

Carrboro Races Present Mixed Bag of New and Old

BY AMY CAPPIELLO
STAFF WRITER

This year's election presents Carrboro residents with a choice between new and old, a traditional way of conducting the business of town government and a slate of candidates who embrace a more open town hall.

Outgoing Mayor Eleanor Kinnaird, who is not seeking re-election, said

the town government must address a slate of issues ranging from gun control to public housing to development.

Kinnaird said several candidates were supportive of gun control measures. But while the board has been very involved in handgun reform, the people of Carrboro have not voiced an opinion, Kinnaird said. "We did a door-to-door survey of a middle income neighborhood, and no one

wanted to talk about it," she said. "But, when we had a forum, more people were in favor of gun control than the other way around."

Another issue facing Carrboro is the rapid increase in development the town has faced in recent years. "In the past 10 years, Carrboro has doubled in population, our bus service has increased greatly, the price of houses has tripled or quadrupled and new

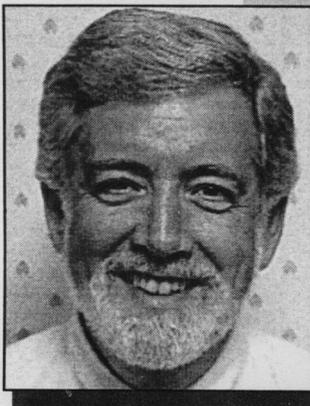
businesses have entered the area," Shetley said.

Kinnaird said all of the recent development has caused a decrease in affordable housing in Carrboro, a problem that she believes is especially noticeable to students. "Unfortunately the board is very anti-multi-housing."

Kinnaird said the Carrboro board recently passed a proposal for a new apartment complex which the town

desperately needed. "Mike Nelson said at a forum, right before the vote, that we needed more low-cost housing," Kinnaird said. But Nelson voted against the proposal for the complex while Marshall voted for the new building, she said. Kinnaird said that moderate development of Carrboro, with places like the Cat's Cradle, had made Carrboro more visible without causing it to lose its charm.

Randy Marshall



Age: 51
Previous Experience: Carrboro Alderman, nine years; Orange County Visitors Bureau, chairman
Occupation: Principal of Carrboro Elementary School
Children: Two
Length of Time in Community: 18 years
Colleges Attended: Elon College and UNC

Carrboro Needs Experienced Leader

Randy Marshall said he felt his experience and leadership made him a perfect candidate for the position of Carrboro mayor. "I have the experience and the leadership the community needs," Marshall said. "Like the new chancellor at the University, Carrboro will have a new mayor. I feel like I have the support of the board, and I think that's important."

One of the motivating forces behind Marshall's campaign is improving development transactions, he said. "I think we need to look very carefully at every development that comes before the board," he said.

The board sets up regulations for which developers must comply,

Marshall said. Most of the developers do comply with these regulations, but the board turns down or delays the projects anyway. The board needs to work out a better way of informing developers of what is expected of them before they bring their ideas to the board, he said. "I think we should play fair," Marshall said. "We need to look at our zoning and our permits before the developers spend a lot of time and money on their plans. It's terribly awkward to have them do exactly what our ordinances say and then tell them no."

Bringing in business to the community is also an issue of concern with Marshall. As for development,

Marshall said he was concerned about carefully mixing residential and commercial areas. "I think development is one of the greatest sources of interest in the community," he said. "People move here wanting that small-town charm. Some are concerned (about losing the small-town charm), especially in the northern area."

The services offered by the town are beneficial to the community and must be protected, Marshall said. "We're offering excellent services to Carrboro. Despite our high tax rate, we're doing it economically. We balance our budget and have one of the best credit ratings for a town our size."

PROFILE COMPILED BY SUZANNE WOOD

Mayor Should Help Curb Growth

For second-year Carrboro Alderman Mike Nelson, focusing on fighting bad development projects and protecting the environment are the two issues motivating his campaign for mayor this fall. "My number one reason for running is for controlling growth," he said. "I have a record on the board for standing up and fighting development that I don't agree with. I think it is important for a mayor to stand up and say 'no' to developers when the developer's plans are bad for the community."

Nelson also said he wanted to play an active role in determining how the Carrboro community grew. "Carrboro is on the verge of experiencing an

explosion of growth," he said. "Our population will almost double in the next 15 years. We can either grow in a smart way by protecting the environment, or in a dumb way. I would be interested in working with developers who focus on the environment."

Nelson said his previous experience on the board would help him work efficiently on such issues as development, the environment and social issues if elected mayor.

"I've learned the board's dynamics," he said. "I've been involved in getting some things passed and can set goals and know how to meet them."

In the past, Nelson has helped in setting up the Environment Advisory

Board and the Domestic Partners program. Besides having experience working with the board, Nelson said he thought he would bring a unique perspective to the mayor's position. "Being a renter in the community gives me a different perspective than a home owner," he said. "Being gay and young also gives me a different perspective."

Nelson said he thought the current board had dealt well with the issues brought before it and that the budget was something of which to be proud. "I am very proud of how we run our town government," he said. "The more I learn about it, the more I see how we run efficiently on so little."

PROFILE COMPILED BY SUZANNE WOOD

Mike Nelson



Age: 31
Previous Experience: Carrboro Alderman, two years of first term; Landfill Owners Group
Occupation: Travel agent at Main Street Travel
Children: None
Length of Time in Community: Eight years
College Attended: UNC

Charles Riggsbee



Age: 50
Previous Experience: Carrboro Planning Board
Occupation: Insurance salesman
Children: Two
Length of Time in Community: 50 years
College Attended: UNC

Town Needs Better Business Base

Charles Riggsbee, a long-time resident of Carrboro and candidate for mayor, said he saw the need for a more representative government and for more issues to be put on referendums for a vote from the public. "I'm a life-long resident of Carrboro," he said. "I probably know the area better than the other candidates. From that respect, I think I would be able to get along better with the older Carrboro residents. In general, I think that is a plus for the mayor."

As a former member of the Carrboro Planning Committee, Riggsbee said he saw several things he would like to change about the town government if elected to the mayor's office.

"I would like to see a more representative government," Riggsbee said. "We should put bigger, more expensive things on the agenda and let the public make comments."

Development is an issue of concern for Riggsbee. He said forcing developers to delay their projects at the board's request cost the community money in the long run. "The delays cost money to the developer, and it usually hurts the renters by raising their rent," he said.

Riggsbee also said he was concerned about the cost of living in Carrboro. "I am running because I am dissatisfied with the way the present board is moving," he said. "I think it will make

the town more exclusive to live here."

Riggsbee said he was interested in implementing the Small Area Plan for Carrboro's Northern Transition Area. "Mainly, Carrboro is a residential area," he said. "Small businesses are important, especially away from the central business area. I think we need a better mix of business and residential areas."

Riggsbee said he wanted the chance to work on his concerns with the board by being elected mayor. "I don't have all the answers," he said. "But I am willing to listen and study. I think a lot of government is about using common sense."

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