

To: Maggie Burleson
City Clerk
City of Asheville

Questions for Planning & Zoning

1. What is your vision for growth and development in Asheville?

It is my vision that we should continue along the same track that we have been on for the last number of years which has made our city the envy of most North Carolina towns. Since annexation is no longer a source of growth, we must look elsewhere. My idea is that we must look to the in-fill of many vacant properties and encourage more multi-storied buildings. In other words higher but not wider. In using this approach we should not forget that architecture is a major appeal for our city so growth should fit the neighborhood. We have a unique city and that uniqueness should be preserved at all costs.

2. Do you believe that Asheville has taken an approach that is too pro-growth or anti-growth over the past 5-6 years?

I think that the city has favored growth and I believe that approach has generally been a reasonable one. Large growth projects create controversy and discussion which is good, but we must be sure that our growth is "smart growth" which will enhance the city and/or neighborhood and all developments must be looked at from a number of angles and not just from a creation of jobs viewpoint. I believe that it is necessary to reject certain projects which do not benefit the city in the long term and risk being labeled as anti-growth.

3. How strictly should interpretation and application of the UDO ordinance be applied?

The UDO is a very large and complex ordinance and application is often difficult and expensive. Waivers should be issued when a common sense approach is needed, but most applications should be applied in a uniform manner to prevent the establishment of a precedent which might create future problems for the city.

4. Name one P&Z decision you have agreed with and one that you have disagreed with.

I struggled with the Larchmont Street approval because of the number of buildings proposed and the availability of parking. However, I ultimately decided that approval was the correct decision because of Asheville's need for moderate to low-priced housing and because the location was ideal for mass transportation and other services.

A decision with which I disagreed was the rejection of the additional apartments in the Kenilworth neighborhood. I have owned a number of properties in the Kenilworth and know the area well. Because of the location, the highest and best use of the property is for apartments and I do not believe the additional traffic would have caused any impact. Most of the traffic would have used the street which goes down to Swannanoa River Road and this road is currently used very lightly. This is an established area with many older residents who often are afraid of change. As a result emotions swell and quite often politics affect decisions.

5. What are some of the positive and negative effects of Asheville's zoning regulations?

I am 100% in favor of zoning (city&county) and believe that the vast majority of its effects are positive. These include (1) protects property owners investments (2)allows planning for the future (3)keeps less desirable businesses in an area where they can be supervised for the safety of the public and(4) builds strong communities.

Some people see zoning as negative because they fear a loss of control of their property. I see this type of thinking as a selfish approach without consideration of the people who live around you and the greater good of the whole community.

For your information and consideration ,I am a native of the area and I have worked in Real Estate for 40 years. I feel that my experience and extensive knowledge of the city would be an asset to the Planning and Zoning Commission. I love this city and I have a strong desire to keep this Asheville moving forward in a progressive and balanced way.

Regards,

Bruce Greene
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