



## **2007 Albemarle County Board of Supervisors Candidate Interview August 2007**

*Candidate: Lindsay Dorrier (D)*

On November 6, 2007, voters in the Scottsville Magisterial District go to the polls to elect their representative on the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors. This recording is Sean Tubbs' August 31, 2007 interview with Lindsay Dorrier, Democratic candidate campaigning for the seat. Mr. Dorrier has two opponents: Independent Denny King and Independent Kevin Fletcher.

*The audio of this interview is available online on the Charlottesville Tomorrow Weblog [http://cvilletomorrow.typepad.com/charlottesville\\_tomorrow\\_/2007/09/dorrier.html](http://cvilletomorrow.typepad.com/charlottesville_tomorrow_/2007/09/dorrier.html)*

*Complete election coverage is available on the Charlottesville Tomorrow website <http://action.cvilletomorrow.org/cvilleaction/elections.html>*

### **INTERVIEW**

**Mr. Dorrier, thank you for participating in this interview with Charlottesville Tomorrow. The complete audio and written transcript for this interview will be available on the Internet. Information from this interview will be used in the compilation of Charlottesville Tomorrow's non-partisan voter guide. Charlottesville Tomorrow does not endorse any candidates and our goal is to provide information to the public so they can make an informed vote on issues related to land use, transportation and community design.**

**As you are aware, some of the questions you will be asked have been provided in advance, others have not. All Supervisor candidates will be asked the same questions.**

#### **1. Please describe your past political experience and what qualifies you to be on the Board of Supervisors.**

I have 11 years experience on the Albemarle Board of Supervisors -four years (1976-80) and seven years (2000-present). I served 10 years as Albemarle Commonwealth's Attorney (1980-1990). I served four years as Director of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (1990-1994), and was appointed Director by Gov. Douglas Wilder. Also I have served 25

years in the US Army Reserve, retiring as Lieutenant Colonel in the Judge Advocate General Corps. I believe my work experience and public service background uniquely qualifies me to serve on the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors.

- 2. In June 2006, the City and County signed off on a 50-year water supply plan that includes a new dam at the Ragged Mountain Reservoir and a new pipeline connecting it to the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir. Do you support this plan? Why or why not?**

I support the 50 year plan, which includes finding new sites for future water supply and also conservation measures. I support the new Ragged Mountain dam and the new pipeline connecting it to the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir. We must monitor the measures mentioned in the 50 year plan on an annual basis. Also, we need to look at the Rivanna Water and Sewer Commission and the Albemarle County Service Authority to see if they have the tools necessary to deal with water shortages and whether these Boards need to be restructured to provide the public more protection and preservation of our water supplies.

- 3. In addition to community concerns about an adequate water supply to accommodate growth and prepare for droughts, recent commercial and residential developments in Albemarle County have had to address inadequate sewer infrastructure. In general, what will the financial impact be on ratepayers for public water and sewer to complete the 50-year water supply plan and update and expand our aging sewer facilities?**

The County may have to address the inadequate sewer infrastructure through its capital improvements budget. Also, the developers creating new developments requiring new sewer lines should pay their fair share of the infrastructure costs. The rate-payers already on County water and sewer may have to contribute to development of infrastructure; however, my first choice is capital improvement funds and possibly bonds. We need to look at all the alternatives and make a sound fiscal decision.

- 4. In 2005, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved an update to the Rural Areas portion of the Comprehensive Plan. That revised plan calls for the County to aggressively pursue phasing of development in the rural areas, also known as time-based zoning. If elected, would you support a phasing policy? Why or why not?**

I am willing to look at phasing; however, I want a clear understanding of what phasing is and what it does. If it takes away property rights of landowners, I am inclined not to support it. However if it clearly protects our rural areas in new ways that allow for landowners to be compensated for their property ,and

we can afford this as a County, then I may consider it for the future. If it is unfair without corresponding public benefits, then I would not support it. We need to look at other areas that have considered phasing and see what success these areas have had. The plan the Board considered last year had the opposition of many county residents who spoke at our public hearing. Before voting I will listen to the public and vote accordingly.

**5. What is your specific strategy for protecting Albemarle's farms, fields, and forests, our rural countryside? What are your greatest concerns about new development in the rural countryside?**

I believe that we should make greater use of conservation easements in Albemarle County. I believe that we have approximately 15-18% of the County in conservation easements. Our ACE (Acquisition of Conservation Easements) Program is working and should be fully funded. The tax credit benefits from the conservation easement program in Albemarle need to be communicated to the public. We need to aggressively pursue conservation easements, which provide tax credits, to protect farm land and preserve our County farms and open space. Also, we need to further encourage farming and fruit and grape growing for profitable farms in Albemarle. Our new rural areas employee should help in this regard. Also, keep support for land use protection for farmers. Incentives rather than restrictions should be pursued. New development in the rural areas will not have the infrastructure to support it, and citizens will want the County government to install services and pick up the tab. I believe we should funnel all growth into the development areas (5%) and not the rural areas (95%).

**6. How do you feel about an expansion of the County's designated growth areas, currently 5% of the County's land area, to support a transfer of development rights program or to support a developer's request to move land from the rural area to the growth area?**

I am against any expansion of the growth area in Albemarle County.

**7. How would you define quality growth for our community?**

Quality growth for our community means growth that occurs only after the infrastructure is in place -open spaces, parks, bicycle paths, walking paths, good roads, adequate water and sewer, excellent schools, public transit, clean air, police, fire and rescue protection This is an area that needs more attention and funding by the Supervisors. I will propose an infrastructure task force to study the problems and present priorities for action to the County Board of Supervisors.

**8. What are your transportation priorities for the Route 29 corridor north of Charlottesville and how specifically will the community fund those initiatives?**

My first priority is the start and completion of the Meadowcreek Parkway. My second priority is to find another route over the Rivanna River for a second parallel road to Route 29 North. Also, I favor the measures outlined in the Places 29 Plan for Route 29 North. We will fund these initiatives with a combination of local, state and federal funds, however, we should also require new development to pay the costs with proffers.

**9. What are your views on working more closely with the City and the University of Virginia to jointly operate a regional transit system? What will you do to promote the use of public transportation, pedestrian trails, and bicycle paths?**

I favor working closely with the City and UVA to create a regional transit system. With an aging population we need quality public transportation. This includes buses, but also we should look into streetcars, electric cars, and other forms of transit. Regional transit should include more than just buses, if financially feasible. However, we should seek to develop a system that will remove the necessity for a car in the urban areas of the County. Public spots on TV and radio and internet should promote public transportation, bicycle paths and pedestrian trails. Also, brochures and mailings with water bills should promote new forms of transit and bike and pedestrian paths.

**10. How do we ensure the community infrastructure—roads, sidewalks, fire/rescue facilities and libraries and so on—is in place to support new development in our designated growth areas? Will the County's new cash proffer expectations adequately address the community's needs? Will you support bond referendums to pay for capital budget priorities?**

We need to develop a priority list for new infrastructure in the County. We cannot do everything in one year or even in five years. We need to look at what we can afford and separate needs from wants. I am willing to look at a limited bond issue that does not change our credit rating and is affordable. Also, we must have public support for a bond issue and need to look closely at what is being funded. For roads, we need to get the state to pay its fair share. We need to exhaust all federal, state, local and private sources of grants first before we look at bonds. The County's new cash proffers will not solve all of our infrastructure problems, however, it is a start and we need to improve on it. I will support a bond referendum to pay for capital budget priorities if I believe that the bond issues have broad public support.

**11. In the last County budget, significant attention was paid by the Board of Supervisors to finding new sources of revenue and to lowering the real estate property tax rate. Some proposed new initiatives were scaled back or eliminated. No reductions were made to existing local government operational expenses for fiscal year 2008. What improvements would you make to our budget process, our allocation of tax dollars, and the funding of new strategic initiatives?**

I favor some form of zero-based budgeting in which agency of local government has to justify its existence each year. Special scrutiny should go to new initiatives and new programs. I am willing to consider sunset laws or ordinances, in which each program has a cut-off time or year. Also, we need to review each program to eliminate duplication and to cut red tape. Our government should be lean and courteous. Restrictions on local government operational expenses will be considered by the Board next year and in the future. Strategic planning has helped our budget process and I want to continue to use strategic planning in everything we do in Albemarle County.

**12. What is your top priority for action by the Board of Supervisors if you are elected?**

My top priority is to preserve and protect the rural area of Albemarle County. We can best do that by building affordable housing in the development areas and also protecting the rural areas from large subdivisions. I will look closely at any future growth in the rural areas of the County to ensure that we protect open space, we encourage farming, and we make an effort to provide a high quality of life to the rural residents. That will be my priority.

**13. The Board of Supervisors is currently reviewing the proposed Biscuit Run development. At 3,100 homes, this would be the largest single development in the County's history. Do you believe Biscuit Run will be quality growth in our community? Why or why not?**

I don't believe the Biscuit Run project, at the present time, has the infrastructure to support quality growth. We've got a problem on the City-County boundary, of roads – on the Old Lynchburg Road – We need to ensure that we implement the Fontaine/Sunset Avenue Connector between the City and the County that will take some of the pressure off Old Lynchburg Road. We need to look at the roads Route 20 and Avon Street Extended. We need to take steps to make sure that those areas are protected and that there's a steady area for negotiation by citizens on the roads of that area. We also need to ensure that the infrastructure is there – I believe the development has a lot of green space in it; it has parks, it has space for school, it has open space, it's got clustering of development. So I think it's got the potential to have -- to be -- quality growth. I think we need to look at mass transit, because a lot of these people living in these 3,100 homes are

going to be senior citizens, retirees, who want to be next to the University of Virginia hospital. And we need to provide some sort of a public transit system that removes our dependency on automobiles, so that we can have a development with very few automobiles in it. So I think it's got potential to be quality growth, but it's not quality growth at the present time.

**14. In your opinion, is the state government adequately funding our transportation needs? If not, what steps will you take to ensure priority transportation projects are actually funded and completed in a reasonable timeframe?**

No, the state does not adequately fund our road projects, and yes, we can take up action with the general assembly. I believe we've got five or six delegates and senators representing Albemarle County. Albemarle County has been carved up into about four or five different districts, so with all of these people in Richmond representing Albemarle County, we should have terrific clout down there. I'm hopeful that we can demand, ask for, and receive funding from the state level for our goals in Albemarle County: improvements to our roads and infrastructure. I believe working with former Delegate Butch Davies in Culpeper we have made progress in achieving some of the goals in road priority. And I will not be satisfied until Meadowcreek Parkway is built, and until some of these other projects that have been so long delayed have been built.

**15. What improvements, if any, do you think should be considered by the Board of Supervisors to create genuine public participation in growth and development decisions?**

I think we're making strides in this direction of creating citizen input in the master planning of Albemarle County. Master planning is a phrase that requires a lot of pre-planning before the first spade of dirt is turned in Albemarle County. We're doing a better job of master planning in Albemarle County and we're doing a better job of listening to the citizens. I've attended a few of those meetings recently in the Glenmore area. I've been impressed at the Albemarle County staff's presentation of the issues; I've been impressed at the feedback given by the members of the community. I think we are making progress in including the public in our decision-making process, but until we listen better, we will not have the results we want. Listening is an art; it should be observed and improved upon by all public servants.

**16. What lessons has the County learned from the Crozet Master Plan? What challenges does the County face with the Pantops and Places29 Master Plans and how will you address those challenges if elected?**

Well, we learned from the Crozet Plan that we shouldn't put a number in the plan about future population. We can't be sure what the future population is, we can only plan for a greater population, and I think we did a disservice in putting a number in that master plan and then coming back and having to say it was a mistaken number. For Places29 and Pantops Master Plans, we need to ensure that the public is being listened to and that their suggestions are being considered seriously by the Board of Supervisors. We need to have a dialogue with the citizens of those areas. Already the master planner of Pantops said the that horse is out of the barn, and that Pantops is already developed, and I tend to agree with that; I think there's very little area left to develop on Pantops Mountain that hasn't been developed already. However, we can make changes in the present master plan if we listen to the public and do what they suggest: it's a very congested area and we need to look closely at what we can do to relieve the congestion. Route 29 North is not as congested as Pantops and development is still being done out there, not on a full scale, on a basis so we can take steps to improve communication and infrastructure and the 29 North area, and we should listen to the people who live there.

**17. What do you see as the primary responsibilities of the Board of Supervisors?**

Primary responsibilities of the Board of Supervisors is to keep the tax rate low, provide infrastructural needs, protect the rural areas, preserve traditions, customs and provide a good education in Albemarle County, and ensure quality growth of all citizens in Albemarle.

**Mr. Dorrier, thank you very much for participating.**