



2007 Albemarle County Board of Supervisors Candidate Interview September 2007

Candidate: Ann Mallek (D)

On November 6, 2007, voters in the White Hall Magisterial District go to the polls to elect their representative on the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors. This recording is Sean Tubbs' September 4, 2007 interview with Ann Mallek, Democratic candidate campaigning for the seat. Ms. Mallek's opponent is Republican David Wyant.

The audio of this interview is available online on the Charlottesville Tomorrow Weblog http://cvilletomorrow.typepad.com/charlottesville_tomorrow_/2007/09/mallek.html

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

INTERVIEW

Ms. Mallek, 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.

Four main things qualify me to be on the Board of Supervisors. First, my long history of community activism, going back to my childhood in White Hall, when my parents taught me the moral value of neighbors being neighbors. I really care about what happens here, and the lives of the people who live here. Second, I have spent more than two decades working on local issues

that are critical to White Hall voters and Albemarle's future. I understand these issues inside out, and I know how to find solutions and speak to everyone, so we can get a solution that will work for the community. Third, my experience as a leader on tough problems, like the Advance Mills Bridge, protecting our water supply, and preventing the [VDOT] Free Union depot from being closed. The fourth quality may be the most important one: I want to represent the voters, so that their voices and concerns are the main influence on the Board of Supervisors' decisions. It is not fair, it is not wise, it is not democratic, and it is not good government to base County decisions – affecting 93,000 residents – on how much it helps the bank accounts of just a few individuals.

Organizing the Earlysville Area Residents' League, sponsoring candidate forums, creating programs that benefit the community such as Veggie Share and the parade, and getting the entire Earlysville community involved in local and important issues is one of the important things. I've been an Earlysville precinct leader to encourage voting. My active service on the Acquisition of Conservation Easements Committee, the Charlottesville-Albemarle Regional Transportation Citizens' Committee, the Transportation Working Group, and the Development Review Task Force has given me direct experience with issues critical to the public: over-development, better transportation options, protecting water supply, farmland and rural areas. Participation creates a strong sense of a small-town community. My history is one of encouraging wider citizen participation, and on the Board of Supervisors I will continue to do that. I feel strongly we must have full discussion at public hearings. The information that elected officials receive and expect to base their decisions on must be shared with the public well in advance. In my ten years of working with EARL, I have notified EARL members of the details of upcoming Board of Supervisors meetings so they can be more fully involved, have attended many Board meetings myself, and reported back to those who couldn't attend. This was before the days of Charlottesville Tomorrow. I cannot tell you how helpful your website and emails are.

- 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?**

Yes, I do support the plan, because the Ragged Mountain improvement plan keeps our water local, and our water quality predicable. We can protect our watersheds because they are within the County jurisdiction. Cities upstream have had failures in their stormwater-sewage systems, causing untreated sewage to dump into the James. I do not support James River water as a solution. In times of drought the needed volumes of water would not be available from the James anyway.

Two serious concerns are the location of the pipeline and potential ecological damage from building the pipeline to connect the two reservoirs. These will need careful study, full publication of findings and transparent decision-making, and the highest performance standards. The Rivanna Water and Sewage Authority will present more information on the phasing of the dam project at its public meeting on September 13.

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?

More details are coming soon, but I understand the improvements to the reservoir are at fifty million and the pipeline, which RWSA wants to postpone until 2021, is estimated to cost forty million. Beyond that over 100 million is the expected cost among the City, County and ACSA for the sewer re-lining and replacement of deteriorating pipes. The enormity of the work which is coming due is mind-boggling. Many of the sewer pipes were installed over fifty years ago, when I was a kid, and they have not been upgraded. With the extra pressure of more people comes faster breakdown and a perfect storm of repairs. Prices will undoubtedly rise. The financial impact on taxpayers will depend on what the large developers are held to. The Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors must see signed agreements for adequate public facilities in writing which go with the land before approving any rezonings. Will developers be held responsible for paying these costs?

We should not wait years for payment to begin for the Moore's Creek Interceptor, until after the pipe reaches 80% of capacity, as has been proposed. What we should do is require payments from the developers at intervals of construction. From the very beginning of the Biscuit Run project, the costs of future work should be apportioned to all who share in the development. It is a big mistake – and a potential fiscal nightmare – to wait until 80% completion, because by then the impact on potential payers will be too high. That means the cost would likely be shifted to all ratepayers and to County taxpayers – which the developers have already walked away.

- 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?**

Phasing is no longer under consideration, and I think that is for the best. I've spoken with many older farmers and rural landowners who want to be able to sell part of their land, to pay for medical bills or for retirement needs. I oppose any planning decision that would close off that option for landowners. We can do a lot to protect rural areas by identifying our most critical resources more rapidly, and increasing protection of those areas through easements. Another way to protect rural areas is to put in place 80-90% construction mitigation guidelines, for all roads and building areas.

- 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?**

The country quality of life is based on operating farms and forests, so I would advocate county policies that encourage the business of farming. Our family's land has been in a livestock operation for at least a hundred years through several owners. A farmer who cares well for his land – which is, after all, his main asset – is a good neighbor. Over the years potential buyers of neighboring land have called me to ask what our plans were: "Are you putting apartments in that field?" Now call to they tell us how much they enjoy seeing the baby calves, and the wildlife in the woods and around the lake. There is a new staff person funded in this year's budget for an agricultural support role. That person should help the Supervisors remove obstacles to on-farm sales of home-grown and substantially home-grown products. That person should encourage connections between consumers and producers. Consumer loyalty is a major factor in income security for planning agricultural enterprises. Be involved in the "Buy Fresh, Buy Local" campaign, as our farm is. Encourage CSAs, or Community Supported Agricultural enterprises, and community gardens in our growth areas and in our neighborhoods. Encourage food sourcing for local schools and restaurants from local growers whenever possible. Helping growers orient production toward meeting local demand will increase revenue and improve the viability of farm and garden enterprises. And also to develop regional marketing for new energy products, such as warm season grasses. These perennial provide quality forage for cattle, conservation values in bird habitat and erosion control, and much better income than raising cows, I'll tell you that. They also trap carbon and reduce our local carbon footprint. We should study the model of Halifax County and encourage and support warm season grasses as part of their agricultural strategy. We have lots of large lots, these twenty-one acre parcels, and once people move there they realize there's a lot of land and

they don't know what to do with it. And putting those warm season grasses, ten and fifteen acre sections that could be gathered and harvested by one farmer would be a great way to go about that. Also, we need that agricultural staff person to be a state-of-the-art technical assistance person, especially for new farmers, and to help connect retiring farmers with aspiring ones. As our farmer population ages, drawing new people into farming is essential. Formerly veterinary practitioners and agricultural extension agents performed this function. Widely promoting the refundable aspects of the State income tax credit for conservation easements would encourage more farmers to take advantage of this source of capital, and keep land from development. Also, I would like that person to research possible changes to the five-acre minimum for land use when truck gardening and intense small acreage farming is carried out.

In general my concerns about new development in the rural area are that it costs the taxpayers more, and it harms the environment. It costs more to provide roads, school bus service, firefighting coverage, EMT, and snow plowing services to people spread thinly over a wide area, and I know this first-hand because going door-to-door you certainly can reach a lot of people in a short period of time when you're in a neighborhood and it takes days when you're driving up and down those long-range driveways.

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 oppose expanding the growth area. We made a commitment that growth area residents would have the countryside nearby, so that the growth area does not become a huge monolith, with miles and miles of high rise and high density living. If we betray that trust our growth areas will fail. Providing greater encouragement to farming nearby would increase the proximity of farm products to customers.

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

Quality businesses would be those which offer residents with long-term employment with benefits, do not pollute, or require more water than we can safely provide. A development project would be quality growth if it protects natural resources and wildlife habitats and established human neighborhoods, and forms a good communal space within its borders for its own residents, and widespread community benefits beyond its borders. Examples of those benefits could be commuter buses for residents, and for park-and-ride commuters from outside the neighborhood; regional parks and grocery stores; recreational playing fields; and wetlands and stream buffers to protect and improve water quality and storm water control. Pay-as-you-go is

an important quality for growth in our community. That means growth that does not create added costs to be imposed on taxpayers. We must not be benefiting future residents at the expense of people who already live here.

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

Since 2000 I've served on the Charlottesville-Albemarle Regional Transportation Citizen's Committee and worked on the long range plan. Important features of that plan are expanding bus service from Barracks Road to the airport and later on to Greene County; preserve the right of way in the third lane of Route 29 for a bus lane – bus rapid transit will be the first step towards rail in the far future when we are a bigger community; continue to require that all new residential and commercial developments be transit ready. An example would be amenities such as bus stops with shelters, and pull out lanes for buses to function. Gradually add residential density along core transportation routes to support mass transit rather than adding sprawl, which requires auto travel. Our growth areas are a perfect example of this plan. I would support grade-separated interchanges at those intersections on 29 that have enough traffic to support it. This will save money and improve traffic patterns, without taking more land and businesses. What we should avoid is what happened with the 29 corridor twenty years ago: In 1989 studies indicated that grade-separated interchanges, at a cost of \$15 million for Hydraulic Road, would greatly improve traffic flow, which would have saved businesses and residents many times that amount in gas, time and money. But VDOT and the county decided to go with the expensive and inefficient widening improvements, for example at Rio Road. Now we will need to duplicate that investment to achieve a true long-term solution.

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?

Well, first of all, I'm a big supporter of free transit. We pay for roads; we should pay for buses. During the 1970s gas crisis I lived in Amherst, Massachusetts, where the local government's response was to get a federal grant to begin the Lower Pioneer Valley Transit Authority. The transit authority set up bus routes among the five colleges in three counties, including all main artery routes and housing areas, to deliver workers and students to their destinations. The similarities between that region and our University community are significant. The bus system was an overnight success, rising to 17,000 riders per day within a few months. The bus was free, fast, and efficient. I would support a similar system in and around

Charlottesville and the University, and connecting to neighborhoods and free park-and-ride facilities throughout the County.

Pedestrian trails and bike paths are slowly expanding. For all new projects, bike and pedestrian paths should be required with connections to any existing system. As businesses provide locker rooms and showers, they will encourage their employees to use alternate travel. And I know many people in the Rio area are looking forward to the Meadowcreek Parkway because then they will be able to bicycle directly to downtown to work.

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?

I use the term “pay as you go” development. The consequences of growth caused by a development should be paid for by the project developer, not imposed on the tax payers. For public investment, we must make annual benchmark allocations for particular improvements, to be completed by the time the project is complete. Making the financial commitment at the same time as the permit approval would bring home to the Board and to residents the costs we are taking on. We should use the monies that are paid for in amenities at that site, not somewhere across town. Developers complain, “What I paid for is being used somewhere else and my residents are angry at me.”

Voters understand the connection between uncontrolled growth and high taxes. They know that all these new houses do not pay for themselves. The proffer needs to address the net loss to count taxpayers – approximately \$1000 per year for each single family home (slightly less for multifamily homes, slightly more for mobile homes).

We also need to look at the value assigned to offered benefits, to make sure the benefits are actually worth what they’re supposed to be worth. Vastly overestimated income projections from large projects has meant even greater burdens placed on taxpayers. And some developers expect proffer credits just for obeying the law or common sense – and the current Board has given it to them. Examples include building interior roadways in their own project; using green building techniques; or seeking building lot credits for greenways in wetlands that won’t support construction anyway.

Regarding bonds, when road construction money was cheap, the Board of Supervisors made the mistake of choosing not to bond secondary road improvements. That would have enabled us to catch up with infrastructure that was promised years ago. Since then, the cost of road improvements has

soared, putting us years behind. I favor using bonds to pay for capital projects such as schools – so that the current generation pays for the services they are using. But I do not favor using bonds for County operating expenses or to get developers off the hook because they don't honor their commitments. Strict enforcement and meeting of timeline obligations will help.

When the conservation easement program began, the Board chose to use money available then in the general fund. I don't propose changing this but financial conditions change, and it should be looked at again each year. We must all be sure we are in a position to use any federal or state matches for conservation easement purchases to add to our own resources.

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?

We need clarity in the budget process, with open meetings held in the evenings so that working people can attend, and a lot more information made available well in advance of meetings and decisions. The budget discussions should begin in the fall, not be rushed in the spring. We must decide what our communities and residents need, and then decide how to pay for it. Last year the Board of Supervisors did it exactly backwards: they decided how much we would pay, and then decided what we would buy with that amount. The result: needed firemen and policemen were not funded; needed classrooms, teachers and education programs were not funded; needed and long promised road improvements were not funded. To top it off, after the changes in excise fees and other costs to taxpayers, many people ended up paying more than they would have with the property tax alone. Voters understood this and are angry about it.

I was astounded at how the budget was handled last year. In the early fall of '06, the Board of Supervisors told the school board how much of their budget the next year would likely be. The school board then spent months – all fall and winter – assessing the value of each part of their budget and deciding whether to keep or end programs and expenses. It showed bad faith and bad planning for the Board of Supervisors to then tell the School Board, in spring, that within a week they had to cut millions from the budget the Supervisors had given them in the first place.

We need to look more carefully at local government operating expenses. County personnel costs are going up each year, and to say that no changes

are needed is a disservice to taxpayers. It is vital that we return to one essential fact: the customers of the County are the taxpayers, not the developers who seek permits and zoning changes. Yet, at a Development Review Task Force meeting, Mr. Boyd and Mr. Wyant described the developers as their customers.

Developers must provide professional, certified plans with their applications, and not rely on County staff to do their work for them. If changes need to be made, County staff should not do that work, and staff members should never be asked to help developers get around regulations. If developers provide complete, certified professional plans, the demands on staff will fall. This will be a savings to taxpayers, and give County staff the time to serve taxpayers' needs.

Developers who want to meet with a supervisor one-on-one should pay for a clerk to take notes at the meeting, and those notes need to be made public. We cannot continue with a situation where the public perception is that deals for project approval are being made in secret. Lack of transparency corrupts public confidence and our quality of life.

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

It's very difficult to choose the one that I would make as the top, but I think the one that would make the most difference to the community as a whole and to taxpayers would be, as growth projects are considered, that we have these benchmarks for public investment and that we agree how much the public investment is going to be in the amenities for that project so that we know that ahead of time. We need to require re-zonings to also have considerable public benefit beyond their borders. They cannot just stop at that little line on a piece of paper; they have to consider the far-ranging effects of the people who live there, the damage to the environment through construction.

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?

Well, that remains to be seen. Biscuit Run has the possibility of being a wonderful example of our growth area's success, but for that to happen, we need all the various parts to be done, all the various construction, design and implementation to be done to the highest standards. How accountable the Board of Supervisors will be to its own procedures is also a factor that's going to be important in this approval process. What will be the bottom line to the taxpayers: how much of the consequences, financially, of Biscuit Run, will not

be provided over time by the people involved in the project, and how much will end up being shouldered by the taxpayers.

As I have been going door-to-door this summer, I have met people throughout the district, from way down in Dick Woods Road/Batesville area, to the back reaches of White Hall; Break Heart Road to Advanced Mills. Many people have lived here their whole lives; they've worked very hard. Many folks in the White Hall area had worked at ConAgra. One woman described to me her situation, which applies to many. She said, "I'm 87 years old. When I started working at ConAgra I was making 25 cents an hour. I retired on 49 dollars a month. We've worked hard in the county, we've never caused any trouble, we have a house and seven acres where we have a cow in our garden. When we were concerned about not being able to pay our taxes recently, we were told by a person in the office, 'That's alright; you can sell the land behind your house, or you can move to a smaller place.'" At age 87 – and her husband's aged 89 – that is not an acceptable answer to me. We have an obligation to our residents to treat them fairly and kindly; that was not a kind way to treat someone. I have yet to be convinced that our assessing is fair, especially for open land.

So there are burdens that these taxes – the cost of development – place on our taxpayers as a whole that we need to have in the forefront of our mind as we're discussing Biscuit Run, to be concerned about that.

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?

Well it is clear that the state contribution and resulting from the federal contribution has fallen dramatically in the last ten years. At the same time, the cost of materials has gone up dramatically in the last ten years, so we are in a terrible financial box in the county; we cannot control what the state does for us. One thing we can control is that we have our projects be pay-as-you-go, and that will help to a certain extent that has not been required in the past. Some of these small connector roads, small public projects, we may be able to use public funds. The development review task force spent over a year – it was a broad-based group business community – planning and engineering. People were at the table, and we investigated different ways to achieve a better funding source locally. One of the things that was considered was a gas tax. Another was a transportation district, which would probably include the entire growth areas. These things need to be acted upon, and discussed and acted upon by the Board of Supervisors and the City council to try to move forward from that – the report has been issued over a year ago. The Development Review Task-force issued its report in March, I believe, of '07,

with lots of improvements suggested that could help to clarify the different roles of the developers and the public.

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?

Well, one – the most difficult task will be to overcome the perception that the public feels that there's no point in bothering. "Why should I go to a meeting when he's going to get everything he wants anyway?" is the response that I've been hearing from long-time residents and new ones for the last twenty years, and occasionally things happen in the news that seem to affirm that view. I guess I'm an eternal optimist and I always think that we can figure out a way to make things happen, and on occasion citizens have truly had significant influence. I think actually the Biscuit Run project is a great example of a hugely more involved community-base of the neighborhoods around there, realize that they had a stake in this, probably because of the help of Charlottesville Tomorrow and the fact that it's so much easier now to get information on an individual person's level, that they were able to find out when meetings were happening and it helped them to get organized. We need to stop these one-on-one meetings that applicants have with supervisors. The perception is just all wrong. And also, even if supervisors are satisfied that changes have been made, or that they have an understanding with an applicant about what the applicant is going to do, the fact that that information is never discussed in a public meeting creates a perception of distrust. And any time you have distrust, it tends to keep people at home. People are very busy in their lives: they have children, they have parents of their own that are older and everyone has 36 hours of things to do in a 24 hour period. So it is a real dedication of time when people leave their family to come to a meeting. And so, having a confidence that they will actually be able to learn something significant and achieve something is very important toward their willingness to participate.

At the development review task-force, we discussed the whole procedure of development from start to finish, and there were many occasions where there was not clarity in the process. There were many occasions where there was not a set of guidelines of exactly what had to be provided, there were no gates that were closed permanently until that information was provided. The calendar, the 90-day clock that the County is under, that requires action at certain stages along the way, is ticking away even if developers have not provided the information required. That change was something that we wanted to make sure happened, and I think that change has already been implemented. But clarifying application procedures, and leading to a more predictable result, will help both the business community and citizens to know what's actually going to happen. In the growth area, the procedures should be detailed so a developer knows "if I follow the rules and I provide answers

to all these questions and I do it in a quality way with proper standards, I should get approval.” There should not have to be this negotiated dance, this legislative decision, this subjective decision. Any time the decision is seen to be totally personal, it loses the confidence of the community. And this is another reason why representation is so important for the Board of Supervisors.

Some of our Supervisors do not make any contact with their voters. My opponent has a very poor record of representation. Many voters have said to me, “I have written him letters; he has never responded. I have sent him emails; I’ve sent him certified mail.” And it’s not just one neighborhood, it’s people throughout – from the back hills of White Hall, to Batesville, to Advanced Mills, to Earlysville. It is a great concern, because a Supervisor is not elected to make a decision based on what they think personally. They may get lots of staff information, but they need to have a very clear understanding of what their voters think about things, and the way to do that is to represent them, and also to have well-attended and good-functioning good public participation meetings. A very, very bad example was set in the Wednesday meeting in July – August, I’m sorry. Our White Hall Supervisor had come to a neighborhood meeting, at long last, in Advanced Mills, about the fifth meeting that we had had, he came to that one, a Sunday night, and said, “Please come to this Wednesday’s Board Meeting and talk to them because it’s really important that you all make clear about your concerns about the Advanced Mills bridge.” About thirty people left their jobs and came to the meeting at 9 o’clock in the morning and signed up. They were told, “Sorry, we don’t really want you all to speak this morning. If you all would please get into a few groups and pick a chosen speaker, and hold your comments to one minute instead of three minutes because we have a busy day today.” They were furious. I managed somehow to get the three different topics that I wanted to mention crammed into one minute, only because all of my neighbors had taken care of the Advanced Mills Bridge issue very, very clearly all by themselves. Many of them were so angry that they just ignored the buzzer and took their three minutes and said, “I have come all the way down here, I am going to tell you what I want to say.” That was a very bad day in the procedures of the Board of Supervisors. And sadly, the White Hall supervisor did not intervene, and say to the chairman, “We can’t do this. This is not right.” He just allowed it all to happen.

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, one of the biggest problems that the residents of Crozet see with the Crozet Master plan is with the implementation. The plan is fine, and the planning is working forward. The almost completion of these business-overlay district, or the changes for business people for the set-backs in

parking, is another great example of how this is working very well, and the business community has had tremendous input into those changes, to be able to create one big business district – where the Crozet downtown is now – rather than having each parcel have to act as its own business district. That's going to be a huge advantage. The disaster has come from the fact that the Board of Supervisors has not implemented the Master Plan as written, and the Old Trail Development is the perfect example of that. Well, Old Trail may be well designed, and have lots of amenities for the community – it was always discussed with the neighbors in meetings prior to the hearing as around 700 to 800 homes, and on the night of the hearing, all of a sudden there were 2,200 houses, and 17 of the 20-some people there who spoke said, "Wait a minute, this number is not right, we can't go forward, where does this information come from, why do we have to have so many houses? It's more than twice what the Master Plan called for. Why did we spend all these years doing a Master Plan if you're just going to change the number?" There was no answer. Mr. Wyant made the motion to approve Old Trail at 2,200 homes. He should have said, "This is the White Hall district; we can't treat our residents this way, they have a Master Plan, they have certain expectations." He should have asked questions, he should have demanded answers. He should have said, "We can't go forward with this until we get the answers of why this is so important and why we're going to throw our whole master plan into disarray." None of that happened, and the repercussions of it are still being felt in the community.

The commercial district is also more than twice what it was supposed to be in the Master Plan. More than 250,000 square feet of commercial is approved in the new project, and that's more than the commercial space in the existing downtown of Crozet. Now people say, "Well, it won't happen for twenty years." We don't have any idea when it's going to happen. It could happen tomorrow if the economy turned around, because there are no phases that can be implemented, there are no requirements. So implementation of the Master Plan is the most important element, and holding everyone accountable for the decisions that are made is also very important, because if the next round of Supervisors don't do a better job, they should be tossed out too.

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

Well number one would be representing the citizens, absolutely the most important. Being accessible, being available; interested, actually, in people, is a very important quality and responsibility. Because without that we will never develop the kind of sense of community that we need in order to function and have a really good quality of life. There are many people who love the scenery here, and they live in small neighborhoods, or neighborhoods or small communities where they have a sense of belonging. But many people feel isolated from Albemarle County as a whole. They feel

run over. There's often the sense that one neighborhood is being pitted against another in policies. So it is really important that the Board have real debates and discussions and try to work out, in public, these issues. There is a sense that recently, that decisions have to be unanimous, that there's a reluctance to be the one or two who vote against something. I don't understand why, because if it's bad for your community, or bad for the community as a whole and you truly believe that, you shouldn't just vote for it because it's going to win. That gives a terrible sense of frustration to the citizens. The Supervisors are responsible for guiding the policies of the County, and spending the resources of the County, and those are awesome responsibilities. Very big jobs. They require a lot of detailed work. It is not something that you can take on casually, that you think is just a small job. It is a big, big responsibility.

We also have a tremendous responsibility to the future, to the kind of community that our children and grandchildren will be able to live in. Will we have a community that is affordable for a widely diverse group of people in our community? The folks I've known my whole life – I've been fortunate to have grown up here, and been in a family where going out to meet people and traveling to farms with my dad was part of our daily experience when I was small. And the community has certainly changed over the years. It's changed in wonderful ways, and some ways that are sad, make people sad who have lived here for a long time. But no one wants things to just stop. We understand that life goes on, we just want to make sure that it's a quality existence, and that the rights of the individuals who are here now are protected, and that their ability to stay here, especially in their old age, is protected. I do hope that right away, changes can be made to improve the property tax payment situation for these older residents. We need much more outreach and much more assistance to help people, so they do not have to make a move. My mom just moved; she's 85, and at that age it's traumatic to leave your home where you've been for 50 or 60 or more years, even if you're just moving into town. So the uncertainty that these high tax bills have placed upon older residents is a painful one, and one that I feel very sorry about. And it is a responsibility; we need to figure out a better way to accomplish this and to keep ourselves affordable so we will have a vibrant community.

Thanks for participating in our interview.