



2009 Albemarle County Board of Supervisors Candidate Interview September 2009

Candidate: Duane Snow (R)

On November 3, 2009, voters in the Samuel Miller Magisterial District go to the polls to elect their representative on the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors. This recording is Brian Wheeler's September 1, 2009 interview with Duane Snow (R). Mr. Snow's opponents are Madison Cummings (D) and John Lowry (I).

*The audio of this interview is available online in the
Charlottesville Tomorrow News Center*

http://cvilletomorrow.typepad.com/charlottesville_tomorrow_/2009/09/snow.html

Complete election coverage is available on the Charlottesville Tomorrow website

<http://www.cvilletomorrow.org/elections>

INTERVIEW

Mr. Snow 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. Are you ready to start?

I am.

1. Please describe your past experience that qualifies you to be on the Board of Supervisors?

I know Albemarle County and have served in the community all my life. My family has been here for seven generations. My five children attended Albemarle County schools. I have 12 grandchildren that are or will be attending County schools. I served on the Albemarle County Architectural Review Board. I was appointed to the Virginia State Agricultural Council and served for 10 years where I represented Albemarle County and the green industry.

For 35 years I served as CEO and president of a successful business in the County. As a businessman, I learned the importance of listening to customers and employees. As a representative of the County, I would listen to the people and those who work for the County. I know the importance of making tough decisions, if problems do not go away they must be worked through or else they will remain forever a barrier to the growth and development of the community.

2. Do you support the formation of a Regional Transit Authority with the City of Charlottesville? What are your regional transportation priorities and how do you recommend we fund them in the absence of new state funding and without the ability to raise a local sales tax?

Before I could support a Regional Transit Authority with the City, I would exhaust all the efforts to get the Commonwealth to pay attention to its infrastructure and their responsibilities.

Follow up: Great, and then the follow-up had to do with state funding, is there anything more you want to add?

No. The state has that responsibility and only as a last resort would I want to use local funds and then only if the money is there.

3. The next Board of Supervisors will review the Places29 Master Plan. What do you think are the key ingredients that need to be in that plan to gain your support?

The key elements of the plan that are important to me are: One, the Hillsdale connector from Hydraulic to Greenbrier Drive; Two, extend the widening of 29 North from its current location just North of the Rivanna River to the Hollymead area; Three, extend Berkmar Drive to Hollymead Town Centre which would include building a new bridge across the Rivanna River; Four, enlarge the current ramp from 29 North to the 29 250 bypass to two lanes.

The expressway and millions of dollar spent would be for the purpose of accommodating 10% of the traffic headed through the area. It would leave 90% of the traffic wandering around cumbersome traffic patterns to get to their desired locations.

4. In what circumstances would you support an expansion of Albemarle County's designated growth areas?

There is adequate opportunity to serve the community with the existing designated growth areas. That said, I would consider more parks and recreational facilities for our citizens along the edge of the existing growth areas. Parks and recreational areas serve as good buffers between urban and rural lands.

5. If you were to provide direction today to the County Executive on the development of the next Albemarle County annual budget? What would you tell him?

I would say let's begin with the use of a zero-based budgeting process and review all County operations to ensure that our existing revenues are being spent consistent with the priorities of our citizens.

6. In August 2009, Advocates for a Sustainable Albemarle Population (ASAP) released the first report in their research seeking to identify an optimal sustainable population for the community. Should the Board of Supervisors explore policies that would cap the County's population growth at a number below the potential build-out population? Why or why not?

I will use all the available data when considering responsible growth, but I would not apply an arbitrary cap on population growth. There are too many factors that will change over the next 50 years. Technology alone will improve the handling of stormwater, improved road services, improved building supplies.

7. Should the community invest in repairing or enlarging the existing lower Ragged Mountain Dam built around 1908 as part of the 50 Year Community Water Supply Plan? Why or why not?

I am on record for moving forward with rebuilding and enlarging the Ragged Mountain Dam. This Dam is not structurally sound and needs to be replaced, it is also important to maintain the South Fork [Rivanna] Reservoir which would include dredging.

8. If you could focus on one area for improved partnership with the City of Charlottesville during the next two years, what area would that be?

I think we need to explore common interest and goals that would help both localities save money and improve the quality of life. For example public transportation and combining certain public services.

9. What are your priorities for economic development and workforce development in Albemarle? Do we have sufficient land for office, commercial and industrial development within the designated growth areas?

Prepare an economic development plan that will encourage business growth, this is the weakest slice of our tax revenues. I have anecdotal evidence that we need more light industrial zone areas, but this needs more investigation.

10. Do you support the Three Party Agreement reached in 1990 between Albemarle, Charlottesville and the University of Virginia which identified a sequence of transportation projects to be completed before the construction of a Western Bypass of U.S. Route 29?

This agreement was made 18 years ago, most of the projects mentioned in the agreement have been or are in the process of completion, the agreement also calls for three grade separated interchanges at Rio, Hydraulic and Greenbrier. I have not seen any construction drawings for this phase of the project, so I would need to see those before I can make a proper decision.

11. Given the long funding and implementation period for multi jurisdictional projects like the Meadowcreek Parkway and the community water supply plan, what are the advantages and disadvantages to the current Board of Supervisors revisiting previous Boards' decisions regarding such projects?

Revising previous decisions would be based upon a significant amount of new evidence, otherwise the project should proceed. The advantage would be to mitigate cost, improve the plan or clearly prove another method was far superior. The [disadvantages] would be new study expenses, additional cost from inflation and loss of opportunities from delays. We have talked about the Meadowcreek Parkway for years and 100% behind the completion of this project.

And the last part of that, "the disadvantages." We will make sure to get that right

And I have got a copy for you.

Well make sure we clarify that. Alright that's fine, we will make sure it get right.

12. Should Albemarle County officials be able to revisit or renegotiate their past decision on the 1982 revenue sharing agreement with the City of Charlottesville? Why or why not?

Well that would be great if that could happen, but this is a legally binding document and laws would have to be changed in order to do that. The reason I think it should be changed is right now I don't think the County is getting its money's worth.

13. In June 2006 the City and County signed off on a 50 year water supply plan that includes a new dam at 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 definitely support the plan. We have been talking about adding to our water supply for 25 years. I am concerned about the water supply for the future, 2002 was the year of the drought and we were down to a 28 day supply or 20 day supply, I have often wondered what would have happened if we it had gone another 28 days. I think that we need to solve the water problem and take it off the table rather than constantly talking about it and spending literally millions of dollars solving a problem that should have been solved five, six or ten years ago.

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

Zero based budgeting. I feel like that we have wasteful spending, when you operate without a zero-based budget, as the fiscal year ends, a lot of times there was just catch-up spending that we can have our budget added to the next year. I think we need to look at our budgets realistically and make sure that the money is being applied to the priorities and needs of the citizens.

15. Do we have appropriate resources in County government to achieve the objectives in the County's strategic plan? In what way, if any, do we need to make changes? What impact will your recommendations have on staffing and the annual budget?

I think as a rule, the resources we need are there. In one part of the strategic plan, it talks about we are for building the economics in this area so that we [can] attract businesses that would be suitable to this area.

And I feel like that there is not enough detail in some of the plans that we read. For example, we talk about attracting compatible businesses with the

community, but there is no plan for actually how to do that, there are no goals, there is not any action plan to accompany those goals. And so we need goals and we need an action plan to help achieve those goals and one of the particular areas I am concerned about is making sure that we are able to attract the right businesses to this area.

If I remember my statistics right 12,000 people leave the County every week to go work somewhere else because of underemployment. We need to attract the right jobs here and that will have people invest in our community, but not have to bring additional people in to make that business work, we can use the 12,000 that we have here.

Follow up: And by that 12,000 you mean people who are commuting outside of the area to work?

Yeah they are going to Richmond, they are going to Washington, all over.

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

Number one is to listen to the citizens of the County and treat them with respect. I think in a lot of the cases the citizens are not listened to and programs and things are implemented without proper input or regardless of the input.

Great, thank you very much.