

Kathleen Ferguson, Incumbent Hillsborough Town Board

1. What are the highest priority affordable housing issues in your community?

Most important priorities: Critical repairs

Top priorities, but not most important: Rental housing, Affordable homeownership, Senior housing, Permanent housing for homeless

Important, but lower priorities: Mobile homes

2. Should local government provide more money or less money to support affordable housing in your community?

About the same amount of money. Ideally, I would love the Town to replenish our affordable housing fund to be used for a variety of affordable housing needs, including rental assistance, repairs, and landlord damages fund to invent more landlords to accept more vouchers. Our challenge will be to find such funding given that we already are dipping into fund balance for operations, deferring needed operational funding, and a penny tax generates less than \$100k, which burdens many of the current affordable homeowners we would like to help in addition to those needing affordable rental homes.

3. Do you support donating surplus government-owned land to affordable housing developers?

Yes. Yes, Depending on the location, donating surplus govt land can be very viable for affordable housing, especially if located next to schools.

4. Do you think local jurisdictions do an effective job coordinating housing policies and programs with other jurisdictions in the county, including Orange County government?

Neutral. On one hand, the electeds of the jurisdictions who are affordable housing advocates communicate and collaborate relatively well, especially via HOME consortium and shared committees and boards. However, policies are only partially coordinated in my opinion, but with good reason-the different jurisdictions have varied needs and wildly varied circumstances (funding/housing stock/market variables/resources/staffing) which ultimately impacts priorities and decisions appropriate for coordination. Still relevant is that the affordable housing advocates and experts missed critical opportunities to increase stock when HBoro's largest ever development was being decided. With only minor infill development left, opportunities for increasing affordable housing stock in town is now limited to purchasing existing properties WRT to affordable single homes, working with landlords to accept more vouchers, and helping homeowners with needed repairs. I would love to see the affordable home coalition meet with our board, to advocate for HBoro-relevant affordable housing policies, strategies, and support in person at the relevant public hearings and meetings. I also continue wanting for our affordable housing experts to share HBoro-relevant data with our board and staff.

5. What's one example of an affordable housing program or development that you think worked well. Please explain why you think that was successful and how you will support more of these successes in the future.

Habitat's revitalization of Fairview in collaboration with the Fairview Community has been outstanding. And, I am excited to see the much-needed redevelopment of Odis Street. I would love to see even more redevelopment of blighted or poor-condition housing into attractive, permanently affordable homes or rental homes.

6. As the Town of Hillsborough continues to experience growth, what policies or tools can the Town employ to ensure that housing does not become out of reach for households at or below median income?

This is the question I have been asking our affordable housing experts to suggest to our board based on their knowledge and experience :). We have been utilizing mixed housing stock price points with mixed results and recently set up a rental assistance fund administered by CEF. I want to see this fund be expanded and a second fund for homeowner repairs added. I also would like to see more property purchases by the various affordable housing organizations to ensure perpetual affordability. I also want to work with the county on establishment and maintenance of landlord incentive fund that they can receive a set reimbursement for damage in return for accepting more vouchers. Because future development is limited, the window for inclusionary ordinances is no longer open, and I am not aware of options for inclusionary zoning that the state will allow.