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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started: Friday, October 04, 2019 10:23:34 AM
Last Modified: Friday, October 04, 2019 11:07:25 AM
Time Spent: 00:43:51
IP Address: 198.85.222.158

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Q1 Please enter your name.

Damon Seils

Q2 What is the most important affordable housing issue in your community?

Rental housing	Most important priority
Affordable homeownership	Important but lower priority
Senior housing	Important but lower priority
Critical repairs	Top priority but not the most important
Mobile homes	Important but lower priority
Permanent housing for homeless	Top priority but not the most important

Q3 Should local government provide more money, level funding, or less money to support affordable housing in your community? If you said level or less, why? If you said more, how much more AND how do you plan to achieve this?

Much more money ,

Please provide an explanation for your response.:

The two main reasons I responded "much more money" are that (1) I believe the county's recent affordable housing bond should have been for a higher amount, and (2) the multijurisdictional Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness has identified several system-level gaps that will require substantial investment to address. It is at the county level, through coordinated efforts and investments among the local jurisdictions, that we will have the greatest impact. I'm proud of the progress that the Town of Carrboro has made in the past couple of years. Dedicating the recent 1.5-cent property tax increase entirely to affordable housing enables us to add new affordable units and maintain existing affordable units. A recent staff report indicates we are on the way to our goal of creating 85 affordable-ownership homes and 470 affordable-rental homes by 2024; and the challenge remains and is growing. I am particularly interested in finding ways for the town and our local partners to fill the gaps identified in our homelessness system gaps analysis.

2019 Candidate Survey on Affordable Housing

Q4 Utilizing surplus government-owned land is an important tool for creating affordable housing. What are some parcels of public land you think should be made available for affordable housing? Are there any parcels that should not be?

The prime example is the Greene tract. Consistent with the community-led Mapping Our Community's Future initiative and the ongoing partnership between the Towns of Carrboro and Chapel Hill and Orange County, I support the Rogers Road zoning initiative and other strategies to encourage compatible residential and commercial development (including affordable housing) in the Rogers Road neighborhood, including on a portion of the Greene tract.

"Parcels that should not be" don't come to mind. However, new residential development, especially affordable housing, should be concentrated in areas that are accessible to public transit, in order to reduce residents' transportation costs.

Q5 What is one local 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.

I am excited about the potential for the CASA housing project on Merritt Mill Road, especially the example set by the local government partnership that came together to support CASA's application for a low-income housing tax credit award. The grant made by the Town of Carrboro to this project was the largest the town has ever awarded and will support affordable housing at an income target that desperately needs more attention. Although the project was not funded in the most recent cycle, I look forward to opportunities to continue to support CASA in this effort.

Q6 How would you ensure that people who have been affected by the lack of affordable housing have a "seat" at decision-making tables about the future development of affordable housing in our community?

As Carrboro's representative on the Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness, I have seen firsthand the challenge of centering the voices and experiences of people in the community who have experienced homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. Our charge is to include this representation among the Leadership Team's membership. We have had some success in including important groups, including young people and LGBTQ community members. We have become more intentional about seeking out other members with lived experience, but the barriers to participation are high, and retaining these members has been challenging. We have discussed compensating volunteers and finding other ways to enhance the ability for a broader range of people to participate. We are fortunate to have dedicated service providers leading the team who bring their own diverse experiences to the table.
