



2021 Municipal General Elections Candidate Questionnaire

Please answer each of the following questions in 150 words or less. Orange County Affordable Housing Coalition (OCAHC) is a non-partisan association of organizations and individuals interested in affordable housing, and does not endorse candidates. Instead, OCAHC members will share the completed questionnaires from all candidates throughout our networks, including with local media and organizations that make endorsements. (If you do not return a completed questionnaire, we will note that when sending the questionnaires to our networks.) Our goal is to help voters make informed decisions to elect leaders who will prioritize the policies and resources needed to address our community's housing crisis.

Thank you in advance for completing this questionnaire. Should you have questions, please contact OCAHC Advocacy Committee Co-Chairs George Barrett (george@jacksoncenter.info) or Jackie Jenks (jjenks@ifcmailbox.org).

Please submit your completed questionnaire via email to ochousingcoalition@gmail.com by Saturday, September 25th at 12:00 pm.

Randee Haven-O'Donnell Carrboro Council

1. Describe the current housing situation in our community. What are the main drivers of affordability challenges (property taxes, development types, lack of land, etc.)? 145/150

Carrboro was affordable when I arrived in '78. Over the decades, Carrboro's affordability has eroded, disproportionately impacting the Black, Brown, BIPOC community.

Carrboro's housing stock does not support the historic Black community, service and manual laborers, fixed-income residents, the chronically housing insecure and in recent years, the start-up homes for low and middle-income families. The key drivers challenging sustainable living and housing affordability include and are not limited to: property taxes which have risen higher in Carrboro than across the county, exponential, escalated value of land, inflated market values- rising twice as much than elsewhere in the region, limited stock in sustained, affordable rental units - especially for folks at or below 30% AMI, limited land suitable for building, all have crushed affordability for Carrboro. The cumulative impact of these and other factors have edged all but the most affluent residents of Carrboro.

2. What is the most important role of an elected official/local government in ensuring all community members can afford housing? 145/150

- Enhance financial support for the community-based programs and their experts who know the diverse and broad spectrum of housing needs and ranges of affordability.

- Forge public and private partnerships to expand the current housing stock for community that is below or at 30% AMI.
 - Conserve and preserve a healthy stock of current affordable housing; support and expand the housing voucher programs for affordable housing.
 - Ensure that the current affordable housing stock is under a proactive maintenance program and that the affordable housing stock is energy/utility efficient. Provide resources to sustain and up fit the affordable housing stock. Address utility costs needs by providing heating/cooling energy efficiency and weatherization resources and subsidies.
 - Rigorously pursue varied financial opportunities to enhance funding and further public/private partnerships. Implement affordable housing incentives such as the Carrboro payment in lieu to the Affordable Housing Special Review Fund.
3. **What is your prior experience in creating and promoting affordable housing? 150/150** I have experience advocating and assisting folks in attaining affordable, dignified housing. I have housed friends who have found themselves homeless, who were edged out of their rental units or ejected from low income (HUD Section 8) housing, and whose housing situation was and continues to be unsustainable and unstable month to month. We have exceptional resources and expertise in our housing coalition who have helped me help folks in need. I have the first hand knowledge of and experience working with the agencies that partner addressing affordable housing. As a Council, we have direct impact on the Town of Carrboro budget support for non-profit organizations that promote and provide affordable housing. I have resourced the organizations and housing services to re-home individuals to safe, secure housing. I have am a strong proponent of tiny, PeeWee and auxiliary unit homes to meet the needs of secure, safe dwellings.
4. **In order of priority, what are three specific policy or funding initiatives related to affordable housing that you will support if (re-)elected? 123/150**

Three priorities to address 30% AMI housing:

1. Pursue public/private financial partnership opportunities and funding for publicly held land for affordable housing. Coordinate local governing bodies to identify public lands in Orange County. The Orange County Home Consortium report has identified this as a potential resource. Each of the governments can identify and land bank sites that would be appropriate locations for affordable housing (ex: access to public transit, schools, etc.).
2. Reimagine the possibilities of affordable housing incentives for developers including and not limited to; the density bonus, payment in lieu, open space reduction, density bonus-linked size limited requirement waiver.

3. Explore the potential of an Affordable Housing Bond, Evaluate extending the half-cent property tax to boost the Affordable Housing Special Fund.

5. How would you create affordable housing for individuals 30% AMI and below?

150/150

- Fortify work with the non-profits, implement the recommended plans to expand a diverse stock of affordable housing. Expand housing stock serving the most vulnerable and housing insecure at or below 30% AMI.
- Conserve and preserve the stock of affordable housing; expand the housing voucher programs. Consider “lifetime housing” providing housing security that meets individual and family needs which expand and contract over the course of a lifetime. Meet affordable housing stock needs at or below 30% AMI with the inclusion of PeeWee, Tiny Homes, auxiliary dwellings, modular homes, to provide dignified housing for the housing insecure.
- Pursue public/private financial partnership opportunities and funding and affordable housing incentives; ex: payment in lieu of contributions to the Affordable Housing Special Review Fund.
- Provide resources for maintenance and to sustain and up fit the affordable housing stock. Address utility costs needs by providing heating/cooling energy efficiency, weatherization resources and subsidies.

6. Our community has seen growing polarization on arguments for increased housing density weighed against environmental impacts. What is your position on this discussion? 135/150

Downtown housing density adds to the robust vibrancy that bolsters the local living economy and is an efficient land use. Dense, compact, appropriate square foot, right-sized, human-scale housing with expanded storey height is a wise use of the urban footprint. Density downtown, is a sound land use. The consolidation and densification of the downtown urbanized area can serve to protect and preserve the natural habitats and wildlife corridors and their ecosystem. Sprawl and suburbanization guts the environment. I urge density, compact, and 5 storey height housing, especially for downtown. Consider our big sister neighbor, Durham, and how well compact, dense housing has proactively re-ignited and re-emerged downtown Durham and freed up spaces that are dedicated to amenities that enhance downtown urbanized living on a appropriate square footage, right sized, human scale.

7. How would you implement systemic solutions to inequitable property taxes in our community? 148/150

Chris McLaughlin noted a national tax study: in relation to sales price, Black and Hispanic neighborhoods have a higher tax assessment. Their properties were overestimated for market value growth. In Carrboro, property tax assessments over time have caused residents to sell their home and move beyond the municipal tax district. The

entire system must be overhauled for equity and inclusion. The culture of housing is exclusionary and systematically racist. The culture of housing must change. To address the inequities in property taxes, start with how the resident is taxed, identify bundled public services in the tax. Reduced disparity in tax assessments are shown when the assessment is formulated with the neighborhood zip-code, overall neighborhood conditions, (the amenities or lack thereof), and the up-to-date neighborhood property sales prices. Plan to overhaul the system to intentionally be predicated on and reflect equity, justice and wealth generation access.

8. **How do you view affordable housing as a racial equity issue? 145/150**

Housing security is a benchmark of racial equity and justice. Affordable housing is a primary need for survival. Communities must provide housing for all people, across the wide and changing needs of a lifetime. This requires deep, coordinated, and diverse resources. At any time in our lives we are all vulnerable to housing insecurity. This includes a stock of emergency and rapid-rehousing. It ensures that folks who are housing insecure and the workforce are respectfully housed. Fifty percent (50%) of Carrboro renters are rent challenged. This fact highlights the ever present edge on which our community lives. Town budgeting and expenditures must advance racial equity and justice. I will continue to advocate the urgency and firmly pursue dismantling factors that undermine our ability to provide affordable housing. Our municipal budget must support and advance the unified goals of the coalition of affordable housing organizations.

Please answer the following questions with Yes or No

9. Will you support a new bond for affordable housing within the next two years?
 Yes or No
10. Are you willing to dedicate at least 15% of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds toward affordable housing?
 Yes or No
11. Do you support building affordable housing for people 30% AMI or below on the Greene Tract? (Town of Chapel Hill and Carrboro candidates only).
 Yes or No
12. Do you support building affordable housing for people 30% AMI or below on the former American Legion Property? (Town of Chapel Hill candidates only).
 Yes or No