



**Chapel Hill - Carrboro NAACP
2019 Council/Alderman Candidate Questionnaire**

Please type out your responses in full below; take as much space as you need to answer the question in full. We thank you in advance for your participation.

Full Name:	Damon Seils
Age/Race/Gender (with preferred pronouns):	46, white, man, he/him
Occupation/Title/Retired:	research communications
Position sought:	Carrboro alderman
Headshot Photograph (published with your questionnaire responses):	

Background

1. Please provide an overview of your local civic leadership/organizational affiliations. What specific insights into our local community have you garnered from this service work?

I have served on the Board of Aldermen since 2013. Before joining the board, I had several years of experience in town and county government. I was twice elected chair of the Carrboro Planning Board, making recommendations to the Board of Aldermen on development and land use policy. I also served on the town's Greenways Commission. I represented Carrboro as the chair of the Orange County Human Relations Commission, advising the county's Board of Commissioners on social justice considerations in such wide-ranging issues as fair housing, emergency preparedness and response, civil liberties, employment benefits, and marriage equality.

In other work, I am a member of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro branch of the NAACP, most recently serving on the branch's Martin Luther King, Jr Service Award Selection Committee and as a discussion leader for the branch's community book read of Henry Louis Gates, Jr's *Stony the Road*. I also served on the board of directors of the Carolina Abortion Fund, a volunteer-run, nonprofit organization that provides grants to low-income individuals in North Carolina who have chosen to have an abortion but cannot afford the whole cost. As an active volunteer in the Duke University community (where I also hold my regular job), I was a longtime leader of the Duke LGBT Task Force, which works closely with students, employees, alumni/ae, and administrators to promote equality and inclusion for gender and sexual minority communities on campus and in the health system. Finally, I am a member of Local Progress, a national network of progressive local elected officials, and I am cochair with Durham City Council Member Jillian Johnson of an effort to build a North Carolina chapter of the organization.

My involvement in the work of these organizations has offered me opportunities to deepen my understanding of the experiences of marginalized communities—particularly communities of color—and to gain insights into the systemic barriers faced by these communities and the systemic solutions required to dismantle those barriers. I have seen these barriers in their starkest relief in my time as Carrboro's representative to the Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness, where we are working hard to shift our work to end homelessness by viewing it through the lens of justice rather than charity and by making systemic change rather than simply providing services. This is a long-distance race, and it has been important to me to try to maintain an awareness that we participate in systems that cause harm to people every day. Our responsibility is to dismantle those systems and reduce and repair those harms.

2. What has motivated you to run for the office you seek?

I am running for re-election for the opportunity to lead in critical work ahead for Carrboro. We will soon begin developing a comprehensive plan to guide decisions over the next 20 years on our greatest challenges, from affordable housing to climate change. I will continue to press for better local and regional transit, better infrastructure to support a growing and diverse community, and decision making that holds racial equity and social justice in the foreground.

A few of my top priorities include:

Implementing Chapel Hill Transit's Short-Range Transit Plan. This plan, developed over many months with extensive community input, will guide local transit service in Carrboro and Chapel Hill for the next 10 years. As a member of the Chapel Hill Transit Partners Committee and the Short Range Transit Plan Policy Committee, I'm looking forward to working on this important step for our local transit system. Goals of the plan include increasing ridership, creating high-frequency transit corridors, emphasizing equity for transit-dependent community members, and improving weekend service, among others.

Developing a comprehensive plan for Carrboro. I have been advocating for a comprehensive plan for several years and am glad that we are now embarking on one. Rooted in deep community engagement, Carrboro's comprehensive plan will express a shared community vision and establish a framework for achieving that vision. It will help guide decision making over the next 20 years on development and redevelopment, town services, and more in a way that is consistent with our values.

Completing existing flood mitigation/repair projects and beginning additional stormwater infrastructure projects. The town is seeking FEMA funding to complete some of these projects. In 2017, the Board of Aldermen took the important step of creating a stormwater utility, which will provide long-term, sustainable funding for stormwater infrastructure projects throughout the town. This important work is also connected to our broader efforts to implement the town's Energy and Climate Protection Plan and our Community Climate Action Plan--which are in themselves major priorities for the town.

3. Have you attended the Racial Equity Institute (REI) training or any other racial equity trainings in the past three years? (Note: This training is not the same as diversity or cultural competence training.)
 - o If you have, what was the most impactful aspect of the experience?
 - o If you have not, if elected, do you commit to register and attend this type of training?
 - o Describe instances or situations in which you have applied racial equity frameworks in your work.

I have participated in REI's phase 1 and phase 2 racial equity workshops. I also participated in a workshop on the role of government in advancing racial equity, which was offered by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and the Center for Social Inclusion. As a member of the board of directors of the Carolina Abortion Fund, I participated in a workshop on racial justice and reproductive justice, which was offered by the SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective. In 2015, I attended a conference on policing at the UNC School of Law, "Police Violence in the Wake of Ferguson and Staten Island," at which scholars, lawyers, civil rights activists, and community organizers offered insights into the racialized history of law enforcement in the United States, overviews of racially disproportionate traffic stop data in North Carolina municipalities (including Carrboro), and strategies for reducing racial disparities in policing. Finally, in 2017, I attended the "Policing Color: Black, Brown, and Blue" forum, offered as part of Duke University's Provost Forum on Race, Community, and the Pursuit of Justice.

The greatest impact of these experiences was in gaining greater understanding of a critical history of race, racism, and white supremacy in the United States and the importance of developing a systems-level perspective on policy making to address inequities.

Recent examples of applying a racial equity framework include my support of and advocacy for

the Rogers Road zoning initiative, which emerged from community-led work by the Rogers-Eubanks Neighborhood Association, the Jackson Center, and others to develop the Mapping Our Community's Future report. I also supported work led by residents of the Lloyd-Broad neighborhood and facilitated by the Jackson Center—and questioned some of my own previously held assumptions and positions—to develop zoning strategies to help avoid displacement of long-term residents in a quickly gentrifying area of the town.

I advocated for the inclusion of funds in the town budget to support racial equity training for town staff. I was eventually successful in expanding on this effort by urging the town to become a member of GARE. A committed team of staff is now leading this effort and is working with GARE to learn about racial equity toolkits and how they can be used to make changes in decision making around town services and operations.

Housing Affordability and Local Taxation

4. What strategies do you support for increasing the supply of affordable housing in Chapel Hill/Carrboro?

I support the Board of Aldermen's current effort to bulk up the town's relatively new affordable housing fund. We agreed to raise the property tax rate by a total of 1.5 cents over a period of three years, and to dedicate all of that new revenue to the affordable housing fund. With the help and advice of the town's Affordable Housing Advisory Commission, this new sustainable source of revenue will give us greater flexibility to support the addition of new affordable housing units to the community's housing stock and to help maintain the affordable units that exist today.

It is also important that we continue to press for greater authority at the local level to implement inclusionary zoning and to bolster tenants' rights. Local jurisdictions across North Carolina need more options, and I will continue to work with my colleagues in other towns and cities to build a strategy for making change at the state level.

In addition, I believe we need to be open to new zoning strategies that make it easier for property owners and developers to build more and different kinds of housing. In general, I believe development should be concentrated in areas within walking distance of public transit. In Carrboro, that means we should be planning ahead for potential development and redevelopment in places like downtown and near downtown, the Jones Ferry Road corridor, and the NC Highway 54 corridor. Such development, when it occurs, should incorporate affordable housing and include a diversity of housing types, especially "missing middle" and other multifamily housing. Decisions about long-term growth and development in Carrboro should be guided by a community-driven comprehensive plan, and I am glad the town is now embarking on a comprehensive planning process over the next 2 to 3 years.

5. Do you have specific ideas on how to make affordable housing, both rental and owned (and especially housing accessible to transit) available to people who work and provide essential services in our town?

Please see my response to question #4 above.

6. How can we better engage residents of public housing in municipal governance?

In 2018, the Board of Aldermen received a presentation on the Town of Chapel Hill's Public

Housing Master Plan from the town's executive director of housing and community and the director of public housing. The purpose of this plan for our area's public housing communities, including the Oakwood community in Carrboro, is to inform decisions about renovations, rehabilitation, and redevelopment of public housing properties. I was impressed with the approach that Chapel Hill staff took in engaging public housing residents in the development of the master plan and by seeking to (re)establish a resident council and other efforts to promote self-governance in public housing communities. This kind of intentional approach can inform other efforts to ensure that public housing residents have a meaningful role in decision making on issues that are of importance to their communities.

7. What initiatives or changes in existing policy would you support to make it possible for seniors to "age in place"? How can the town support more affordable assisted-living options?

A priority in Carrboro's affordable housing goals and strategies is to remove barriers to retention of homeownership, particularly among seniors. Strategies in place to accomplish this goal—which require further strengthening—include grants for critical home repairs, energy efficiency, upgrades for seniors and other residents who experience changes in mobility, and initiatives to reduce utility payments. Using the town's affordable housing fund, as well as federal and state programs, to support these initiatives is an ongoing project, and we should coordinate with similar programs offered by Orange County and the Town of Chapel Hill. Expanding housing options through direct subsidy, and working with developers to provide more options (like the planned senior community in the Lloyd property development) are additional opportunities.

We can also learn a lot about where our priorities should be by hearing from senior residents, including those living in senior communities. Recently, the Board of Aldermen followed the suggestion of Alderwoman Barbara Foushee by holding a listening session with residents of a local senior apartment community. We heard about experiences in their residential community, their thoughts about connecting with the broader community, and their suggestions for making improvements. For example, this meeting led to offering a shuttle for residents to attend the town's Fourth of July event on the Town Commons.

Finally, implementation of Chapel Hill Transit's Short Range Transit Plan will improve transit service and access to transit, especially for transit-dependent communities. Access to transit can lower housing costs and offer more transportation options for seniors whose mobility may change over time.

8. In what ways would you like to see our town's tax base diversified? How should we move towards that?

I believe one key to attracting more businesses to Carrboro is to retain existing, longstanding businesses, such as the Cat's Cradle, that play a significant role in drawing residents and visitors to Carrboro and thus supporting other businesses. We should always be on the lookout for ways to create conditions that support new and existing businesses, including new zoning strategies like the one I led in 2018 to create more opportunities for new and existing arts- and performance-based businesses downtown. We should also complete the 203 South Greensboro project, which will house a branch library and town recreation and parks offices and encourage residents and visitors to spend more time downtown and support local businesses. We should maximize this opportunity to build as much space as we can afford in the 203 South Greensboro project, including space that could be leased to new commercial and other ventures.

We can also take cues on economic development and community wealth building from the

recommendations of the Mapping Our Community's Future initiative. I am a supporter of the Rogers Road zoning initiative, which seeks in part to update our zoning and land use regulations to allow for more home-based businesses and other commercial opportunities in this part of town in a way that promotes the existing skills and leadership of residents.

I'm glad that the Board of Aldermen approved an updated economic development plan in late 2017 that expresses our priorities and values for supporting local economic development. The town's economic development director has begun to provide a monthly economic development report, and we have an opportunity to make sure these reports are tied to updates on the implementation of the new economic development plan.

9. How should the town address future possible displacement of residents of mobile home parks?

A good place to target our efforts, as challenges develop for residents of mobile home parks in Carrboro and throughout the county, is to support existing and emerging initiatives at the county level. These initiatives include, most importantly, the county's new Risk Mitigation and Housing Displacement Fund. The county has also developed a local housing voucher program, and mobile home park residents who are at risk of displacement are a priority in this program. In addition, the zone navigators in Orange County's Family Success Alliance, in which Carrboro is a member organization, have been working closely with residents of mobile home parks to determine what options best meet their needs.

10. What is your position on the Rosemary Street Vision and its impact on the Northside neighborhood?

Because the Rosemary Street Vision and Implementation Plan is a Town of Chapel Hill initiative, I am not as familiar with it as I with Carrboro planning initiatives. On the Carrboro side of the line, I was a supporter of the Lloyd-Broad zoning overlay initiative, which was intended to guide new development to be consistent with the existing character of the neighborhood, in response to gentrification pressures. The Board of Aldermen approved the new zoning overlay district last year, and I'm looking forward to the first report on its implementation.

11. How can the town address the pressures of rising regional population growth, increased student population, and rising land prices in ways that do not disproportionately negatively impact communities of color and low-income neighborhoods?

As I mentioned in my response to question #10 above, I supported the new Lloyd-Broad zoning overlay district, which was intended to guide new development in this historically African American neighborhood to be consistent with the existing character of the neighborhood, in response to gentrification pressures. This effort was led by neighborhood residents with facilitation from the Jackson Center.

With respect to the question about students, it's important to be clear about the demographic trends. The absolute number of students living in Carrboro has remained relatively stable over the past 20 years or more, and the proportion of residents who are students has declined. What does seem to be changing somewhat is where students are able to or choosing to live and how that shift is influencing the local rental housing market.

In my response to question #4, I mentioned the importance of planning for diversity in the community's housing stock. We can respond to growth pressures, in part, by planning for new housing supply of a diversity of types and for a diversity of income levels—especially “missing

middle” housing—and fighting for access to greater tools to promote affordability. I also believe that, in general, new development should be concentrated within walking distance of public transit, further enhancing its availability to a broader range of renters and owners.

Transportation, Infrastructure and Environmental Justice

12. What can the town do to make public transportation function better for low-income workers, hourly workers, senior citizens and the disabled?
- Describe your own public transportation usage; in what ways has your use of public transportation informed your perspective on our present system?

I commute to work daily by local and regional bus, and I travel around town primarily by bicycle and by walking. However, rather than focus on my personal transportation choices, I believe it is more important to focus on the policy-level decisions elected officials can make to expand the range of transportation options for more people. I personally have the benefit of easy access to Chapel Hill Transit’s fare-free local bus system, employer-subsidized access to regional bus service, and living in a part of town with fairly good pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. My challenge as a policy maker is to find ways for more of us to have these options.

There are a number of ways to continue improving public transportation for transit-dependent populations. As a member of the Chapel Hill Transit partners committee, I help shape the priorities for how new allocations of funding from the Orange County Transit Plan are spent locally. These priorities include improvements in nighttime and weekend service to improve access to jobs with nontraditional work hours; access to retail, medical, recreational, and education destinations for lower-income and transit-dependent residents; and better service for the Rogers Road community and other lower-income communities. Resulting service improvements have included better service on the HS route and service later at night on the J route, among others.

I also helped shape the goals of Chapel Hill Transit’s Short Range Transit Plan, which we hope to implement next year. These goals include improving weekend service and emphasizing equity by expanding access for transit-dependent community members. As a result, service improvements will include 7-day-a-week service in our community for the first time.

We should also continue to make improvements to regional transit service. A few years ago, we successfully advocated to bring regional service directly to downtown Carrboro. It is now possible for commuters to travel from downtown Carrboro to downtown Durham, and points in between, on weekday mornings and evenings, expanding access to jobs, health care, and other opportunities.

Finally, infrastructure improvements that increase access to transit are also important. Carrboro recently completed a mile-long sidewalk on Rogers Road, including the installation of a new bus shelter at Purefoy Road, to improve transit access for residents in the surrounding neighborhoods. These kinds of local investments will continue as we spend funds allocated through the Orange County Transit Plan on bus access improvements, including new sidewalks on South Greensboro Street, Jones Ferry Road, and Barnes Street—all of which will improve access for lower- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

13. Define “environmental justice” as it relates to our community. Do you see any model environmental justice work being undertaken locally?
- Describe how you believe a racial equity framework should be applied to new sustainable infrastructure or greenway projects?

I believe environmental justice work, as with any justice work, means meaningfully engaging communities—especially communities who historically have been marginalized or excluded—in decision making around policies that affect them. It means understanding the systemic and historical reasons for disparities and centering the voices of those who are most affected by those disparities, making sure these communities are involved in both developing and implementing solutions.

A great model to look to locally is the work of the Rogers-Eubanks community. After decades of community leadership and advocacy, local governments finally followed the community’s lead by closing the landfill. Meaningful change continues to happen as the local governments lift up the community-led work of initiatives like Mapping Our Community’s Future, which centers the Rogers-Eubanks community’s voice in identifying a holistic set of goals for environmental preservation, affordable housing, and community wealth building. It is the responsibility of local governments to support work like this, and to not allow it to be co-opted by other interests.

Policing

14. How would you work to ensure improved relationships between citizens and law enforcement? What suggestions do you have to increase diversity (by race, class and gender) in our police department?

Our police department has done a pretty good job of recruiting and retaining a diverse police force, in both patrol and leadership positions, which I think is a foundation for good relations in the community. In our small department of only about 40 sworn officers, in a very competitive hiring environment, new hires over the past few years mean the department now includes 5 women and 7 officers of color. The department has also established a routine of holding regular community meet-and-greets at local businesses around the town, and cosponsors a variety of events, from community engagement events on the Town Commons to youth events like the RENA bicycle rodeo. In addition, the town recently identified an LGBTQ liaison within our police department. I am hopeful this position can be seen as a resource for LGBTQ residents, and I will work with Mayor Lavelle and the town manager to develop this role as a visible community resource, especially for transgender residents and other particularly vulnerable groups.

15. Do you support citizen review of police departments? Why or why not? What is your position on citizen review of the UNC police department?

I support incorporation of civilian input into policing and have worked to expand public engagement in the development of policies, training, and evaluation. Among other efforts, in early 2014, I began meeting with the police chief and representatives of the ACLU of North Carolina to shape a policy for the use of dashboard-mounted and body-worn police cameras. That policy has since been approved, and cameras are in use. Likewise, I worked with the town manager and the police department to make progress on other recommendations of the Orange County Bias Free Policing Coalition. The department now offers fair and impartial policing training to officers and has de-emphasized regulatory and equipment traffic stops, implemented a requirement for written consent for searches, and confirmed that marijuana enforcement is a low

priority. The department is also now tracking its enforcement data and providing regular reports to the board, including information stratified by race and ethnicity. This is ongoing work, and I am interested in working with community groups and engaging the community further to identify the optimal way to involve residents in the provision of this critical town service.

I also support community involvement in UNC policing. I introduced a [resolution](#) in April 2019 (unanimously approved by the Board of Aldermen) in response to incidents of racial intimidation on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus. That resolution urged the university to rescind trespass warnings against student antiracist activists; to press charges and issue trespass warnings against persons who carried firearms onto the campus; to clarify when the community may expect the presence of an armed person on or near the campus to trigger an Alert Carolina emergency notification; and to invite community members not necessarily affiliated with the university to participate in the campus safety commission convened by the interim chancellor.

16. [If a candidate for Chapel Hill Town Council] What is your present understanding of the co-jurisdictional authority of the Chapel Hill Police and the UNC Police?

- What is your assessment of the current relationship between the two entities?
- What responsibility should the Town of Chapel Hill ultimately bear for the conduct of UNC-Chapel Hill campus police on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus?
- Do you feel it is important that the public know the specifics of the co-jurisdictional relationship between the two departments? If so, how do you propose to engage the community on the matter?

17. [If a candidate for Carrboro Board of Alderman] What is your assessment of the town's response to the racial profiling by the Carrboro Police Department as outlined in the recent Dr. Frank Baumgartner study on race and policing?

In addition to the work described in response to question #15, and in response to community input and the work of Professor Baumgartner, I am glad the department is now providing regular reports on racial and ethnic disparities in traffic stops and other data. This reporting should continue. The reporting and analysis also needs to improve. For example, the Orange County Bias Free Policing Coalition has rightly cautioned that the department should be careful about how it uses and interprets data from the RTI-STAR tool for examining traffic stop records. This tool offers a certain amount of information, mainly measuring purported bias at the individual level. However, these data should not be used to draw broad conclusions about disparities in traffic stops and the policy-level and system-level factors that shape them. With recent changes in enforcement policy, Carrboro's traffic stop outcomes seem to have settled into a pattern. Now that we are collecting and reporting the data regularly, we have the opportunity make further changes that will reduce disparities. I look forward to continuing to work on this issue with the Coalition and other community partners.

Business and Labor

18. What more can our town do within its jurisdictional authority to promote living wages?

Among my first accomplishments in office was to revive the board's effort to bring the town's lowest-paid full-time and permanent part-time employees up to a new living wage of approximately \$15 per hour. This effort coincided with the launch of the Orange County Living

Wage Initiative, and I am glad that the Town of Carrboro remains a certified living wage employer.

The work of the Orange County Living Wage Initiative has been critical in the local movement to promote living wages, especially given the limited authority of local governments to regulate wages and other employment practices. We need changes in state law, and I have been working with colleagues in other towns and cities in North Carolina to highlight this issue and organize for change. In May of this year, I introduced a [resolution](#) in Carrboro in concert with resolutions in other jurisdictions calling on the General Assembly to promote the well-being of North Carolina's workers by raising the minimum wage for all workers, providing paid leave, empowering public sector workers to negotiate the conditions of their employment, and to repeal "right to work" laws.

19. What do you believe are the main reasons or barriers as to why people of color are not attracted to Chapel Hill/Carrboro to start (or relocate) a business?

Larger demographic shifts in the community have also shifted the landscape for business. These shifts come on top of longstanding systemic problems, such as poorer access to capital among people of color, making it harder to make the investments required to start a new business. Chapel Hill and Carrboro have notoriously difficult processes for permitting and development, and wherever there are barriers we can expect that they have a disparate impact on communities of color. I'm glad the Board of Aldermen approved an updated economic development plan in late 2017 that expresses our priorities and values for supporting local economic development, including a focus on racial equity. The town's economic development director has begun providing monthly economic development reports, and we have an opportunity to make sure these reports are tied to updates on the implementation of the new economic development plan, and the work of our Economic Sustainability Commission, and creative thinking about strategies for supporting businesses owned by people of color.

20. What are the existing governmental policies or programs that harm or promote business development for entrepreneurs and/or people of color?

Barriers include the time it takes to get through governmental approval processes, from development review to permit approval to lack of a clear strategy for promoting business development by people of color. These barriers have a disproportionate impact on people who have less access to wealth. As discussed in response to question #19, we have an opportunity through the town's new Economic Development Plan, to build strategies around the plan's focus on racial equity. We also must honor the work of the Rogers Road community in the Mapping Our Community's Future report by supporting the Rogers Road zoning initiative, which is intended to improve access by the community to economic opportunities.

Demography and Engagement

21. In what ways can local governance better promote student engagement?
- What are you doing to engage the student community in your campaign?
 - What should be the role of local elected officials in engaging with student-lead, anti-racist organizing on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus?

Students make up one-fifth of Carrboro residents and are invaluable to Carrboro's thriving civic,

business, and activist lives. In my time on the Board of Aldermen, I have been a strong and consistent voice for students who live in Carrboro. This has included advocating for accessibility to voting on campus; encouraging students to participate formally on advisory boards and informally in other town activities; leading the Board of Aldermen in expressing support for student-led movements and other efforts on campus and in the community; and speaking out for students when they are denigrated in community discourse about such issues as housing and neighborhoods.

Students are also involved in my re-election campaign, and a student team is organizing an event for other students living in Carrboro to learn more about my platform and priorities.

Finally, as I noted in response to question #15, I introduced a [resolution](#) in April 2019 (unanimously approved by the Board of Aldermen) in response to incidents of racial intimidation on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus. I and other members of the board have been outspoken in our support of student anti-racist organizing on campus, including the removal of the Confederate Monument from campus.

22. Assess the town's response to shifting demographics in our community. In what ways can the town improve access to services and communication generally with non-native-English-speaking populations?
- How can our town do a better job of welcoming immigrants to our community without creating tensions with other underserved communities?

Carrboro has been out front on issues of importance to local immigrant communities, and we on the Board of Aldermen have been vocal in support of legislation and other efforts to protect and welcome immigrants. I am proud to have [led an effort](#) by the town to assist Carrboro residents who are DACA beneficiaries with costs related to the rescission of DACA, including paying renewal fees and providing referrals to legal assistance for DACA beneficiaries with expiring benefits. This effort will be renewed this year.

We have great community partners in Carrboro. Leveraging those partnerships has enabled our small community to make a big impact in helping immigrants feel welcome. For example, the town provides direct financial support to El Centro for their Carrboro-based worker center. Rather than creating tensions, I believe this work has fortified relationships across the community. A clear example has been the increasing visibility and involvement of the local branch of the NAACP, and in particular the branch's president, in building partnerships and demonstrating solidarity with immigrant rights groups as immigrants come under increasing attack.

23. How would you characterize our town's readiness to ensure a full and accurate count in the upcoming census? How can our municipal government increase citizen participation?

It is critical that we fight for a fair and complete census. Carrboro is included in the Orange County Complete Count Committee (represented by Alderwoman Foushee, with myself as alternate). Local governments can be effective in a few ways: (1) Educate ourselves and the broader community about what our county stands to lose if we do not have a fair and complete census. (2) Determine what resources our county needs to ensure a complete count. (3) Partner with Orange County, Chapel Hill, and Hillsborough to provide the necessary resources. A focus of this new committee's work is to address concerns about counting everyone, especially vulnerable members of the community who face barriers to housing, services, and broader

community participation. I am particularly interested in ensuring that our local governments work closely with immigrant communities, with the Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness, and other partners so support the complete count effort. We can also learn from the experiences of other communities, and I plan to participate in a webinar later this month with local elected officials from across the country to learn about strategies that local officials can use to ensure a fair count. Orange County's public awareness campaign will begin in January.

Matters of State-Level Jurisdiction

24. How should municipalities like ours express our values or policy positions in matters which are generally the domain of the state legislature (e.g., living wage policy, immigration policy, reproductive rights, etc.)?

The Board of Aldermen consistently advocates for legislative and policy changes to our legislative delegation and with our partners in the North Carolina League of Municipalities. Among many goals expressed to our delegation this year, four priorities included restoring the budget cut from the State Maintenance Assistance Program for local transit systems, flooding and stormwater assistance, funding for schools to address utilities and stormwater mitigation, and changes in state law regarding access to police video camera footage. As individual leaders in the community, we also have the opportunity and responsibility to amplify the efforts of communities and groups who are working to make progressive change locally and throughout the region. I have been proud to represent the interests and values of Carrboro residents in regional and statewide policy making and advocacy, including through participation in the Moral Monday movement; serving in formal and informal roles with organizations like the Carolina Abortion Fund, the NC AIDS Action Network, and others; and supporting candidates around the state who can help change the makeup of the General Assembly. As one of North Carolina's few openly gay elected officials, I also have a responsibility to support my fellow LGBTQ North Carolinians and to show up for them whenever I can.