

KELLY MILLER

ASHEVILLE CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What types of development do you think are appropriate for downtown Asheville? What types are inappropriate? Explain.

I have been an advocate for smart growth for decades. Making wise land use and related zoning decisions affecting downtown Asheville is one of my highest priorities. Balancing the values of environmental stewardship, social responsibilities and economic vitality to meet not only our current needs, but also the needs of future generations without affecting our quality of life, is central to my FRESH Leadership platform.

I support community development that builds density, resulting in increasing our tax base so we are able to provide quality services without drastic increases in property taxes. I support improvements to our downtown infrastructure to support multi-modal transportation as evidenced on my recent votes to pursue and accept ARRA grants (stimulus dollars) to provide bike paths, sidewalks and hybrid buses.

I served on the downtown master plan steering committee until my appointment to City Council in December 2008. I made the motion for approval on Council and voted yes on the plan. The planning department is now reviewing the plan and will be making recommendations to Council on development issues in downtown. I am looking forward to reviewing the proposed UDO changes.

2. How would you improve Asheville's Homeless plan and service system?

Our 10-year plan to end homelessness provides policy makers with the necessary roadmap to truly make a difference. Diligence is key to determining what is working and what is not effective. We must continue to benchmark and measure our annual progress. We have dedicated staff to ensure we are doing all we can to annually measure our progress.

I also advocate a community discussion with service providers on how we may physically consolidate services targeting our homeless population into one central place. Temporary housing, work force development, satellite health care screening services including mental health, transportation, credit repair, job placement, a permanent mailing address...all of these are now provided by a variety of providers in various places. A review of best practices to see if providing these services in one central place is more effective than our current system is a worthwhile endeavor.

3. What initiatives would you undertake to make Asheville a greener city?

Five must-do initiatives I would undertake to make Asheville a greener city are:

- A. Approval and/or implementation of Asheville's recent master plans include transit, parks/greenways, bicycle and downtown. Green is a huge piece of all of these plans.
- B. Lead the discussion on providing a permanent funding source such as bonds to fund the long-term implementation of these master plans.
- C. Work with A-B Tech's Enka Campus Incubator, Warren Wilson College, Economic Development Coalition of Asheville Buncombe (EDC), Community Energy Advisory Committee (CEAC), WNC Green Building Council, Progress Energy, Advantage West and other players in the game to develop clear strategies aimed at making the Asheville area the #1 place in America that is home to companies specializing in green products and services.

- D. Launch the *Reading, Riding and Retrofit* program that Councilwoman Robin Cape and Mack Pearsall are championing.
- E. Continue to request from City staff specific policy recommendations that move help us closer to becoming more sustainable and green.

4. Do you support a living wage for all city employees including contract labor? Domestic partner benefits?

I do support a living wage for all city employees. I need more facts on the contract labor piece of this question. Does this apply to all employees of a subcontractor or is it an average? Does it apply to a 16-year-old high school student working part-time or just full time? How many subcontractors is the City currently using and what is the average wage? Perhaps the most important question that needs to be asked is what are the unintended consequences of including contract labor?

Yes, I support domestic partner benefits.

5. What are the three best City Council achievements of the past four years?

- A. Funding various master plans
- B. Adoption of the ten year plan to end homelessness
- C. Hiring of City Manager Gary Jackson

6. List and explain three of your priorities for City Council during the upcoming four years.

- A. Implementation of master plans and finding dedicated funding

sources to bring these plans to life. Citizens provided thousands of hours of input into the master plan processes (downtown, transit, parks/greenways, bicycle, sustainability). Moving these plans from concept to actionable items to funding requires dedication and focus.

- B. Strengthening our economy and local workforce. I am committed to helping businesses survive and prosper in Asheville during these hard times. As policy makers, we need to encourage entrepreneurship in Asheville. When businesses flourish, especially locally owned businesses, higher wages can be paid and more dollars remain in our community. Council recently passed changes to the UDO allowing it easier for our business community to continue providing jobs during these tough times. We also consolidated many City departments' permitting operations under one roof via the soon to open "one stop shop" off of Charlotte Street. This lowers the costs of opening or expanding a business.

I advocate that Council continue supporting work force development initiatives to help align our workforce with the new economy. The Chamber's efforts in this area, along with the Economic Development Coalition of Asheville Buncombe (EDC), are really making a difference in lowering our unemployment rates.

- C. Evaluating the effectiveness of City funded social services related program. I serve on both the Finance and Housing & Community Development committees. Council members Newman, Cape and I (the HCD committee) will be working with staff to identify the best ways and means to deliver limited dollars to numerous social programs. We must be strategic in how we affect change where change is needed. I believe providers of services will welcome this dialog.

7. What sets you apart from the other City Council candidates? Explain.

I was appointed to Council in December 2008 because community leaders in Asheville for over ten years have witnessed first hand my ability to bring divergent perspectives together to forge compromises that move Asheville forward. Second, I am one of the few candidates

with real public policy experience, having worked for both state and local governments including a state legislature, and now as a Council member. I know first hand the hardships of owning a struggling retail store. I started my own business during the 1980s recession, made payroll, paid the bills and build this retail operation into one of the most successful start-ups in the region. Volunteering hundreds of hours over a nine year period to help create the nation's largest new urban park, Pack Square Park, proves my dedication to seeing projects to completion, and ability to pursue a vision despite countless challenges. Finally, I offer balanced and common sense leadership that does not pit one viewpoint against another.

8. If elected, how would you engage the citizenry of Asheville in helping to make decisions and accomplishing your goals?

Smart Council members continue pushing the policy envelope while improving public involvement. Making input easy helps us learn all sides of issues. The downtown master plan is a great example of how we engaged the public. Council's FY 09-10 Strategic Plan provides clear priorities for Ashevilleians to review and provide input. URTV, the City Channel and the City's Website are three important vehicles to engage the public. I support these, as well as Mayor Bellamy's periodic open town halls meetings. Finally, the public is always welcomed to attend any Council meeting including committee meetings.

9. Do you support President Obama's agenda, including his energy, health care and education initiatives? Explain why or why not.

Possibly, but I, like the majority of Americans, are dismayed that the Congressional leadership has not made good on the promise of transparency and inclusiveness, which were at the core of President Obama's platform. Health care's HB 3200 is a perfect example of bad process and lack of transparency. As Representative Shuler correctly points out, one staff member wrote this bill. Numerous caucuses were not invited to participate. If processes are not changed and the American people are not allowed to engage in honest, fact-finding

debate, then I fear the legislation passed relative to energy, health care and education will not address key issues like affordability and unintended consequences. Facts, not hearsay, should drive the policy discussion specific to these three important issues. When I see that happening on Capitol Hill, then we can have a discussion about supporting agendas that are good for all of America.

10. Who are the five largest contributors to your campaign and how much did each contribute?

Mac Pearsall (\$1000), Thomas Pearsall (\$1000), John Mark Stroud (\$500), Guy Clerici (\$500), Craig Madison (\$500)