



Lex-Wiki.Org is a local Wikipedia for Lexington, MA. Lex-wiki.Org covers Arts and Entertainment, Local Flora and Fauna, Local History, City Life as well as Town Government and other issues of public interest in Lexington.

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Biographical Question

1. *What can you tell us about yourself? Please include a brief outline of your relevant experience, including public offices held and other volunteer service.*

I'm a "townie". I've lived here all my life. I'm a graduate of Boston College class of 1971 with a major in economics. I've operated my contracting business in Town since High School. I've been involved in Town government since first being elected to Town Meeting in the seventies. I've been a Selectman for 12 years. I've been on numerous committees, many involving building projects. I served on the Permanent Building Committee and chaired it for many years.

Candidate Platform

2. *Why are you running for the Board of Selectmen?*

I'm interested in continuing on the Board to work toward a solution to replace our aging fire and police facilities with a modern new public safety facility to serve both police and fire.

3. *What do you believe are the priorities for our town in the short-term and long-term?*

Our short term and continuing priority is to balance annual operating budgets without needing an override. We must also deal with the responsibilities of being such a desirable community. This means accommodating school enrollment increases in the short and long term, making wise choices that address needs adequately and fiscally responsibly. I support building a new Hastings School for up to 650 students, with flexible space to accommodate supportive programs. I support expanding Diamond Middle School to educate 1,000 students, including supportive space. I don't support expansion at Clarke. I don't support short term space additions at any other school. I believe we can and should accommodate enrollments with present space until Hastings is built and Diamond is expanded.

Policy Questions

4. *Lexington public school enrollment is projected to increase in the short and medium term. Five of our six elementary schools and our two middle schools are running out of capacity. At the same time, Lexington public safety buildings (fire station, police) need to be reconstructed or renovated.*

What are your priorities regarding capital construction needs, and how do you see the role of the Selectmen in this discussion?

My priorities are those stated above. I see the Board's job to be one of balancing dreams with realities. All departments advocate for their needs and wishes. It's up to the Board of Selectmen to weigh the requests of all Town operations and limit expenditures to satisfy reasonable needs. Controlling spending makes the Town more livable for everyone. I don't mind spending if the long term value is clear.

5. *What are your criteria for selecting members for town boards and committees appointed by the Board of Selectmen?*

A member must be willing to serve and to put in the time necessary to do the job. I look for expertise and a strong interest in the committee's charge and in serving the community.

6. *What are, in your view, the key areas in need of transportation safety improvements in Lexington, for pedestrian, bicycle and automobile traffic?*

Education on transportation safety rules such as crossing at crosswalks is key. Slowing down. Continuing the Safe Routes to School Program. Advancing design changes in the center for greater pedestrian safety and having bicyclists obey traffic rules like everyone else should.

7. *What can Lexington do to ensure affordability of housing in the low and medium income brackets?*

Encourage modest housing developments. Continue strong support for LexHab’s housing efforts. Ease regulations on shared housing options.

8. *Hartwell is the largest commercial district in Lexington, and on average the area generates \$8M in tax revenue annually. Yet Hartwell Ave area office space vacancies have been approximately 22% in 2014, compared with 4% for Hayden Ave and Spring St area office spaces. What should Lexington do, in your opinion, to build up the infrastructure and amenities around Hartwell Ave?*

We should invest in street scape improvements with multi modal paths, lighting, landscaping and benches. We should also invest in a well-defined gateway from Bedford St. to Hartwell Ave. that’s user friendly to public transportation users, bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicles. We should offer limited financial incentives for those willing to redevelop properties in the short term. We should listen to property owner’s views and quickly respond to their needs for permitting and support. I believe we should set back the property classification rate to 170 from 175 lessening the discrepancy between residential and commercial tax rates. We need to show this business community we value them and want them to grow and succeed.

9. *What combination of incentives and regulations should Lexington employ to ensure its small businesses are vibrant and well diversified?*

The welcome mat should be out for all businesses. The most important thing we can do for them is ask them “How may I help you?”. And then respond immediately.

10. *Over the last year, can you describe one issue which the Board of Selectmen handled very effectively? And one issue that could have been addressed better?*

We’ve handled most things quite well. One in particular was the stepping in to operate the Visitor’s Center when the Chamber was having its issues. It was a thoughtful and well executed take-over, not losing a single day of operations.

One that could have been more efficient and timely was the settling on a program for the Visitor’s Center to advance a design for its renewal.

All candidates are asked to limit the response to each question to at most two or three paragraphs, and to provide the questionnaire responses by Saturday, Feb 7th, 2015. Responses will not be edited, and will run as submitted. They will be posted on lex-wiki.org in PDF format and announced through other town media. Questionnaire coordinator: Andrei Radulescu-Banu (bitdribble@gmail.com, 617-216-8509).
