

Salem Planning Commission

Leah McMillan

Occupation: Architect

Address: [REDACTED]

Home Phone:

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Ward: 2

Date Applied: 11/7/2016 1:52:31 PM

Business Name: Mill Creek Architecture

Business Address:

Supplemental Answers

What is your primary business or occupation?

I am an architect. I own my own firm and consult with other architects.

Please list the citizen advisory committees, civic, charitable or other organizations upon which you have served including the dates and length of service.

I have served on the Salem Housing Authority Advisory Committee and Salem Housing and Urban Development Advisory Committee both 2011-2013, SESNA Board 2009-2012, my local professional board Salem AIA 2009-2012, and the SESNA Heritage Neighborhood Committee 2016.

What do you believe you can contribute to the Planning Commission?

I believe I bring a unique perspective from the design side of the field and I speak the code and planning language. I also enjoy riding my bike with my family and am aware of the needs for better access. I want to see Salem thrive as a unique city.

1. Have you attended a meeting of the Planning Commission in the past 12 months? If yes, how many?

I have not attended in the past 12 months, but I have attended meetings.

2. Please briefly describe your work or volunteer experience which relates to the work of the Planning Commission.

As an architect I am familiar with the planning policies and codes created and enforced in the city of Salem. I am familiar with the applications and process and have worked with several staff members on projects. I have previously worked for four firms in Salem. Currently, I have only 1 consulting project and one project under construction in the Salem area.

3. List any of your skills, knowledge, or perspectives that you believe add value to the Planning Commission's land use decision-making process.

I grew up outside of Salem, but I have owned my home and lived here for over 10 years. I have seen the city grown and change and I have seen it struggle. I want Salem to be unique, not another Portland, not a cheap place to buy houses. I want it to be a thriving community that I can raise my family in, bike safely to school and work in, create attractive nodes and responsibly planned developments. I believe that both working and living in the city as well as raising my family here show that I am committed to seeing Salem thrive. As much as I'd like to think this can be done by architects, one building at a time, I know that more improvements can be made by working on fundamentals with other community members.

4. Please list your experience working on diverse teams, public bodies, or committees.

I've worked on several committees made up of individuals who bring unique backgrounds and skills to the table but share their compassion for the community. Sometimes I find myself leading the group while other times I am happy to sit and listen and learn.

5. The Commission strives to make decisions which implement the Salem Area Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code. Describe your affiliations within the community that could affect your ability to participate in land use decisions if you are appointed to the Planning Commission.

If I was working on a project myself or with an architect or firm involved in an application, I would have to recuse myself from that project. I believe that my membership with the Salem AIA would bring better opinions and inform other architects and designers in the community. I also feel that an architect on this board is slightly different from the past real estate agents and developers that have sat on the board, architects tend not to directly benefit from these decisions, they simply help inform their clients.