

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PLANNING COMMISSION CANDIDATE

CANDIDATE: Kelly Thomas

PLEASE RESPOND IN WRITING BY: Thursday, January 24, 2019, at 5 p.m.

PLEASE SEND TO: Lynda Rose
Assistant to Mayor Chuck Bennett
VIA EMAIL: lrose@cityofsalem.net
OR VIA FAX: 503-588-6354

1. Please explain your understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Planning Commission.

These are outlined in Salem Revised Code Chapter 6, for example: "To recommend to the Council and all other public authorities plans for the regulations of the future growth development and beautification of the municipality in respect to its public and private buildings and works, streets, parks, grounds, vacant lots, and plans consistent with the future growth and development of the City, in order to secure to the City and its inhabitants sanitation, proper services of all public utilities, harbor, shipping, and transportation facilities" among many others.

The Planning Commission must also consider the goals in the Biennial Work Plan, such as working toward increased citizen participation in the planning process.

2. What skills, knowledge and perspectives do you possess that will enable you to be an effective member of the Commission?

Balance is my key perspective. How do we take into account people, planet and profit to come as close to a win-win-win as possible with a particular application? Having attained skills and knowledge by being employed in the roles of planner, developer, builder, contractor, board member, businessman, and policy development will certainly help me to answer this question on difficult applications.

3. One of the most common application types you will hear at the Planning Commission is a Comprehensive Plan Change and Zone Change, where an applicant wants to change their zoning to facilitate a development proposal. What is your perspective regarding responding to the current market versus maintaining a long term vision?

I feel the answer to this question is similar to the one above: balance. A long-term vision is essential, but Comprehensive Plans aren't always perfectly crafted on every piece of

property when they are developed. Thus, when an applicant comes to the Planning Commission requesting a change to the current zoning/master plan, we need to consider if that application fits with the long-term vision--even if not *perfectly* aligned (i.e. Mixed-Use development on a Commercial and/or Industrial property)--or if it abruptly conflicts (i.e. High-Density Residential on Rural zoning). The 'current market' zone change needs to hold up to most aspects of the future vision, while taking into consideration the impact on the surrounding neighborhood, and the impact the development may have on city finances via increased property tax revenue.

4. What are some examples of how you believe Salem has done a good job of land use and transportation planning? What are some areas for improvement?

Having only been in Salem for six months, I don't have many examples, but do like the addition of the pedestrian bridge to Minto-Brown Park. I also find the downtown core has a good mix of different commercial businesses and I have usually been able to find parking there relatively easy. Finally, I have noticed the corridor mixed-use plans and compliment the efforts made thus far. I see affordable housing connected to multi-modal transportation and connected open space as needs for possible improvement.