**2013 Friends of Bolin Creek Candidate Questinnaire**

**For Carrboro Candidates for Mayor and Board of Aldermen**

We asked ten questions of Carrboro’s mayoral candidate and its aldermen candidates that we believe get to the heart of the environmental challenges facing Carrboro and the future of Bolin Creek.

The candidates’ answers are listed below. Please note our deadline was Saturday, Oct. 12, and three candidates met this deadline: Lydia Lavelle, Jacquelyn Gist and Randee Haven O’Donnell. A fourth candidate, Sammy Slade, asked for an extension and thus we granted an extra day to all candidates. The answers from the fifth candidate, Kurt Štolka, were received after the deadline. In the interests of transparency, we have included his answers but feel in fairness to the other candidates compelled to let voters know these circumstances. Al Vickers, the sixth candidate running for office in Carrboro, did not respond. (Also, Sammy Slade listed a total of seven top priorities, but again in the interest of fairness we were only able to list his top three.)

1. **What will be your top three priorities if elected to office in Carrboro? Why? What action(s) will you take to achieve each of these priorities upon taking office?**

***Mayoral Candidate***

**Lydia Lavelle**

My top three priorities if elected as mayor of Carrboro will be to make certain the Board of Aldermen and the Town transitions to new leadership in as seamless a manner as possible; to go about filling my vacant seat on the BOA in an organized way; and to use the position of mayor to promote the town and serve as an ambassador for the community.

Since I am running unopposed, I am taking time this fall to look toward transition items. I am meeting more regularly with our town manager and being included in more meetings in anticipation of my new position. If I am elected as mayor, one of our first tasks will be to fill my vacant seat on the Board of Aldermen, and we need to thoughtfully consider how this will happen.

I am excited that, if elected as mayor, I would be a spokesperson for our town in varied settings. The mayor has the unique opportunity to promote and advocate for the town in many ways, such as representing the Board on groups that are composed of leaders from other jurisdictions. This will be essential given the current political climate in our state.

***Aldermen Candidates:***

**Jaquelyne Gist**

If I am re-elected my top 3 priorities will be:

A. The NC General Assembly this year began weakening the ability of local governments to enact and enforce environmental regulations stronger than those of the state or feds. For us this means that much of the hard work over several decades that many citizens and elected officials have done to protect our water, land and air could be swept away if we do not act quickly. Next year we will most likely be faced with the final enactment of this restrictive legislation. My top priority now, along with the rest of the BOA, is to work to strengthen and add to our exisiing regulations before the GA passes the final legislation removing our ability to do so. The BOA,with the leadership of Damon, and town staff are working on this now.

B. A top priority of mine now on the BOA is the initiation and support of efforts to examine and improve our storm-water system to lessen the impact of the increase in extreme rain events that we may expect with climate change. More details on this initiative are in my answer to question 2.

C. During my service on the BOA I have worked hard to help Carrboro maintain our sense of place and community as we grow and to make sure that all citizens have a voice in the decisions that impact their neighborhoods and community. My actions have resulted in initiatives such as the Greenway Summit (along with Alderman Haven-O'Donnell) the facilitated meetings for the Northern Small Area Plan, and the neighborhood protection overlay zone as well as neighborhood sensitive board decisions on issues such as the routing of streets in new developments to lessen the impact on natural areas and existing neighborhoods. This will remain one of my top priorities.

**Randee Haven-O’Donnell**

* Strengthen and expand Carrboro's tax base
  + Continue to promote our vibrant local economy
  + Further develop and promote Carrboro’s entrepreneurial, professional services and creative class niche
* To persist in environmental conservation and protection
* Preserve, conserve and protect woodlands in our community
* To address aging infrastructure, mitigate storm-water management to protect the environment and
* To ensure that Carrboro protects, conserves and reserves a water supply of the highest safety and quality
* To enhance and promote further water conservation and quality standards in partnership with Orange County and neighboring communities
* Pursue alternative-energy options
* Encourage and integrate multiple modes of transit, bicycle infrastructure and share programs, car sharing, and a fixed-bus guideway networked into Carrboro
* To maintain Carrboro’s commitment to comprehensive recycling, including curbside and for multi-family homes
* Given the closure of the Orange County Landfill: To pursue a mid- and long-term solution for municipal recycling and solid waste
* To steadfastly uphold Carrboro’s commitment to social justice:
* To further develop and make sustainable the stock of affordable housing in Carrboro
* Continued collaboration with El Centro Hispano, Justice United and the Human Resource Center to provide services and a worker center.
* Maintaining the Town’s commitments to the Historic Rogers Road Neighborhood.

**Sammy Slade**

1. I will continue the work of establishing economic development that is rooted in local ownership and import substitution, that is, the local living economy:
   1. Actions
      1. Continue implementing recommendations from the local living economy task force
   2. Why
      1. Strengthens Carrboro’s vitality, tax base and walkability
      2. Keeps money re-circulating locally
      3. Reduces environmental impact
2. I will continue to work on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and establish adaptation goals
   1. Actions
      1. Create a year-by-year plan integrated with Carrboro’s 20/20 vision for achieving the target that we have already set for mitigation (7% reduction per year) and adaptation goals yet to be defined
      2. Maximize the use of our communities’ collective intelligence in finding creative solutions by coordinating and integrating the plan with non-governmental community entities and all town departments
      3. Create advisory board or adding one day a month that the EAB meets to engage with these issues
      4. Continue to be vocal about Duke Energy and its deadly dependence on fossil fuels. Electricity is a major source of our ghg emissions. Because Duke Energy is a monopoly generator of electricity in NC, we have no alternatives to choose from.
   2. Why
      1. James Hansen when he was at NASA and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change head R.K. Pachuari, warn that global emissions must start downward by 2015 to avoid irreversible climate catastrophes.
      2. The recent floods in Carrboro show what we can expect more of as climate change is here now. Adaptation will be costly and once runaway climate change happens, no amount of adaptation will be enough.
3. I will continue working for a ‘Livable scale Carrboro’ comprehensive guiding document that is complimentary to the 20/20 vision. The document would set the vision for future and current developments within a framework that is in line with our regional-carrying capacity (water, power generation, living economy, affordable housing, waste, schools, food, environmental constraints and areas for conserving) while protecting town character, assuring social justice and affordability.
   1. Actions
      1. Identify development expected for next 20, 30 and 40 years as defined by transportation planning development projections
      2. Define growth parameters
      3. Compare desirable growth parameters and values as identified in 20/20 vision document to the transportation planning development projections.
      4. Create document to guide zoning practices.
      5. Downzone areas of town so that developers must seek permission before developing to ideal projections.
      6. Up-zone of pre-identified areas of town.
   2. Why
      1. We need to have more power in determining our own form of development. For example, building codes are out of local control and through upzoning processes we can get concessions for environmental measures and affordability measures.
      2. With current zoning parameters, we are missing opportunities to implement our vision for town and assure that it is done in the most sustainable way within the bounds of what we can control at the most local level.

**Kurt Štolka** , *Note: this response was received after the deadline.*

* Focus on providing quality employment to prevent the current out-commuting pattern of residents to Durham County and elsewhere. We need to collaborate with Chapel Hill’s economic development office and jointly support UNC students/graduates through entrepreneurial incubators and market our educated workforce and quality of life to companies who can benefit by our walk/bikeability and great schools. This will also address the wealth gap and affordable housing crisis we currently face. During the past decades, our town officials allowed many high priced developments without checks like mandatory inclusionary zoning to ensure a mix of incomes were integrated into our town expansion. A comprehensive land use plan needs to be adopted to facilitate sustainable future growth in places our community wants it that will both make it easier for companies to locate and build here as well as ensure our green spaces and community values are protected.
* Improve our walking and cycling infrastructure. Carrboro has not updated its walking space or bicycle lane system since they were implemented in the 1970s. We cannot be satisfied with the status quo when only 1% of our residents commute by bicycle. Carrboro needs better connectivity for walkers and people riding bicycles as well as additional bike parking spaces. Carrboro needs a fully connected walk and cycle network to connect neighborhoods in the north to neighborhoods south of Route 54. It is essential for us to make our streets safe so parents can be certain their children are not in danger of being killed by high-speed vehicle traffic on their way to school or play. We need to re-prioritize our town policies to openly invite people to walk and bike rather than arrive by motor vehicle. This will not only improve the health of our community but also drastically reduce air pollution and noise pollution.
* Create healthier communities. Carrboro needs to establish a social-equity policy where all public spaces, services, and facilities are equally accessible for all residents. This can involve providing outdoor-fitness equipment and playfields, more frequent open-streets events, and ensuring the same quality of buffered sidewalks/bikeways no matter a person’s income level.

1. **Do you think Carrboro’s storm-water regulations are adequate to meet the challenges of new and existing development? If so, what changes will you advocate? Do you think the present ordinances are implemented effectively?**

***Mayoral Candidate:***

**Lydia Lavelle**

Carrboro, historically, has been on the leading edge of storm-water management. In fact, our Town has done substantial work toward implementation of the Jordan Lake Rules, which have now been delayed and are under threat of being dismantled. I believe advocacy for the process and data that led to the development of these rules and doing what we can to make certain the current General Assembly does not reduce our power to regulate in the manner we have been able to in recent history should be our number one priority with regard to storm-water management.

In Carrboro, we have asked staff to take a comprehensive look at flood damage we suffered this summer. The summer flooding at the Rocky Brook Mobile Home Park, for example, could be due to infrastructure problems and/or storm-water pipes whose carrying capacity proved insufficient for that particular unprecedented volume of rain. In any event, we need to look to monitor our storm-water management program in light of what may be changing weather patterns in our area.

***Aldermen Candidates:***

**Jaquelyne Gist**

The devastating flooding that occurred in our community on June 30th left many of our neighborhoods as well as our natural areas severely damaged. The flood was the result of an intense amount of rainfall in a short period of time. With climate change we must prepare for more once rare weather events. At the  first meeting of the BOA after the flood I requested, with the support of the rest of the board, that Carrboro undertake a complete evaluation of our existing storm water management system. This will include working with OWASA to examine our infrastructure for leakages and breaks, determining if the current pipes are of adequate size to handle increased rainfall and planning to replace them if they are not. I also want the town to work with HOA's and property owners to repair and re-enforce storm water retention devises and to clean out culverts and make sure that they remain clean. The town could support the efforts of HOAs and property owners through the joint purchase of materials to keep down cost and by using town equipment. Part of these efforts include increased enforcement of regulations. Finally, as we work in the coming months to reinforce our environmental policies before the GA meets again (see Q 1) storm-water regulations will be on the top of the list.

**Randee Haven-O’Donnell:**

2014-Raleigh legislation impacts local environmental regulation authority. Proactively: tighten storm-water regulations in anticipation of climate change manifested in recent rain events with constrained capacity of infrastructure to manage storm-water volume. Inadequate, 16-inch sewer lines will be less so, as weather events and run-off continue. Retrofit is necessary to accommodate new development and redevelopment where current capacity is limited **and** older lines exist. A cooperative effort is critical to mitigate both the financial impact of making upgrades and NOT making upgrades. We must work collegially with OWASA, neighborhoods, and developers to assess needs and determine cost-effective, but forward-thinking solutions that endure. We need to develop an intergovernmental storm-water management plan addressing larger interconnected issues. I'm especially concerned about effects of aging infrastructure on low-income neighborhoods vulnerable areas in our community.

My three-pronged plan: community-wide awareness of rain-event frequency and intensity, a comprehensive action place and advocate for:

* reduction and change in our current energy-use habits
* we all live downstream: a comprehensive intergovernmental storm-water plan that addresses larger interconnected issues of storm-water management
* Work with neighborhoods in most vulnerable areas
* Harness rainwater, use it! Create neighborhood rainwater catchment systems to re-circulate gray-water use

**Sammy Slade**

Storm-water management in Carrboro is better than what is being done in most places of North Carolina, for example we have been ahead of the curve on the Jordan Lake Rules even as these keep getting postponed, we also have stream buffers that are larger than most places have and we protect ephemeral streams. Having said that we are not to the standard of what our waterways demand if they are to be healthy.

We need to be vocal against the assault by the NC legislature which is taking away our powers to regulate at the local level. We have a one-year window per recent legislation to implement environmental standards before the legislature takes these powers away. We have asked staff to look into the opportunities and to come back to us with recommendations. The legislature has imposed that we must pass these unanimously; I will certainly vote for them if I am re-elected.

One change that I think we should include is making primary constraints more binding, allowing development in primary constraints, in areas of a property that are more than the 40% set aside should not be allowed.

We need to do a better job at assuring measures for preventing excessive sediment run-off during construction are effective. I know that construction runoff has been a problem and I am open and supportive of solutions to this issue.

**Kurt Štolka** *Note: this response was received after the deadline.*

I do not think our storm-water regulations are adequate at all. My home was one of the many flooded and I am not technically in a flood-plain zone. Our storm-water system is only built for ’15 year storms, which is not nearly robust enough to deal with the deluge of rain we received over the summer. There were one or two other instances where our drainage creek almost spilled over onto our street. There is an OWASA easement behind my home which does not have any means of protecting our homes from runoff which flows past our house. If this is any indication of other OWASA easements, I think we need to collaborate with OWASA to address areas in need of maintenance. We also need to build with higher densities in order to preserve our green spaces and prevent additional impervious surfaces from further altering our flood zone areas. As part of my aforementioned walk-and-cycling upgrades, we should incorporate [bio-swales](http://vimeo.com/66131674) to capture rainwater rather than let it funnel into our overstressed water/sewer system. This will combine anxiety-reducing effects for walkers and bike riders, street beautification, and the additional storm-water catchments we need.

1. **As Carrboro grows how do you envision integration of the downtown with the northern part of Town, particularly as it relates to environmental protection? How do you define “environmental protection”?**

***Mayoral Candidate:***

**Lydia Lavelle**

To me, environmental protection means the actions, the policies, the values, and the efforts individuals and communities embrace to maintain, rejuvenate, and protect the natural world, and the quality of life within it. As Carrboro grows, I envision our policies regarding development and integration of the various parts of our town to be guided by our values. The northern end of town should be developed with appropriate density clustered on transportation corridors. We need to upgrade our infrastructures to encourage alternative transportation. We need to continue to educate regarding composting and continue to grow our community gardens. Additionally, I envision continued efforts toward recycling with enhanced attention to reduction (in both consumption and packaging). I hope our future sees us being more responsible with our own trash. Our urban boundary, I believe, has minimized sprawl as well as protected our watershed, and I would not support efforts to change that boundary. Our buffers with regard to our creeks and waterways and our efforts to preserve open space also have helped ensure that our natural environment is protected.

***Aldermen Candidates:***

**Jaquelyne Gist**

Our community members who live in the Northern area of Carrboro are actively engaged in the life of the town and enjoy shopping, dining, attending festivals and cultural events downtown. Many choose to make their home here because of all that the downtown offers. Making sure that those who live in our northern neighborhoods feel connected is important.

Getting downtown needs to be made easier for our neighbors in the Northern part of town. Providing ways for people to get downtown without getting in a car not only improves our sense of community it also lessens our carbon output..As we move forward with greenways and bikeways it will become easier to bike-or even walk for those who enjoy long walks-downtown. I hope that in the near future we will be able to extend more frequent and convenient public transportation to all of our neighborhoods. Small vans and buses with neighborhood stops taking people to and from downtown on weekends and evenings would make visits to downtown more fun and car free.

Environmental protection is a mind set. It means that as personal and policy decisions are considered the impact of those decisions on the environment must be given primacy. For me this includes decisions ranging from how to get to work-I walk or take a bus-to how to build a new bathroom in a park or where new housing should be built. With the urgency of climate change environmental protection cannot be an afterthought.

**Randee Haven-O’Donnell**

With global environmental change my definition of environmental protection has changed. I see environmental stewardship through the eyes of St. Exupery’s quote, “You become responsible forever for what you have tamed”. Our ecological conscience demands stewardship with an unwavering commitment and responsibility to our land, water and air. We need to make a concerted effort to knit together Carrboro’s bulls-eye-like concentric-circles consisting of an outer ring of ET-rural homesteads and farms, wide rim of residential neighborhoods, purlieu residents adjacent to woodlands and lake and vibrant walkable, bikeable residential downtown. The timing is right to initiate conversations that unify our diverse perspectives on Carrboro community. Vision 2020 is a solid platform on which to build community-wide conversation. I propose re-launching neighborhood and cross-neighborhood conversations centered on the recommitment to and updating of Vision 2020. Environmental protection is a critical component as it relates to water quality, storm-water, land and farm preservation, open space, greenways, natural areas, wildlife corridors, solid waste and recycling, energy conservation, alternatives and consumption. The new Town website and the Town Commons ATM kiosk can act as a community bulletin board interlacing neighborhood list-servs, cross-pollinating communication across neighborhoods promoting deeper community interrelationship, interdependence and integration.

**Sammy Slade**

For one, I believe that the northern part of town needs to have a better bike-and-public transportation connection to our downtown. However, in order to maximize the ability for people to walk and bike to work or shop from their homes, the northern part of town needs a dense commercial node. Implementing and identifying such a site would be part of the process that I described in question #1 ‘Livable Scale Carrboro, part of this plan would include identifying areas that must be protected and conserved.

For me environmental protection includes being responsive to the effects that we have at the most local scale and the effects that we have on other places, as well as our contributions to global/local-aggregated effects such as climate change. To illustrate this point the tension we have felt between a) maximizing independence from fossil fuel transportation by maximizing our ability to walk, bike or use transportation can come in conflict with b) more immediate ways of understanding ‘environmental protection’ such as the question of whether to have a bike path along Bolin Creek. More on this in the next question.

**Kurt Štolka** *Note: this response was received after the deadline.*

I envision the integration of downtown with our northern area by increasing walking and cycling access to ease the funneling of motor vehicles on our main roads. We need to make it easier for people to access their commercial, employment, and friends by other means. I advocate for increased mixed-use commercial development within the northern area which will ease congestion and create more vibrant communities in the north. People in our northern and southern areas should not be forced to come to downtown for essentials if they could easily walk or bike to a nearby shop. I believe that Carrboro should embrace a policy of “We love the environment, and we don’t want to live in it”. As our town grows, we need to grow within our already built-out areas in creative ways rather than allow further green-space development. Although we cannot establish an urban-growth boundary like Portland, OR, we can adopt a water/sewer growth boundary that Greensboro initiated to prevent further sprawl. This will reduce our future infrastructure maintenance costs and curb development where we do not want it. Reducing CO2 emissions and energy use should be paramount. Although a small town like us cannot make a huge difference on global climate change, we can set best practices for other towns to adopt. Modern cities are not based on concentric rings, so I advocate our northern and southern areas to add suburban business districts and operate as an urban village that have their own centers but still are connected by transit, cycling, and walking routes to downtown.

I define environmental protection as preventing the infringement of development into our rural areas, protecting our populace from motor vehicle-induced air pollution, reducing fossil fuel electricity use, and creating a community that produces the minimum of waste.

1. **Reports of damage from the recent floods remind us about the value natural surface woodlands perform in slowing and soaking up rainwater during storms. Will you support our call for protecting our waterways by putting paved biking paths away from sensitive creek areas?**

***Mayoral Candidate:***

**Lydia Lavelle**

This question likely refers to the proposed Bolin Creek greenway in Carrboro. The Bolin Creek Greenway Conceptual Master Plan presented in 2009 to the Board of Aldermen recommended 4.8 miles of a greenway trail that, once complete, would provide a safe connection from Morris Grove Elementary School in northern Carrboro to downtown. The plan suggests paving the greenway, which includes a stretch along part of Bolin Creek through UNC property. Environmental advocates are on each side of the issue of whether to pave or not; the plan suggests that paving would result in more environmental protection than the current natural path (which runs along a sewer easement). Others, however, believe that keeping the path in its current state would provide more environmental protection than paving. Because Carolina North is owned by UNC, I believe they, perhaps with input, would have the final say on the surface (if any) of a greenway through their property. I would like to see a greenway through Carolina North. I am not wedded to the greenway being along Bolin Creek (although for many reasons, that location makes the most sense). If an alternative were presented through Carolina North that had the support of both sides, I would consider it.

***Aldermen Candidates:***

**Jaquelyne Gist**

Our greenways must serve all of citizens including those using wheelchairs or pushing strollers. I have long supported and advocated for keeping paved paths away from our sensitive creek areas and will continue to do so. Path locations and materials should be varied to address the specific ecology of each section of a pathway. This will result not only in better preservation of our creeks but also a more interesting walk or ride!

**Randee Haven O’Donnell**

My record of accomplishments and votes demonstrates unflagging advocacy for protecting our treed environment, tree canopy, waterways and riparian buffer. I am a life-long cyclist for transportation and recreation. As such I appreciate UNC’s Campus-to-Campus Route A recommendation connecting the Carolina North project in Chapel Hill with downtown Carrboro. Route A as proposed establishes a bikeway for northern Carrboro neighborhoods to link. The Town of Carrboro Board has done good work anticipating the use of the connector through to Estes Ext. and downtown. The paved greenway will connect Claremont north of Homestead Rd. bridge behind Chapel Hill High School, adjacent to Smith Middle to Seawell School Rd. to the Campus-to-Campus plan. This is an excellent way to maximize our limited funds and provide a paved bike path that is also away from conserved wetlands and sensitive creek areas. Developing a connected network of safe bike routes is a community goal. Environmental conservation and protection include, both, protecting our treed lands, waterways and creek areas as well as providing and promoting clean, energy efficient transit. Too many seek to systematically dismantle years of environmental advances. It is important we remain united as a community to holistically find environmentally sustainable solutions.

**Sammy Slade**

Before getting elected the first time I went on a walk with Friends of Bolin Creek. One of the first actions I did when I came on to the Board of Alderman was to make sure that alternatives to the Bolin Creek option were included in the final report as I felt there were still many questions that the community was raising on the options.

I know that OWASA has long-term plans for moving their sewer lines away from the creek. If the creek corridor is ultimately chosen, I believe that we should coordinate with OWASA to have the bike path along the new sewer line corridor, up and away from the creek and its flood zone. Also I believe that we need to continue requesting to DOT that they not use road standards for bike and walk paths because they are too wide.

**Kurt Štolka** *Note: this response was received after the deadline.*

I believe the development of apartment complexes and neighborhoods near our waterways has the most negative effects regarding storm-water runoff. We need to retrofit those areas with additional storm-water systems through the EPA‘s [Low Impact Development (LID)](http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/green/upload/bbfs1benefits.pdf) methods to bring these areas back to predevelopment runoff levels.

I believe we should make our public spaces equally accessible for everyone and sensitively create routes for people to access these areas. This not only creates a healthier community, but also provides more connectivity for those that choose to travel by bicycle which takes fossil fuel-powered motor vehicles off our streets. Creating a welcoming, connected greenway network will aid us in the future whenever UNC decides to develop their forestlands and provide additional fitness opportunities for all ages.

1. **Carrboro is fortunate to have 325 acres of forest in its midst, made up of Carolina North, the P.H. Craig tract and the Adams Preserve, located just west of Seawell School Road and adjacent to Wilson Park. A 2003 NC State study found these lands worthy for conservation for its significant wildlife and water resources. Will you as an elected official support an initiative to conserve the entire area?**

***Mayoral Candidate:***

**Lydia Lavelle**

I have been a member of the Triangle Land Conservancy for seventeen years and I served on the Durham Open Space and Trails Committee for some ten years before moving to Carrboro. I have backpacked 300 miles by section hiking the Appalachian Trail with a group of friends over the past ten years. My commitment to conservancy, maintaining lands for passive recreation, and developing trail systems demonstrates my love of nature and my interest in conserving these irreplaceable assets. I am very interested in protecting the 325 acres of forest we have in Carrboro and would love to see the area conserved. However, it must be noted that the Craig Tract is still privately owned, and Carolina North is university property. At present, our role can be one of advocating for these lands but our ability to control or prescribe their use is a limited one.

***Aldermen Candidates:***

**Jaquelyne Gist**

Yes, I would support an initiative to preserve all 325 acres of the forest. It is irreplaceable and will be a wonderful legacy for future generations. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

**Randee Haven O’Donnell**

Yes, I will continue to uphold Carrboro’s commitment to protecting and conserving this area. I have been a staunch supporter of conserving this land since serving on the Horace Williams Tract Committee for the Town of Carrboro in 1997. I supported the Board’s decision to partner and purchase the Adam’s Tract, furthering Carrboro’s commitment to preserving natural, open space and wildlife areas. In the Carolina North community discussions, 2005, myself, Mayor Chilton, Dan Coleman, Dave Otto and James Carnahan all represented Carrboro on UNC’s Leadership Council. We urged preservation in perpetuity of the Carolina North forestlands in Carrboro. Carolina North forestlands in Carrboro was granted a 50-year preservation as a result of extensive environmental conservation studies including that of Bio-Habitat whose findings were reported after the area was designated for preservation. With the partnered purchase of the Adams Preserve, Vision 2020, environmental preservation and conservation policies enacted by the Carrboro Board of Aldermen demonstrate a long-standing commitment to conserved and preserved lands, especially those along riparian buffers.

**Sammy Slade**

Yes, of course. The Adams Tract is owned by the Town of Carrboro and we plan to

protect it. Plans for the Carrboro side of Carolina North also show that this area will be preserved. I am for finding ways in which to protect the P.H. Craig property as well.

**Kurt Štolka** *Note: this response was received after the deadline.*

I will support this conservation initiative. It is essential to provide people with green space to reduce anxiety and provide fitness space. We are unique and extremely lucky to have such a large part of our area remain forested where you cannot hear a sound and can enjoy the stillness green space offers. I want to ensure that my children are able to enjoy this area just as I do today.

1. **Runners, bikers and hiking don’t see the property lines in the Carolina Forest and land adjoining it. UNC lands are under supervision by foresters but adjacent tracts are not managed. Will you as an elected official help us bring together the property owners to develop consistent policies for the public use and methods for problems as they come along? What suggestions do you have for seeing the creek is protected, and problems are handled expeditiously?**

***Mayoral Candidate:***

**Lydia Lavelle**

The annual report by UNC to the Town of Chapel Hill (and attendant exchange of information) would seem to be the proper mechanism to coordinate efforts and policies regarding Carolina Forest. This 4th annual report, which recently was released for the current year, explains what development activities have gone on in Carolina North in the past year and how UNC is “complying with the terms of the development agreement. The report is part of the structure established by the agreement for providing continued town-gown communication.” The recent decision to include Triangle Land Conservancy as stewards of protected land at Carolina North signals UNC’s efforts at collaboration regarding the site. Highlighted in the report are numerous activities held on the trails and land of Carolina North, as well as statistical data regarding use of the trails. Coordination with UNC via review of the annual report or yearly check-in would seem the most appropriate vehicle to address waterways in Carolina North or issues that affect owners of neighboring tracts.

***Aldermen Candidates:***

**Jaquelyne Gist**

The use and protection of the Bolin Creek area involves many people with a wide range of interests, needs, rights and viewpoints. My experience has taught me that when any one group perceives that they are left out of formulating policies which affect them they will be angry and resentful and work to overturn the policy, and rightly so. Carrboro has a history of using facilitated community meetings to resolve difficult problems. It is time for us to engage this process to resolve the issues effecting Bolin Creek. It will not be easy but bringing all parties together to develop consistent policies and the means of enforcing them to protect the creek is the only way to create long-lasting meaningful regulations as well as guidelines for use of the creek area. I will introduce this process and move it forward.

Regarding the issue of enforcement of current creek protection regulations we need to increase site inspections and also make it easier for citizens to report problems. The town is currently re-designing our website. I will ask that a link to report problems and violations be prominent on the homepage.

**Randee Haven O’Donnell**

Yes, definitely. I have experience working with community folks to bring property owners UNC and P.H. Craig together. There are multiple Carolina Forest landowners with different perspectives on the land and vision for its future. UNC, P.H. Craig, and Carrboro are the key stakeholders. I recommend meeting with individual landowners and setting the groundwork for a larger, facilitated discussion amongst the stakeholders. First: to have a reading on the current thinking about their land. Next: to identify talking points of policy agreement, then to develop a plan for continuing and advancing the policy conversation.

To ensure the creek is protected and problems are handled expeditiously all parties need to come to consensus on the fundamentals of creek and riparian buffer protection and commit to following through on policies made.

**Sammy Slade**

Yes, I will help bring together the property owners to develop consistent policies for the

public use and methods for problems as they come along.

In order to protect the creek, we need to do more than what can be done on the property itself, because much has to do with runoff from developed areas. Beyond protecting at that level, I am receptive to learning more about issues affecting the creek in its most immediate environs that are identified by both the property owners and the community at large via individuals or through organizations such as Friends of Bolin Creek. I support exploration and implementation of solutions to these problems.

**Kurt Štolka** *Note: this response was received after the deadline.*

I believe collaborating and ignoring political borders are something our area can do a lot better to solve resolve our issues. We need to establish scientifically what is best to maintain our forest and waterways and use that as a baseline for discussions with neighboring landowners. A consensus is not always possible. Creating an established comprehensive forestland management program is more important than getting everyone to agree, which result in diluted policies.

1. **What are the most important steps the Town of Carrboro can take to improve safe biking in the area?**

***Mayoral Candidate:***

**Lydia Lavelle**

Our community has had too many recent bike tragedies. We must continue all related safety initiatives such as promoting helmet and light use, educating riders about the value of reflective clothing and auxiliary illumination, and requiring that riders follow rules of the road. There are two specific public-safety campaigns I favor. First, when motorists drive distracted (cell phone and texting behind the wheel) and/or drive drunk, everyone is in danger. Sadly, cyclists engage in these activities also, and cyclists need to be targeted by education initiatives. Second, too many residents seem confused about the proper side of the road to bike on (and for that matter, the proper side of the road to walk on). Signs in highly trafficked areas can help decrease this confusion for many riders, and we can ask local bike shops to increase discussion of this with customers, especially children. Bike lanes and greenways, sharrows, good lighting, and safe parking are also imperative to aid in bike safety.

***Aldermen Candidates:***

**Jaquelyne Gist**

It is wonderful that more and more Carrboro residents and visitors are walking and biking. But with the increase in ped and bike traffic have come an increase in safety problems. When you talk about safety it seems as if everyone is blaming everyone else. Car drivers complain about bike riders and walkers. Bike riders complain about cars. Walkers complain about bikes and cars and sometimes other walkers! Truth be told everyone be they tire, spoke or foot needs to pay attention to what is going on around them and obey the rules. A public-education effort is underway and needs to be made more visible with more outreach. The Carrboro police force has been asked to increase enforcement. But education and following and enforcing rules are only a small part of improving safety. Creating physical barriers between bike and car lanes is also needed to protect bike riders. These barriers can be relatively simple such as raised "curbs" between lanes. These should be incorporated into all new roads and road improvement plans. I support the creation of a plan to add them to existing heavily used bike lanes.

**Randee Haven O’Donnell**

Carrboro can further ensure that bike helmets are accessible and available to all riders. Recently Carrboro lost two residents to a bike-related tragedy. We’ve learned through incidences such as these that bicycle safety is no small matter. The Carrboro Bike Coalition with events such as Kid-ical Mass do a good job of getting the word out and helping folks gain access through bicycle events. The local bicycle shops, the Carrboro Bike Coalition and local rider groups can play an important park in advancing bike-safety education. Carrboro’s transportation planner has done an outstanding job of reimagining the roadways to provide greater safety and distinction between motorized vehicle traffic and that of bicycles. Creating and distributing a comprehensive map of safe-biking routes in Carrboro would be most helpful. It is my hope that with the Bicycle Summit event in Carrboro next week we will gain some much needed insights and feedback from new eyes viewing our bicycle landscape. I look forward to participating and learning about how other communities design their bikeways and routes.

**Sammy Slade**

The Town of Carrboro can improve safe biking by enforcing speed limits, creating more bike paths, interconnecting neighborhoods for bikes and walkers, and encouraging use of bike helmets and bike lights. We can also continue to educate drivers about road sharing and increase the signs encouraging them to do so. In the coming months the Carrboro Police force will be enforcing laws for bikers and drivers that will improve bike safety.

**Kurt Štolka** *Note: this response was received after the deadline.*

The most important steps we can take to ensure safe biking is to separate our bike lanes from traffic, which is the main fear people have. This separation is a long-established measure for safety and effectiveness throughout northern Europe and increasingly in progressive cycling cities such as New York, Washington DC, and Portland. When people can feel assured they are safe from cars, people will not hesitate to get on their bike. Intersections are the main sources of conflict with motor vehicles, and that is precisely where we have no space for cyclists. [The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)](http://nacto.org/cities-for-cycling/design-guide/) has detailed implementation plans to achieve this. As Vice-Chair of Carrboro’s Transportation Advisory Board, we believe this is achievable and there are creative ways to achieve safer streets at low cost. Town officials can also lobby NCDOT to increase driver education on how to interact safely with cyclists and pedestrians in driver education and testing. A comprehensive education and infrastructure realignment is needed in order for us to keep progressing. Carrboro not only is the Paris of the Piedmont, but can also be the Copenhagen of the Piedmont.

1. **Suggest steps Carrboro can take to improve collaboration with Orange County and neighboring jurisdictions.**

***Mayoral Candidate:***

**Lydia Lavelle**

We have many areas where collaboration is not only a good idea, but essential. Examples are recycling efforts, emergency management, providing remediation to the historic Rogers Road area, looking to locate a county library in Carrboro, providing financial support to the County Visitors Bureau via Carrboro’s new hotel’s occupancy tax, and coordinating economic development efforts. In recent months, because of open communication, the County has been very receptive to the library effort, and appreciative of Carrboro’s financial commitment toward infrastructure upgrades in the Rogers Road community. We look to continue all of these efforts in the coming months with new leadership not only in Carrboro’s mayor position, but also the county manager position. Our new model of having joint meetings between just the BOA and the County has led to more focused discussion of areas of collaboration. Working with Chapel Hill continues to be essential in many areas, particularly transit, as our jurisdictions (and Triangle Transit) start reaping the financial benefits of the transit tax and financial plan that was adopted by the jurisdictions recently. Also, our steady participation at the TAC- MPO meetings helped present a united, informed front responding to recent funding changes from the N.C. Department of Transportation.

***Aldermen Candidates:***

**Jaquelyne Gist**

Carrboro, Orange County and Chapel Hill have a long history of collaborating to meet the needs of our citizens. OWASA and the Home Trust are the results of on-going collaborations. Our fire, police, recreation and parks, transportation and economic development departments, to name a few, collaborate daily. Collaboration among the governing bodies is also constant though not always perfect. Assembly of Government meetings are a good form for sharing information but are not always the best way to fully appreciate the needs and perspectives of other boards. A more effective way to improve collaboration may be a less formal venue. Reinvigorating the inter-city visit model here at home may be an exciting means of building better relationships. Having each local body host a tour of their community and discuss the issues they face may bring a fresh understanding of each other’s needs and new ways to work together to solve problems.

**Randee Haven O’Donnell**

As part of Leadership Triangle’s Regional class I have toured classes around Carrboro. Our Carrboro walkabouts have been hugely successful. This same model can be used for our local municipal Boards, staff and local businesses to explore each other’s world. We can step inside each other’s shoes, and walkabout, get a feel for the culture and verve of each community. Learn our communities from the inside out. Involve community groups in work sessions with Orange County and neighboring jurisdictions. Orange County and the greater Carrboro community need to know Carrboro as we need to know more about them. We are an interdependent ecosystem. Functioning as separate fingers on a hand makes for poor environmental decision-making and stewardship.

**Sammy Slade**

Assembly of Government meetings alone are not sufficient for effective collaboration. I feel that it is necessary to reach out to elected officials individually to understand their positions on issues. At assembly of government meetings there is too little time to understand each other effectively. In particular, there is not enough time for reconciling all the diversity of views during these meetings. I will strive to connect more with my colleagues from other jurisdictions to learn about their positions and share my own, hopefully this way we can have better and more productive meetings when we meet as bodies. The other way in which we can improve collaboration with Orange County and neighboring jurisdictions is by assuring that what we share at these meetings are positions we have taken as bodies and not so much as individuals.

The Rogers Rd. experience is a good example. When we meet in the Assembly of Governments we need to have clarity established from each jurisdiction about where we are with our commitments in order to avoid misunderstandings and wasted time. I am afraid that currently the county is mis-interpreting their own legal council’s advice in regard to current EPA litigation and what it means for the county’s ability to negotiate possible non-binding solutions that can ultimately serve to resolve the challenge of providing sewer to the Historic Rogers Rd community and serve as an offer to the EPA to drop their charges. If the county were able to discuss as a body and decide where it stands before the Assembly of Government meeting the Assembly of Government meeting could be more productive.

**Kurt Štolka** *Note: this response was received after the deadline.*

Carrboro can improve collaboration with Orange County and neighboring jurisdictions by creating a common regional group to facilitate discussion between governments, their related departments (such as transportation, economic development, utilities). This will assure each area has a voice in the region. Municipal borders do not prevent negative externalities which could affect your neighbor or your region.

1. **What kind of commercial, business or industry growth does the Town need? How would you balance it with conservation of natural resources?**

***Mayoral Candidate:***

**Lydia Lavelle**

Our town needs business growth to increase our commercial tax base and provide jobs. We want to continue the quality of life and level of activities and services our residents enjoy. We favor a local living economy and I am proud of the creative way we were recently able to retain both Fleet Feet and Kalisher in town. I favor businesses that consider their environmental footprint and create jobs close to where their workers live. Our businesses should be encouraged to create incentives for employees to walk, bike, or bus to work. I would like to see us cultivate or promote incubator space for start-ups or aspiring businesses, nurture and support our creative sector, and continue growing our tourism/festival culture. Preliminary plans for a new Carrboro Arts Center have the potential to take Carrboro’s reputation as an arts-and-entertainment locale to a whole new level, all possibly as part of a defined cultural arts district. The possibility of a new county library being located in this area would also be good for downtown businesses, as well as be environmentally smart, as this area is accessible by many residents using bus, bike or foot.

***Aldermen Candidates:***

**Jaquelyne Gist**

Carrboro's efforts to preserve our natural resources along with our unique sense of place and community has brought us to a new economic development phase. Our new hotel and the decision of Fleet Feet to make Carrboro home to their national headquarters and training center are a direct result of the past efforts of many to create a community which values and works to protect our natural resources. There are many organizations such as Fleet Feet which want to be located in a community that will be attractive to thoughtful qualified employees. Maintaining and further protecting our natural resources should be done for it's own sake, it is also good for our economy. I have been involved in the formulation of Carrboro's new branding and economic development efforts which are aimed towards attracting new none storefront enterprises to our town to increase the none residential tax base and provide employment opportunities. Potential new businesses could include think tanks, consulting firms, marketing firms and others which depend on a creative workforce which values living in a community with natural areas.

**Randee Haven O’Donnell**

In order to further develop and expand Carrboro’s sustainable and resilient local economy, I worked to establish and serve on the Local Living Economy Task Force. The Local Living Economy Task Force provided the Board of Aldermen with a set of economic principles and specific recommendations to guide Carrboro’s public policy in economic development. We must continue with the recommendations made by the Task Force for the economic sustainability and resilience of our community. Additionally, I am on the Carrboro Farmer’s Market Community Board. We are working to further integrate the sustainability of the Farmer’s Market and local food into the fundamental fabric of Carrboro’s economy. We must promote Carrboro’s ever expanding local community of design thinkers. I am currently working with the Arts Center and local entrepreneurs in the discussion of a Carrboro Arts and Innovation Center. I am the Board of Aldermen Liaison to the Economic Sustainability Commission: actively seeking to bring locally owned-and-operated business depth and diversity to Carrboro. I am deeply committed to and engaged in widening Carrboro’s Revolving Loan Fund, expanding the arts, and growing Carrboro’s presence and professional services niche in software development and web companies.

**Sammy Slade**

The town needs to encourage economic development that is rooted in local ownership and import substitution. So many of our basic necessities are provided by companies that are based in faraway places; this represents a lot of money that leaves our community. One study showed that $100 dollars spent at a local store would keep roughly $45 dollars in circulation locally vs. $100 dollars spent at a chain store of which only $13 dollars would remain in the community.

Let me give an example to illustrate how import substitution and a locally owned economic development strategy can benefit Carrboro. In Carrboro $60 million dollars are spent a year on food (State Department of Revenue: tax revenues from grocery stores and restaurants located in Carrboro). Carrboro expends approximately 95% of 60 million dollars on food that comes from far away. This expenditure translates roughly to <$55 million dollars that the community might otherwise keep at home! More and more it is recognized that there are urban opportunities in agriculture as well, not only in the actual production of the food, but in having towns getting back to providing local inputs such as equipment and tools for local production.

‘Living scale Carrboro’ in question 1 answers how to balance economic development with conservation of natural resources.

**Kurt Štolka** *Note: this response was received after the deadline.*

Carrboro needs additional professional quality employment growth. Half of our population out-commutes for their jobs everyday which precludes us from business tax revenue and circulation of earnings throughout our local businesses. We recently lost out on Strata Solar’s solar-panel production facility off of S. Greensboro Street due to an 18-month approval process. If we had a comprehensive future land-use plan in place, we would have a vibrant and future-focused local company stay in our area rather than relocate its plant and headquarters to Chatham County. We need to re-use our existing developed areas and retrofit them for future needs rather than push out further into our natural areas.

1. **How would you characterize your leadership style?  Give an example of a successful project or process you led or participated in.  What did you learn?**

***Mayoral Candidate:***

**Lydia Lavelle**

Good leaders should be well-prepared, organized, able to listen, honest, adept communicators and accessible to others. Good leaders should treat everyone equally, not be afraid to express their opinion, be able to admit when they are wrong, and look out for the collective good of the group. These are all ideals that I strive to follow in my service as a leader in this community, and I believe those who have followed my tenure have seen these displayed. I recently led an effort to make a change to a proposed revised MPO-TAC Memorandum of Understanding that our local and regional jurisdictions follow that was of importance to Carrboro. In achieving consensus on the item from Durham and Orange officials, I researched it well, explained the item from Carrboro’s viewpoint to the other elected officials, explained how I thought it would help all member jurisdictions, and was able to get the item changed. I learned that effectively articulating the issue, focusing on a common value (accountability to elected officials), and addressing the concerns of affected others (looking for the win/win) helped move a group toward consensus.

***Aldermen Candidates:***

**Jaquelyne Gist**

I consider my leadership style to be grass roots and based on community organization. I believe that my role as a leader is to help my community meet its goals and to assist people in participating in the decisions which affect their lives. One example that I am particularly proud of was my initiative to purchase and preserve the Adams Tract. During a previous term as an Alderman I learned that some members of the BOA planned to purchase the Adams Track and build the new Public Works facility on a large portion of it. I helped to organize residents to oppose this use and spearheaded a work group made up of town and county staff, elected officials and citizens to facilitate the purchase of the property and plan for its preservation. I am very happy with the results. My belief in the ability of our community to advocate successfully to meet its goals was confirmed and I learned that the citizens of Carrboro are strong defenders of our natural heritage.

**Randee Haven O’Donnell**

Community folks and colleagues describe me as trustworthy, collaborative, engaged, and a no-nonsense advocate. The goal of an elected representative in her political work is to improve the quality of living for people. I have demonstrated solid skills in community dialog, advocacy, collaboration amongst colleagues in Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, Orange County, and the surrounding region. I am dedicated to deepening and widening access to and inclusion of the greater community in decision-making. I initiated the New Horizons Task Force to ensure inclusion of newly annexed neighborhoods into the Carrboro community. At times we must bridge what appears to be competing interests. An example is that of day laborer workforce in Carrboro. I have actively worked to establish a worker center. In absence of a worker center, the day laborer workforce has improvised an area for work pick-up. This area is immediately adjacent to a residential neighborhood. The neighbors in the community support the right of workers to seek work. They are negatively impacted by the proximity to their homes. I continue to work with both the neighbors and the workers through the Community Resource personnel the Town of Carrboro and El Centro Hispano have provided to address this issue.

**Sammy Slade**

I would describe my leadership style as dual. I believe in being responsive to the public, while always demonstrating and pursuing commitment to my principles in particular with respect to environment, growth and economic justice. An example of my leadership has been my work on the Historic Rogers Rd. task force. The Historic Rogers Rd. Community is the closest it has ever been --in 30 years of suffering the landfill-- to getting sewer. After learning about the history and the nature of this classic environmental injustice I took the position that we must provide sewer to the community. I identified some of the sticking points. I pushed to expose the degree of commitment for the goal by the other members of the task force. I pushed for establishing what proportion each jurisdiction is responsible for and thereafter how to get over the hurdle of having each jurisdiction provide this amount legally. The last part is still in play and it has required lobbying another jurisdiction during their public hearing on the issue and meeting with other local elected officials to learn about their position and share what I have learned relative to their position.

There are many issues, too many for one elected official to be engaged with all at once. There are some issues that I have a passion for that I choose to invest more energy towards. For issues that I cannot dedicate this amount of energy towards I rely on the wisdom of the public that I hear from, perspectives of leaders both elected and from the community at large that I have learned to trust and perspectives from staff. For the issues that I can dedicate more energy towards I take into account all of the above but augment with my own active research. Thereafter I am able to follow-up proactively with my colleagues and staff and the community at large to make sure we are on track and that we are all on board.

**Kurt Štolka** *Note: this response was received after the deadline.*

I characterize my leadership style as participatory focused. During the TAB’s recommendations of an open-streets event and our current proposal for a downtown slow zone, we encouraged everyone to come up with their ideas for what can be incorporated into our plan. One aspect of decision-making I strive for every time is a decision which results in implementation. Our community will be better served by leaders who implement plans rather than put them on a shelf and hope the issue goes away or continue asking for staff input and further plans that go unused.