

Primary Candidates' Questions & Responses
Primary Election - May 5, 2015

CITY COUNCIL – Southwest District

Keith Griffin

Carol Schleif

1. Compared to other cities, development in Carmel is expensive, and sometimes very difficult, due to the demand for particular materials and the process itself. What are your ideas for streamlining the process and making it more cost-effective, so that Carmel is an easier place to do business?
2. Fishers, Noblesville and Greenwood have all become second-class cities in the last several years? Would you be in favor of second-class city status for Carmel? Why or why not?
3. One of the major reasons for Carmel's enviable tax rate is its business investment. What are your ideas for ensuring that continues? How can we make certain the business voice is respected at committee and council levels to the same extent homeowners' opinions are?

Keith Griffin

1. While I do not fully accept your premise as accurate, there are, of course, things that can be done to improve (and make more cost effective) development.

One of the biggest issues I see in response to your question is the length of time it takes proposals to get through the Council. "Politics" on the Council are at an all-time high. This leads to contention rather than debate. The Council needs to reasonably consider the merits of a project, the quality of the plan and the intended benefit to the community. Right now, these factors seem to be secondary and are therefore adding to the costs of development in Carmel.

On a similar note, delay is one of the biggest contributors to cost overruns in development. In addition to improving the process at the Council level, we need to ensure that proposed projects are moved through the City Engineer's office with greater efficiency. One way to facilitate results is to increase staff or consider bringing on consultants to review projects.

2. This is obviously an issue that is getting a lot of attention recently. The fact that procedures are in place (and that such categories exist) should be the starting point of the debate. We have flown past the threshold for second class city and it is now time to fully review this matter.

I liken the city to a business and the mayor its CEO. A CEO needs a trusted and competent CFO. By becoming a second class city, Carmel would have a financial professional working in unison with the mayor's office. I feel this is an important step toward continuing the progress and growth of the city while at the same time being fiscally responsible and diligent in the handling of the city's finances. Professionalism in this position is required.

Additionally, adding 2 council representatives is also a benefit of second class classification. More members improves (hopefully) quality of debate, uniqueness of ideas and provides better representation to our residents. For these reasons, and others, I think the time has come to fully vet this matter and ultimately consider making Carmel a second class city.

3. Business investment is without a doubt the reason Carmel has the low resident tax rate it enjoys. I will work tirelessly to attract more business growth and development. But more importantly, to your question, it is critical that the Council hear from the existing business community.

Homeowners certainly are an important fixture at council and commission meetings, but that is not to say the business community is without a voice. It is important that that voice be heard and by creating an environment of welcoming the business community to the table will go a long way to ensuring more business leaders attend the meetings. I will promote an open-door policy and encourage the business community to engage me at any time on issues that it feels are important to their interests and those of the community. The current tenor on the Council needs to be improved.

Carol Schleif

1. I have done architectural work all over the country and disagree that materials significantly deter development here & do not do so elsewhere. What I think would help save money would be to reduce our excessive right-of-way widths and requiring homes to face collector roads. Why do we need a 90 foot right-of-way on a two-lane road when only 60 feet are needed? Why not allow developers to install nice metal fencing and evergreen trees along collector roads instead of re-designing the entire neighborhood, including additional roads, in order to accomplish this aesthetic?
2. No. Population count is not the only factor. In my experience, the clerk treasurer has done an excellent job screening expenditures and bringing irregularities to our attention. Having the clerk treasurer position remain an elected office assures that there is another layer of checks and balances for the tax payer.
3. One of the major reasons for Carmel's enviable tax rate is its business investment. What are your ideas for ensuring that continues? We seem to be doing a good job encouraging businesses to come to Carmel. Most of this comes from the mayor's office, so council members don't do much of this. However, I would like to see the

administration treat ALLL businesses equally. The arts & design district is treated with favoritism, where the rest of our business areas are being ignored. That perception has not gone unnoticed by those businesses who have asked me about moving here. How can we make certain the business voice is respected at committee and council levels to the same extent homeowners' opinions are? I certainly think the business voice is just as important as the residential voice. That's why I have asked for your opinion over this term. If I had to pick one area, I would say that businesses might respect the zoning that is in place which protects existing neighborhoods from commercial intrusion. If that was done, I think you will hear less homeowner resistance.