



Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods Working Together

March 24, 2011

Members of the Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods
Interested members of the Lawrence Community

Re: **Questions to Candidates for City Commission**
Questions to Candidates for the School Board

Dear fellow member of the Lawrence community,

The Lawrence Association of Neighborhoods (LAN) continues to monitor the actions of the City Commission, the County Commission, the Planning Commission, the School Board and other deliberative bodies as part of its ongoing efforts to ensure that the interests of all neighborhoods are heard and made a part of decisions by these bodies.

The upcoming election will determine the composition of the City Commission and the USD 497 School Board. LAN wants to inform the community on each candidate's position on a variety of issues that are important to the preservation and enhancement of the community's neighborhoods. A set of questions was sent to each candidate. The responses are attached.

Please examine these responses and consider them as you decide who to support. The future health of Lawrence's neighborhoods will be determined by the decision makers who sit on the City Commission and the School Board.

Remember to vote on Tuesday, April 5, 2011.

Yours truly,

Gwen Klingenberg, President

Responses to questions of candidates for the City Commission

Rental registration and inspection can be effective tools to better enforce the provisions of the development and building codes that govern rental housing. Do you favor rental registration and inspection for all rental properties that are more than 20 years old throughout the city?

Sven Alstrom

YES, I am in favor of rental and inspection for all rental properties. There are plenty of life safety concerns that should require inspection for emergency egress as well as other code concerns.

Hugh Carter:

I have made Neighborhood Preservation one of my platform items for this campaign. I'll cut and paste my newsletter of 2/17/11 to share more thoughts on this. My only concern about rental registration is the logistics. We aren't enforcing codes as they currently exist, so I'm not sure we can handle additional regulation, etc. I remain open to the idea of rental registration, but need to learn more.

Dear Voter,

The City of Lawrence is made up of many unique groups and geographical areas, all of which have their own needs and challenges. There are a total of 36 neighborhood associations within the city limits and countless other neighborhood groups that have not officially organized. It goes without saying that we have a passionate and involved citizenry, which is one of the things that make Lawrence so special.

As a planning commissioner, I recently took part in the development of the Oread Neighborhood Plan. We spent untold hours listening to the ideas, questions, and concerns of both homeowners and landlords. Given its proximity to the university, this neighborhood has many unique benefits as well as challenges. City Commissioners approved the first draft of the Oread Neighborhood Plan in 2010, but the work is far from finished. I would like to be a part of completing and implementing a plan that will encourage investments in the neighborhood that will improve its appearance, vibrancy, and quality of life.

As with many of our aging neighborhoods, we also need to take a hard look at our enforcement of existing building codes. I feel that City codes and statutes should be balanced with the City's ability to fund and staff enforcement. However, at a minimum, we must consistently enforce codes which are aimed at protecting the health and safety of our community. Without better code enforcement, many aging neighborhoods throughout our great city could be at risk. As always, I appreciate your time and support.

Mike Dever:

I am in favor of revisiting the idea of implementing a rental registration and inspection program for rental properties that are more than 20 years old. I have been hesitant to implement new regulations during these difficult economic times where the city has been experiencing continued reductions in revenues. I was also concerned that the city staff would have a difficult time implementing and overseeing the program. However, as time has passed, it has become apparent that additional oversight may be required to protect the health and safety of renters, and the neighborhoods that house some of the rental property in our community.

Mike Machell:

The city lacks the staff and budget to proactively enforce all provisions of the development and building codes that govern rental housing. Given the challenges we face to meet current budget obligations, I am not prepared to increase staff in order to more aggressively enforce the codes. I support the current practice of enforcing the codes on a complaint basis and citing repeat or habitual offenders. However, I am open to consider a change to the practice of rental registration and inspection for all rental properties more than 50 years old throughout the city. It will require additional information and review to determine whether the threshold should be 20 years or something between 20 and 50 years and if existing staff is capable of handling the additional workload should the standard be changed.

Bob Schumm:

I am particularly sensitive to this topic, because there is a single-family home across the street from me occupied by six or seven college students. I favor the strict enforcement of the current codes, before we consider additional codes. If the problem is not resolved through better enforcement, and the city commission were to consider expanding the codes, I would weigh the benefits against the additional costs to the city and the taxpayers.

Neighborhoods are suffering from the chronic nuisance created by party houses. Do you favor meaningful enforcement of noise, nuisance and occupancy codes including fines against the owners of properties generating chronic problems?

Sven Alstrom

YES, I support enforcement of occupancy codes and nuisance complaints including fines. Boarding houses and congregate housing must also be responsible neighbors. I believe that some of the so called congregate housing should actually have to apply for fraternity or sorority house zoning expansions where a simple majority of the residents are a member of such an organization. Those congregate houses are essentially dormitories for those organizations not simply a standard multi-family residential occupancy.

Hugh Carter:

While working on the Oread Neighborhood Plan as a Planning Commissioner, I found that the majority of the issues in the neighborhood were related to enforcement (law enforcement and code enforcement) rather than planning. In my discussions with Chief Khatib, I have expressed that I would like to see community police assigned to the Oread neighborhood to be proactive in addressing the noise and nuisance issues. A platform item for my campaign is to work with Chief Khatib to identify necessary facility upgrades and to get the department properly staffed. If elected, I will make staffing a priority, including community police for the Oread neighborhood. When it comes to occupancy codes, I believe this is a health and safety issue that should be consistently enforced. This was also addressed in the newsletter I attached to question number one. Increased fines for occupancy violations may be one way to fund the additional resources needed to consistently enforce codes, but I am open to all ideas on this important issue.

Mike Dever:

I believe that the city should enforce all of the codes that exist within our community. I am open to using whatever means are reasonable and necessary to enforce the noise, nuisance and occupancy codes in all of our neighborhoods. It is not fair to the neighbors if a "party house" is found to be a chronic violator of the codes, and I think it is reasonable to put some of the burden of enforcement on the property owner.

Mike Machell:

I favor enforcement of existing noise, nuisance and occupancy codes where owners of the property have previously received warnings and have failed to correct the problem in a timely manner. Private property owners have the right to the quiet use and enjoyment of their property. Enforcement of noise and nuisance codes can be effectively addressed and habitual offenders should be fined. Citizens who filed the complaint should receive a timely response on its status. Occupancy codes are much more difficult to enforce and prove that there has been a violation. More inspectors would be helpful for enforcement, but if resources were available, my preference would be to increase neighborhood police patrols to address chronic nuisance as well as promote safer (and quieter) neighborhoods.

Bob Schumm:

This is a quality of life issue and I strongly support the enforcement of the current codes. If the current codes do not go far enough in addressing the current problem, I would be open to looking at expanding the codes to include additional fines against landlords.

It is commonplace for a neighborhood or LAN to learn of a development proposal only when the proposal has been placed on the agenda of the Planning Commission. Do you favor effective participation of neighborhoods in the negotiations over development proposals during the review stage rather than relegating neighborhoods to public comment periods at commission sessions?

Sven Alstrom

YES, we should demand that development applications require notice to neighboring property owners within a 250 ft. radius. So that adjacent property owners are immediately notified of a possible change of use or zoning modification. Many jurisdictions require public notice as part of a development application, often because it may be unknown to the city whether a homeowner's association and its covenants have expired or not.

Hugh Carter:

I was just talking about this subject at the NLNA forum a couple of nights ago. As a Planning Commissioner, I could see that most neighborhoods felt like something was being "shoved down their throat" because they would only really become aware of the details of a project shortly before it was to be approved. However, in virtually all cases, the developer had at least met all current guidelines for notification of neighbors. From what I understand, our current notification guidelines are pretty standard. However, that doesn't answer your question.

I recall voting to delay several projects because neighbors had valid concerns that needed to be addressed. I also recall approving and applauding requests from developers that had gone beyond the minimum notice guidelines to seek review and input from neighbors before submitting proposals to the commission. I would be in favor of incentivizing developers to go beyond the minimum notification guidelines and include neighborhoods in the process as early as possible.

To take this a step further, I have proposed that the City work with neighborhoods to identify infill and redevelopment projects that we would like to see happen. Then I'd like to pre-plan and pre-approve some of these projects and shop them to the development community. This is a proactive approach to growing jobs and income while encouraging the type of development that would be welcomed by neighbors.

Mike Dever:

I have received some solid public input regarding how the city could do a better job of making the public more aware of pending proposals. One concept I really liked was to have a place on the city website where we highlight active plans, proposals, code amendments or activities that would impact the community. This might solve some of the issues neighborhoods or organizations have as it relates to hearing about proposals that are forthcoming. If we put these action items in one place, it will be much easier to stay abreast of the issues and be more actively involved earlier in the process.

Mike Machell:

I support having neighborhoods involved early in discussions of development proposals that impact them. Involvement of all the relevant stakeholders in planning a proposed project is essential to its ultimate success. I want to see neighborhood concerns addressed at early stages of negotiation rather than waiting until the matter is before the city commission. As City Commissioner, I want to not only set the expectation that these discussions occur, but that there has been an open and respectful exchange of ideas as part of the planning process.

Bob Schumm:

Input from residents and neighborhood associations about a development proposal are extremely important and should be incorporated into all stages of the planning process.

The Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization, receives over \$200,000 of taxpayer money from the city for economic development planning activities. Would the city be better served if these activities were performed by planners working for the City and answering to the City Commission rather than for a business advocacy organization?

Sven Alstrom:

YES, these monies should remain with the city and under the obligation of the municipality to first serve the best interests of the citizens as residents and taxpayers and be less subject therefore to special interest or development groups of a particular kind or having a special agenda.

Hugh Carter:

I believe the answer is somewhere in the middle. I would like the City to work more closely with the Chamber on economic development activities, rather than taking over this function.

70-80% of new jobs are created by existing businesses. I have proposed that we hold quarterly "Roundtable" discussions with 5-10 local CEO's and business owners, City staff, the Chamber, and at least one City Commissioner. The attendee's from the business community and the location of the meeting would rotate each quarter.

If we are to create an environment for local businesses to thrive, we need to make a visible effort to get their feedback. They are the small business experts in our community, so let's start by listening to them and following up on actionable items to support job and income growth.

The second area that I believe the City could be more involved with is the site visit process for potential new employers. I have proposed that we include dynamic people from our community in the presentations given to companies who are considering Lawrence as a location to do business. As an example, Susan Tate (Director of the Lawrence Arts Center) could discuss the

wonderful creative culture and amenities that we have to offer in Lawrence. Susan is just one of many examples of what I consider to be our greatest asset, our people. Let's put our best foot forward and "Wow" prospective employers when they come to our community.

Mike Dever:

I believe that the Chamber does an adequate job of representing the city as it relates to economic planning activities. The costs associated with providing these services would likely exceed the amount currently provided to the Chamber of Commerce if the City of Lawrence was to take over the responsibility for these services. I believe that the city benefits from partnerships with many organizations like Douglas County, the University of Kansas and other social service providers. Partnerships allow the city to pool resources from other private and public sources and the public receives a greater benefit from the pooled resources. We need to remain vigilant in our oversight of the relationship with the Chamber of Commerce, and assure the taxpayers that they are receiving the highest possible benefit from the dollars provided.

Mike Machell:

I don't think that the City would be better served with these changes. I view the Chamber's role as separate and unique from that of the City. The Chamber's mission is to promote local and regional economic development through partnerships with other organizations, highlight issues of importance and encourage civic engagement in the business community. The Chamber receives direction from its members through a Board of Directors made up of private citizens from the community. Financial support of the Chamber by the City ensures that there is cooperation and coordination between these organizations. Moreover, the City ultimately benefits from successful economic development outcomes promoted by the Chamber, so it is appropriate that it provide financial support to support these efforts. Finally, City staff doesn't necessarily possess the breadth of business expertise that members of the Chamber – many of whom own or manage businesses – have.

The City planning office receives direction from the City Manager through the City Commissioners. Its responsibility is to provide city planning expertise and information to assist policy makers regarding decisions involving economic development and land use planning. There is also a regulatory role in terms of code enforcement, such as enforcement of storm water and set-back standards. My preference is to balance the regulatory role with that of facilitating the planning process and ensuring that processes and codes are efficient, predictable and timely.

Bob Schumm:

The City Commission must be responsible stewards of the taxpayer dollars and ensure that city funds are spent wisely. At this point in time, the Chamber does an adequate job representing the city on issues of economic development and I do not favor any substantial changes. However if elected, I would continue to evaluate how the Chamber is spending the money and whether or not city taxpayers would be better served by reallocating the money.

Responses to LAN questions of candidates for the School Board

The Lawrence Elementary School Facility Vision Task Force tentatively agreed that 15 elementary schools are not a viable option and to recommend closing one or two schools and consolidating others. When a neighborhood school closes, property values in the neighborhood drop 10 percent, and appreciation slows. This loss of value can be many multiples of the savings USD 497 hopes to realize with a school closing. Do you believe that the viability of neighborhoods should be factored into School Board's decisions rather than just its budget concerns?

James Clark:

I do believe that the viability of neighborhoods should be factored into school closing decisions. While school closings have a direct and sudden impact on neighborhoods, the neighborhood provides a long-term benefit to schools. Since we are an aging community, there are a lot more households in many school neighborhoods that do not have children attending school: yet those households have an effect on the schools and the children attending them, such as attendance at school functions and attention to community safety. (I note that the Task Force did not have representatives from neighborhood associations. The one member who belonged to a neighborhood association was also a parent).

Ola Faucher:

Yes, the viability of neighborhoods should be one factor in the School Board's decisions, in addition to budgetary and other concerns. I'm not totally aware of full range of past considerations made by the School Board. However, partnerships with the appropriate community organizations are essential to assure that school district actions are integrated with the overall community plan and values. Neighborhood schools have been a vital part of making Lawrence a welcoming and enriched community.

Rick Ingram:

There are a number of important variables that should be factored into the School Board's decisions beyond just the budget, and the effect on neighborhoods is one them. As you note, closure (which includes consolidation) may cause property of values to drop, which negates any savings that the district might see. Less tangible effects also occur because these decisions affect the quality of life in the neighborhoods in particular and in Lawrence more generally. The School Board needs to always consider the big picture.

Shannon Kimball:

Many goals and values must be considered in any decision regarding whether and how to consolidate or close a school. Among these goals and values are recognizing and maintaining school communities. Also among these are investing in our school facilities to address equity across learning environments, aging facilities, and operations and maintenance needs. As a member of the Elementary School Facility Vision Task Force, I have spent a considerable amount of time over the past eight months collaborating with representatives from across our community to identify these and other goals and values that the School Board should use to inform its decisions regarding the future of our elementary facilities. As a member of the Board I would look to these goals and values to inform my decisions.

Randy Masten:

Yes. I strongly believe the community needs to be involved in these important decisions. A first and very important step was made in that direction with the establishment of the elementary school task force, which did consider the impact of closure or consolidation on neighborhoods and social networks. Additionally, the task force recommended that this concern be taken seriously as the board and district move forward. As your question points out, however, social networks are not the only thing potentially disrupted in a neighborhood when a school closes. I intend to be guided by the work of the task force as we move forward, but I wish to do so in a way that engages and responds to the communities that are involved. If consolidation is done right, then I think it has the potential to raise property values in the affected areas. However, to get it right will require a lot of hard work, good planning, and community engagement.

Marlene Merrill:

Neighborhoods are part of the pattern of community that exists in Lawrence. Placement of schools in Lawrence has been by chance not design particularly in East and Central Lawrence; some schools are as close as three blocks to one mile apart.

The Lawrence Elementary School Vision Task Force laid out criteria by which to judge the viability of each school; the criteria include the size of school, classroom configuration and class size, excess capacity, repairs and renovations needed, and portables present, etc. If Lawrence is successful in safeguarding what we value most, which is classroom instruction and high student achievement, than we must use the results of the task force. The recommendations include combining buildings where appropriate, reducing the backlog of repairs in our elementary buildings, and renovating buildings so that all our elementary buildings meet the demands of educational programming in the 21st century.

Keith Diaz Moore:

There is a whole system of factors beyond budget that ought to be considered by the school board beyond budget. I view schools as centers of community, in terms of the social networks they facilitate, the space they provide for community functions as well as their role as anchors of neighborhoods (which this question focuses upon). Absolutely the viability of neighborhoods should be factored into the decisions of the School Board. This is why one of the main points of my campaign is the importance of community participation in these types of decisions. It is why I was so active last year when school closure came up as a possibility without community dialogue. Whether its closure, construction or boundaries, those significant decisions of community impact demand participatory processes.

Tyler Palmer:

I do believe that the viability of neighborhoods should be factored into the decisions about whether to close schools. While I applaud the work that that the task force has done and the way that the board brought the community into the process, I still have concerns about the results. Absent the financial crisis, it would be easy for me to refuse to support the scale of closure and consolidation that is currently being considered. Even with the financial crisis, I do not know that I can support all of the recommendations that the task force has put forward.

Having grown up being able to walk to the elementary schools and junior high I attended, I understand what a huge benefit "walkability" is to both students and parents and how important schools are to neighborhoods. As a student, the entire neighborhood was my home

and my school was an integral part of that environment. My friends and I could walk to each other's houses on the way to and from school for class or just to play on the playground after school or on the weekend. If I needed to go to school early, stay late after school to get help from a teacher, or leave school early for some reason, my mom didn't have to worry about how I was going to get to school or get home from school or about having to make special arrangements for transportation. With the limited resources we had when I was young, it was clear to me even then how significant it was to live close to a school. When schools close, the character of the neighborhoods will change. As new families move into the area they are going to be looking for a neighborhood with a school rather than one that used to have a school.

If the community shows significant support that the task force recommendations are the way to go, I may be able to support a consolidation process that continues to include substantial community involvement, is deliberate and thoughtful in the process of how and what to consolidate, and is extremely careful about ensuring as smooth a transition for the students and families involved as possible.

Bill Roth:

Your point about property values is one that has concerned me for over a year. Although there are members of the Lawrence Real Estate Board who understand the issue, the most alert members of the board have been unable to convince enough of the other Board Members that they should raise this as a valid concern and be proactive. With the loss of schools in strategic areas there will be a drop in property value, which will have a fallout effect on tax revenues. This will mean that the tax rate will have to increase to cover the budget OR the services in the budget will have to be reduced. We already have enough trouble maintaining our streets, which are a prime example of the impact of falling tax revenues.

The development of athletic facilities at Lawrence High School cost a reported \$19.8 million, has taken over 2 years to construct. Do you believe that this decision should have been sent to the voters for their consideration?

James Clark:

I would have favored a decision by voters because the decision to build two separate facilities, when wealthier communities in Johnson County seem to be able to share their facilities, seemed extravagant. (Of course, if voters had approved two separate facilities, it would not have made it less so).

Ola Faucher:

High school athletics have strong supporters in the community. However, that enthusiasm shouldn't ignore the affects of facility development on the neighborhoods. I am not yet familiar with the regulations or ordinances which govern how the School Board decides on whether an issue should be brought up for a community vote. I can also respect the need for the School Board to have latitude in making facility decisions. However, barring any regulatory or ordinance requirement, the size, complexity, and environmental impact of the high school athletic facilities (both of them) should have warranted extensive community involvement, including a public vote. It concerns me that we're investing such extensive funds in athletics programs, despite significant donations, while still considering school closing and/or consolidation.

Rick Ingram:

In the bond that was passed for high school improvement, money was "left over" which was used for athletic facilities. Legally the district could only use these funds for high school facilities, so they were within their legal right to do this. However, I believe that the decision was very poorly thought out. For example, we are still paying for these facilities because we are renting the lights and turf. I believe that it would have been appropriate for a referendum on how best to spend these funds (e.g., improved libraries or other projects). In doing so, the district could have built good will, that has now been squandered.

Shannon Kimball :

When undertaking a project of this kind the School Board should seek out and incorporate input from the community and affected stakeholders in both planning and construction. Transparency of process and good stewardship of our tax dollars are of the highest priority in the Board's decisions. As a Board member, I would uphold these values.

In regard to the outdoor athletic facilities improvements, it is my understanding that a portion of the funds used for these improvements came from the 2005 bond issue approved by voters for improvements at both high schools and the junior high buildings, a portion of which had already been used for indoor athletic facility upgrades (locker rooms, weight room, gymnasias, etc.) at these buildings. The remaining funds came from existing capital outlay funds, a capital lease, and private donations. With the exception of the funds raised by the 2005 bond issue, Kansas law allows the Board to spend the other funding sources without a separate ballot issue.

Randy Masten:

I live very close to LHS and have learned a great deal from this particular case about the importance of good communication between the district and the community. The main lesson I have learned is that all major decisions that the school board and district administration make should be approached in the most open, transparent, and community engaged way possible. I will work hard to make sure this happens if I am elected to the board. I believe the process could have been done better in the decision to develop the LHS athletic facilities. Schools are integral parts of neighborhoods and decisions about facilities need to involve the residents of those neighborhoods, as they are directly affected by those decisions. I do not know the rules that determine when it is appropriate to call for a vote on board/district actions, so I cannot say whether a vote would have been appropriate in this case. At the very least the board should have arranged for more opportunities to solicit community input, and should have done a better job of responding to neighborhood concerns.

Marlene Merrill:

These facility improvements were funded using funds from energy conservation lease to purchase and about \$4million in funds left over from the bond issued to improve secondary education. Lease to purchase agreements are approved by Kansas regulators so that private companies and public institutions like school districts can make investments in their facilities that are energy efficient. The School Board as the elected representatives of the community made the decision first to improve practice fields for our athletics and the band. When the site we were using for football proved to be no longer safe and the cost of using this stadium increased, the School Board decided to add bleacher-like structures to each high school. This decision is saving the community about \$100,000 per year and keeps student athletics practicing and playing on site.

Keith Diaz Moore:

Having reviewed the bond issue whose funds were used for this activity, it seems a stretch to suggest that this was a predictable use of the funds when the voters approved it. I believe that yes, the funds for the athletic fields should have been approved by the voters. The school board must begin to think long-term. Our neighborhood elementary schools have been neglected over the past decade in terms of maintenance, and if the community is going to support a bond issue for remodeling and renovation, they need to trust the stewardship of the school board. This athletic field issue clearly is one the next board will need to work hard to overcome.

Tyler Palmer:

It's clear from the acrimony between the board and the neighborhood surrounding the new athletic facilities that the planning and implementation process for the athletics facilities left a lot to be desired. Whether the decision should have specifically been put before the voters, I doubt that it would have turned out much differently. The desire by the community for equity between the schools is evident and the fact that the district wasn't looking for a bond issue or an increase in the mill levy to support the construction made it likely to have passed anyway.

Voters approved the level of the current capital outlay mill levy and elected the members of the board that approved the construction of the athletic facilities, so they did have indirect input into the process. If there is a desire to force the board to seek more public input on substantial projects like this, it is the public's prerogative to limit the size of the mill levy to a level that would require that the board seek a bond issue for a capital outlay of the size required for such projects.

Bill Roth:

The School Board made an unwise decision when they accepted a donation of \$500,000. That amount turned out to be a minor part of the district's total financial cost, when the cost of both stadiums is aggregated. Their action placed the school district in the position of having to pay for an elaborate football stadium at Free State. The district then got themselves into the position of having to build a like facility at Lawrence High, which became exceedingly expensive. It is self-evident that when those amounts of money are to be allocated to facility construction of this magnitude, long range planning to include overall financial impact and voter involvement are mandatory.

The construction of athletic fields at Lawrence High School fell short of the promised plans. The construction did not provide promised drainage systems and landscaping, and the lighting fails to perform as promised. Should USD 497 be obligated to correct deficiencies?

James Clark:

USD 497 should be responsible for its share of drainage remediation, but I suspect there are issues with the city involved, i.e. storm drains, guttering, etc.; as well as landscaping. The construction of the athletic facility is an extreme example of the opposite effect of school consolidations and closings. The neighborhood of the consolidated school/new facility is also adversely affected by school board decisions, i.e. changes in traffic volume, construction and lighting.

Rick Ingram:

Again, this is another example of a poorly thought out decision. Yes, USD needs to correct these deficiencies. To the extent that these deficiencies impact the surrounding neighborhood, they would be well-advised to seek community consultation.

Shannon Kimball :

Again, with respect to this type of project, the School Board should seek out and incorporate input from the community and affected stakeholders in both planning and construction. Transparency of process and good stewardship of our tax dollars are of the highest priority in the Board's decisions. As a Board member, I would uphold these values, both throughout the planning process and throughout any later disagreements regarding the outcome of the project. The Board and other parties involved should continue to work in good faith toward resolving any outstanding issues related to construction of the athletic fields at LHS.

Ola Faucher:

Any deficiencies that now exist with the LHS athletics fields would need to be analyzed for cost of correction by a consultant with some expertise in such facilities. I am concerned about investing funds to correct those deficiencies when so many other financial burdens exist for the school district. The district could instead seek private donations to address the analysis and correction of the deficiencies or to at least supplement any corrections that are identified. Contractors have contractual obligations to meet construction standards established by the funding entity. I hope those avenues have also been fully investigated. An analysis of the deficiencies could also serve to develop a long-term correction plan which is affordable in our current fiscal state; then at least some progress can occur.

Randy Masten:

Yes. The district has not yet fulfilled its commitments to the neighborhood and should do so. That said, the district administration and board should try to open a dialogue with the neighborhood to explore whether there might be any less costly compromises that would meet neighborhood needs. As the district moves forward with renovations to existing facilities or construction of new facilities, it should always ask for and listen to neighborhood input and should try to come up with plans that will have the least possible negative impact on neighborhoods.

Marlene Merrill:

Lawrence district administrators acting for the School Board have extensively met with those aggrieved neighbors and have resolved problems. The City of Lawrence has also met with neighbors as appropriate.

Keith Diaz Moore

There are many lessons to be learned from this negative case study in terms of how the school district ought to interact with the larger community. As centers of community, the School District ought to act neighborly and meet the obligations conveyed through the planning process. I would hope to raise this point if elected.

Tyler Palmer:

If a promise was made to include certain features, the district should honor those promises. If the various deficiencies were the result of a failure on the part of the contractor, the district should necessarily seek remediation from the contractor to ensure that those mistakes are rectified to the satisfaction of those involved.

Bill Roth:

The school district is liable for any problems that they or the contractors that they hired, have caused and therefore they can not skirt their responsibility. If there is a failure to perform on the part of the contractor, it is the district's responsibility to make the contractor comply. Of course we as tax payers will have to pay for design fixes, but the tax payers hired these people to do the job and so we are in the end responsible.