

Judi Anderson
2012 Candidate Questions and Answers

1. The current proposed road resurfacing project covers the length of Governors Drive to a point just past the Manly intersection. Are you in favor of proceeding with this project?

Roads and other infrastructure projects are needed in a private community to maintain appearance and community viability/salability. Regrettably, we cannot rely on the county or state to do this for us. The overarching issues are money, oversight, and timing. If we have appropriate funding and can assure oversight by experts on the execution of the replacement project, this is something we should do. I'll support conducting special community-wide meetings to help assure that all residents understand the scope, cost, and work plan for road improvements/ replacements.

2. The reserve fund for this road project will, barring unforeseen circumstances, total roughly \$1.6 million in usable cash at the end of this calendar year. The payment of 2013 POA dues early next year will most likely raise that total to somewhere between \$1.9 and \$2.0 million. Bids for the project are expected to be in hand by the end of this year.

If the bids are substantially in excess of the funds available for this project, a number of possibilities have been proposed. Please indicate for each whether you would be in favor of or opposed to the idea. You are not necessarily being asked to pick only one option as your preferred choice, so you can, for example, be in favor of more than one option:

- Assessing all residents for the balance needed to complete the project.

If we are talking one mile, a modest assessment might be a viable option. But, we'd have to know the estimates before making any definitive judgments. For more extensive re-paving projects in the future, it makes sense to look at long term financing options. We have residents who have banking backgrounds who can be a valued resource in exploring what works best in terms of financing large projects. I encourage tapping into their expertise. We have engineers, too, who can assist in assuring quality control.

- Borrowing money from either a bank or through a private bond issue.

If we can obtain a fixed rate bond or long term fixed rate instrument at today's low rates, it may be very practical to borrow needed funds to make these improvements. I would be opposed to any financial instrument that involves balloons or other risky elements.

- Splitting the project into two parts and undertaking the second part when sufficient funds have been accumulated.

Work is required on the first mile immediately. As a fiscal conservative, I will always favor having money available before the project starts, along with contingency funds for those unexpected surprises that inevitably emerge in any program.

Splitting the project may offer the advantage of understanding what can go wrong that could be avoided in the future. However, the costs associated with doing a half mile, then waiting for a year or more to complete the second half-mile may not be financially attractive.

Without knowing the actual financials, I'm unable to comment on how this should be handled.

- Delaying the entire project until enough funds are available.

Continued deterioration is a reality we must address. This is not just about the cost of the repairs themselves, but the impact that deteriorating roads will have on property values. We have identified clear needs that require immediate attention and we should attend to these issues rather than allow the project to escalate beyond our control and continually be put in abeyance by our inability to fund it.

3. Are you in favor of continuing our annual deer culling program?

If the majority of GC property owners and the experts who study our herds believe this activity is in the best interests of the community and its natural areas and that it can be safely done in our residential setting, then we should consider continuing to pursue it.

My understanding of the current situation is that culling is in abeyance, because it has not been a successful time to hunt. However, hunting during the regular NC bow hunting season is permitted inside our gates.

Because of my work, I am familiar with government-sponsored studies exploring other herd-management options that do not expose us to the various downsides of hosting hunters in our community. To date, none of these solutions are financially practical. Perhaps at some point, we can evaluate their efficacy. Meanwhile, whenever possible, we should encourage landscaping practices that do not entice deer.

4. This year, we reconfigured the back gate to remove the live attendant from 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM every night. Were you in favor of, opposed to or indifferent to this change?

We live near the Lystra gate and totally favored this cost-saving effort. We should evaluate the potential for similar cost savings in all gate management efforts. We should also follow up to monitor any unforeseen ramifications associated with this new procedure.

5. Are you in favor of pursuing the idea of building amenities for all community residents; such as swimming pools, tennis courts, playgrounds etc.? If so, please indicate the amenities which you feel are important to pursue and, if possible, how they might be funded.

I would support building a playground for all residents' children and grandchildren and would encourage exploring options for identifying solutions for other amenities for those who seek them. I'm not convinced that opening the GCCC pool and tennis courts to all comers is one of those options, but would like to create a subcommittee to explore collaborative ways to reach a solution that is beneficial to all and that makes our community more attractive to homebuyers.

6. The Long Range Plan Committee recently ran several focus groups involving 42 of our community residents. The summary report from that effort stated the following:

"There was also consensus that there is "friction" between club members and non-club members that is detrimental to the overall goodwill and community spirit of Governors Club."

Do you agree that the described "consensus" exists throughout the community?

Do you agree that the "friction" goes both ways; both from non-club members towards club members and from club members towards non-club members?

Regrettably, It's impossible to draw valid, actionable conclusions from a focus group alone. Attitude research is only useful when qualitative (focus groups) and quantitative (formal survey) research tools are paired and prepared by market research professionals. In the seven years we have been here, we have yet to see any "research" that targets GC residents that has been properly constructed so that it provides projectable data or that can be properly analyzed. For that reason, I'm reluctant to agree that this is a pervasive problem that exists among the majority of residents. I do agree, however, that there are rumblings of discontent. Are these rumblings of greater concern or consequence than one might find in other communities of similar size? I have no way of knowing.

What I can share, however, is that there are many GC residents I still do not yet know... even after having been here "a spell." We've been GCCC members the entire time. I have also participated in two dynamic committees and various mixers and groups. We need to do more to give all residents a greater chance to meet others in some way that is fun, congenial, welcoming and all-inclusive.

Toward that end, I agree fully that we should to encourage community-wide events that make no distinctions between the GCCC members and non-members, and that offer opportunities for all residents to meet and mingle at social functions. The new board-sponsored Activities Committee seems to be a great start in this direction. I'm hoping that such opportunities will promote new friendships and understanding and help diminish some of the undercurrent conversations.

One thing is a certainty. The rumor mill is alive and well. With improvements in the website and more two-way communications, perhaps the board can help improve on actions already begun to provide details and correct information on matters of community-wide concern.

7. The report further said the following:

“It was strongly recommended that the POA Board develop a long term solution to the issue (the “friction”) to address the animosity that is currently festering.”

Do you agree with that this should be a priority for the POA Board? If so, do you have any ideas you wish to offer as to how this issue could be addressed?

Community well-being is always an issue of concern for a board. As with any constructive project, the board should seek a professional assessment of what the problems/issues are and then carefully craft actions designed to address them. There are experts among our residents who are capable of exploring these concerns and can help to develop solutions that may well involve nominal cost and effort. While the focus groups provide some insights, this is an imperfect assessment tool when used alone and following its findings without securing additional information is ill-advised.

Additionally, we should continue efforts to expand initiatives in two-way communications. The Splinters newsletter is an excellent vehicle and I applaud the board's initiative in establishing it. The website continues to develop and we should continue to support its improved functionality. The FAQs will also help with communications.

8. One more comment from that report said the following:

“A number of residents felt that everyone should have access to the (Governors Club Country Club) pool on a fee basis. As one person said, ‘We have to be able to offer this amenity to families or we are never going to be able to market to them. This will severely affect our home values if we can only market to retirees.’ ”

Do you agree with this sentiment and feel that the Board should pursue obtaining this benefit for all residents?

Many communities have community-wide sport and exercise facilities. The Governors Club was not established using that model. Clearly there are financial and other considerations that must be

addressed. I do agree that the board should create a mechanism for studying the need and the options.

9. We know that our community is aging and that older residents are moving out. Some residents insist that the future of the community is critically linked to getting more young families with children to move here. Others feel that the future of the community is linked to getting couples over the age of 50 (pre-retirees and retirees) to move here. Arguments exist to support both positions. There are also arguments to support the position that both groups are equally important.

Do you lean one way or the other on this issue, and, if so, which group do you feel is more important to the future of the community?

This is another “Show me the numbers” question. It’s impossible to answer without knowing more about Realtors’ projections for population growth and patterns in the greater RTP area for the coming decade. We should examine the demographic patterns and income projections for likely homebuyers AND determine the amenities they expect to see. We should know what other alternatives these prospective buyers may have, in order to assess if our community is competitive at certain price points. We should develop valid data as the basis for any shifts in our marketing messaging. Finally, we should encourage and promote the dissemination of positive information about our schools to Realtors who serve our community.

10. The POA has made efforts to market the community to local realtors, but it has not made any concerted efforts to do so outside the immediate area or on a national basis. The marketing program proposed by the Board last January (which included national marketing efforts) did not meet with the approval of the residents. Despite the results of that vote, do you feel that the POA should attempt in some way to market the community to people outside of the immediate six county area?

There is little doubt that many individuals will continue to look to North Carolina as an attractive place to live. Chapel Hill has been named one of the 12 best places to live in the U.S. We want area Realtors to think of the Governors Club as THE destination of choice. Those Realtors are key to the process. There is already a standing committee designed to reach out to them and make the house hunting process here easier and more productive. Let’s see if this produces the desired results.

As for a large national program, the property owners have voted this proposal down. There may be other viable, less costly alternatives that offer limited outreach in “productive” areas of the country. Once identified and evaluated, the board should propose them for POA member approval.

11. The current Board is considering the purchase of approximately 3 acres of vacant land just outside the front gate (adjacent to the current offices of Governors Club Realty). The idea behind this is to control the use of that land because it is so close to our front gate.

Do you support the idea of purchasing of this land?

Absolutely. It is extremely important to control the appearance of the entrance to our community. Having inappropriate land use in that location could detrimentally impact the perception of prospective home buyers. Having worked with the County for the past three years as part of the External Relations Committee, I have little confidence that we could prevent development of commercial properties in that location and no control over what might be put there. If we own it, there's no issue.

If so, do you have any thought as to how the cost would be handled? (For example, assessments, borrowing, delaying other expenditures?)

I have no information on the negotiations nor do I know the financial ramifications vis à vis other POA commitments, such as road funding. The POA would have several options which might include an assessment or borrowing via a loan predicated upon income associated with future dues.

If so, do you have any thoughts on the long term strategy for this land or how the land should be used.

For the moment, we should leave it as a natural and undeveloped buffer from the street. Eventually, it might be a good location for added amenities. Future use will be question for the whole community to decide.

12. Running a community association is, in many respects, a balancing act between spending the money necessary to preserve and enhance overall property values within the community and maintaining a reasonable level of dues (or, put another way, not raising dues or initiating assessments). On one side would be those who say it is far more important to keep the level of dues down than to worry about the physical condition of the community and its infrastructure. On the other side would be those who say that the condition of the community and its infrastructure (and resulting property values) are far more important than worrying about increases in dues. It's probably fair to say that most people are somewhere in between these two possibly extreme positions.

Can you indicate toward which side of this balance you might lean?

A homeowners association is no different from any other business with an endless array of cost/benefit analyses that demand the balanced application of common sense and good judgment. For me, this process focuses on assessing the impact of any given expenditure on its overall

worth to the community. Each decision requires a specific evaluation, but the bottom line demands that we separate needs from wants and focus first on “needs.”

I am a fiscal conservative by nature and will tend to tread a careful line when asked to approve expenditures. In my dealings with my clients, I always assure them I will spend their money as though it were my own. That’s proved to be a good yardstick. I agree with the importance of the appearance and upkeep of the community infrastructure, but that appearance must be carefully offset by frugal assessment of the options and how best to fund them.

Funding is always THE challenge. No one wants to have special assessments or increases in dues that endlessly escalate. Some associations have adopted creative ways to fund large assessments that give property owners the option of paying in a lump sum or over time...those who pay over time pay interest. Those who can afford a lump sum (lucky them) do not have to bear interest rates they don’t want or need to pay. We should explore some of those options.