

# RUNOFF ELECTION

## CARY TOWN COUNCIL



**Election Day: Tuesday, July 26**

**Early Voting: July 7-23**

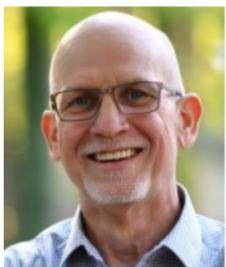
Cary will hold runoff elections for two Town Council seats in July: an at-large seat (voted on by the whole town) and the District C seat (voted on only by residents of District C).

There is so much at stake in this election! New developments are popping up all over Cary from Apple in the west to Epic Games in the east. Downtown is redeveloping at a rapid pace, the new Fenton development has transformed Cary Town Blvd, and a new sports complex is coming to what is now the South Hills Mall. All of these developments will lead to rising housing costs, property taxes, and expenses in Cary.

What happens when Cary becomes too expensive for us to live here? What happens when longtime Cary residents are displaced? Are we prepared?

The good news is that the Town of Cary has established a **Cary Housing Fund** to help with the housing crisis. This fund will help us all enjoy Cary for years to come. We wanted to know how candidates felt about the fund so we asked them:

**If elected, will you follow the recommendations of the Cary Housing Plan? In particular, will you support the continuation of dedicated Town funding to develop and preserve affordable housing in Cary?**



**KEN GEORGE (AT-LARGE): YES**

I fully support maintaining the current funding of affordable housing in Cary and will vote to replace whatever Federal Funds are lost in 2 years. I also support seeking more Federal and State dollars, along with county funds. I want to expand the spending to meet the needs that we can identify. A successful

program will breed success, and therefore would need to be expanded beyond its current level of funding.

I want a new approach and am proposing a plan to expand our "home repair" grant program in Cary, to go beyond just fixing roofs, air conditioners, floors, etc. to include renovation projects that would allow rental basement apartments, bonus room apartments and/or accessory dwelling units, or "Granny Flats" that can be built with 30-year guarantees of reduced rent. These grants would only be paid back at the sale of the home to a non-

family member. When the money is paid back, it will go toward helping build another unit! The fixed-income homeowner benefits from collecting rent, to help them pay their bills, while we get additional affordable options within existing non-HOA neighborhoods, not clustered together in an "affordable community." The town should WAIVE ALL fees on such projects. This novel approach is more than just a talking point, it's one of the solutions we must advance.

Being endorsed by the Raleigh Wake Citizens Association, I'm asking you to work with me to develop working plans to make sure that Cary can catch up on the affordability of housing. The topic is on the council agenda for August. We are woefully behind as a town. It's going to take leadership to help those workforce families find a place to live in Cary. It's not only worth the effort, but it's worth our sacrifice.

*Candidate Ken George submitted a response that was too long to print in its entirety. We encourage you to visit [www.onewake.org](http://www.onewake.org) to view his full reply.*



**CARISSA JOHNSON (AT-LARGE): YES**

I am very comfortable saying yes: I will follow the recommendations of the Cary Housing Plan, but will go further to say that while it is a good plan, I think we can do more. I believe there is a great deal of competency and great ideas in our Town staff, a myriad of ways we can partner with area non-profits, agencies, County and

State government, and builders so that we can come together to make real progress to decrease the affordable housing shortage.

The current mixed-income project the Town is planning at 921 SE Maynard in partnership with non-profit builder Laurel Street is a great example of what we can do, and this is the type of project I will advocate for on Council. I am eager to see it be a solar-powered development built to a green standard, and once complete it can be a repeatable model of what we can do in other areas of Cary. I have been a vocal advocate of the project, which is right in my neighborhood, and have worked with my downtown neighbors

to get signatures on a statement of support for the project. In stakeholder meetings over the last year, I became convinced that this type of sustainable mixed-income project is right for Cary.

I believe voters will look at the body of knowledge I built during countless hours of meetings and calls with stakeholders, my supportive actions, and my unequivocal statements in support of a comprehensive housing-affordability plan for the Town and know that I am not paying the topic lip service. Wake County and Cary's housing affordability crisis is one of the primary drivers behind my decision to run for Council. In juxtaposition, I am in a runoff with a former Council member Ken George who was one of two people on the Council who voted against the scaled-back plan for seven single-family detached Habitat for Humanity homes in his own neighborhood in 2017. In this case, I believe actions speak louder than words, and my actions demonstrate my unwavering commitment to pursuing every possible funding source and approach to ease the housing cost burden so many Cary citizens face.

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**If elected, will you follow the recommendations of the Cary Housing Plan? In particular, will you support the continuation of dedicated Town funding to develop and preserve affordable housing in Cary?**



**RENEE MILLER (DISTRICT C): NO ANSWER**

Candidate did not answer the question.



**JACK SMITH (DISTRICT C): YES**

I am the only candidate in the runoff that has a demonstrated record of accomplishment addressing affordable housing in Cary. You have me on video record affirming my support for the ONE Wake recommendations. I was one of the primary leaders providing content and direction in the formation of

Cary's Affordable Housing and take immense comfort in its implementation and success. In addition, this year's budget has over \$10 million in additional funding.

We have to increase our affordable housing stock by expanding our partnerships with not-for-profits and provide more funding in excess of the 4% we currently budget. We've had extraordinary success partnering with Habitat for Humanity and DHIC and we must keep doing more to enable all our not-for-profit colleagues to act quicker. In addition, we need to explore availability of additional town land similar to the 7 acres we are in the process right now of converting to affordable housing. We need to investigate if our successful program helping families remain in their homes

through grants not paid back until after the house is sold, can be modified to help first time home buyers. With the region's explosive growth, affordable housing clearly is emerging as a top priority and there is no silver bullet that will fix the backlog overnight. Compounding the challenge for Cary is we are 85% built out and 50% of our residential housing is part of an HOA, restricting our ability to pursue programs such as 'granny flats' on a large scale. They and similar programs will help but our best opportunity to provide more immediate impactful affordable housing is through infill redevelopment, particularly in areas with struggling strip malls. A good example is the recent Glenaire Senior Living expansion onto a distressed shopping center which resulted in a win-win for all.

On a personal note: I was born in Germany and received my citizenship in 1967. In this country I grew up poor and know what it feels like to be an outsider, growing up in a blue collar area surrounded by affluence. When I joined the Council it was a passion of mine to ensure Cary became a welcoming and inclusive community for all. Today we are and I am proud of my efforts to ensure every person living in Cary enjoys all the benefits Cary has to offer. No matter where you live or your income you can feel safe and a part of our family friendly quality of life with all our amenities.

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This handout has been prepared by ONE Wake, a non-partisan organization that is not affiliated with any political party or candidate.

#### Key Dates:

June 26: Absentee Ballots Mailed Out  
July 1: Voter Registration Deadline  
July 7-23: Early Voting  
July 19: Last Day to Request Absentee Ballot  
July 26 (6:30am-7:30pm): Election Day  
July 26 (5pm): Absentee Ballot Return Deadline  
*Return to Wake County Board of Elections  
(1200 N New Hope Rd Raleigh, NC 27610)*

#### Early Voting Sites:

Herbert Young Community Center  
101 Wilkinson Ave Cary, NC 27513  
Wake County Board of Elections  
1200 N New Hope Rd Raleigh, NC 27610  
Hours: 7/7-7/23 (8am-7:30pm M-F)  
7/17 (1-6pm), 7/23 (8am-3pm)

**Election Day: July 26 (6:30am-7:30pm)**  
Find your Election Day site at [vt.ncsbe.gov](http://vt.ncsbe.gov)