



2007 City of Charlottesville City Council Candidate Interview September 2007

Candidate: Peter Kleeman (I)

On November 6, 2007, voters in the City of Charlottesville go to the polls to elect three members of City Council. This recording is Sean Tubbs' September 6, 2007 interview with Peter Kleeman, an Independent candidate in the race. The other candidates in this race are David Brown (D), Barbara Haskins (I), Holly Edwards (D) and Satyendra Huja (D).

The audio of this interview is available online on the Charlottesville Tomorrow Weblog http://cvilletomorrow.typepad.com/charlottesville_tomorrow_/2007/09/kleeman.html

Complete election coverage is available on the Charlottesville Tomorrow website <http://action.cvilletomorrow.org/cvilleaction/elections.html>

INTERVIEW

Mr. Kleeman, thank you for participating in this interview with Charlottesville Tomorrow. The complete audio and written transcript for this interview will be available on the Internet. Information from this interview will be used in the compilation of Charlottesville Tomorrow's non-partisan voter guide. Charlottesville Tomorrow does not endorse any candidates and our goal is to provide information to the public so they can make an informed vote on issues related to land use, transportation and community design.

As you are aware, some of the questions you will be asked have been provided in advance, others have not. All City Council candidates will be asked the same questions.

- 1. Please describe your past political experience and what qualifies you to be on City Council.**

Well, I have a broad background and experience. I've worked in many different capacities and I have been very active in local issues, primarily in the last 10 to 11, 12 years. I have experience working in the areas of transportation planning, environmental protection, some things having to do

with city planning, sustainable development, and I am a strong advocate for public involvement and have exercised my role as a citizen in many of these areas. In fact, I am a frequent attendee at City Council meetings and I am fully up to date on what they have done, are doing and I have clear ideas on what they could be doing, so I bring that kind of experience.

My professional experience has been working— I've worked at the federal level in energy areas and in environment, public health. I have been an educator. I taught at the University of Virginia. I have worked for the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Transportation as an environmental engineer and a transportation planner, so I have a variety of professional experiences working on issues from a different perspective, but all of these issues are key issues in City Council deliberations, so I feel I bring a breadth of perspective that few of the other candidates have and enough experience and contacts and I've worked with people around the state, around the country. I've been on national committees in some of these areas having to do with environment and transportation that I think I provide a resource that I have tried to deliver as an independent active citizen.

But I feel like I can do so much more so much more quickly and in a more efficient manner if I'm actually at the table from the inception of projects rather than fight against projects that I think are not workable, not viable, and in fact, I had some success in changing the way projects move on, but I think the efficiency, for me, would be so much greater if I was at that table, so I bring a wealth of personal involvement, professional involvement and I think being an independent thinker and thus an independent candidate, I am not afraid to bring new ideas and see what's available and then take action that I think independently is the appropriate point to move forward on.

2. In June 2006, the City and County signed off on a 50-year water supply plan that includes a new dam at the Ragged Mountain Reservoir and a new pipeline connecting it to the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir. Do you support this plan? Why or why not?

Well, there were several plans suggested and I have no knowledge of how broad and comprehensive those plans were or how much editing was done for whatever reason to the small number of evaluated alternatives, but among the alternatives, I think the one selected is clearly one with some strong features and I guess I could say that I do support it with some reservations. Of course, there are downsides to all major investment projects, especially when you're building reservoirs and flooding domains of our region, but this plan was one of the best practicable alternatives. It is expensive. The cost of these things is staggering. There's no doubt about that, but it does keep our water supply resource use within our watershed and, apparently, according to the material that I've read even on your website, that it does piggyback on existing water treatment facilities so it's not requiring quite as much additional infrastructure to get this water to be useable by residents and businesses.

It does have downsides, however. We are losing conservation land; it's recreation land. It's been trails and we have a shortage, I think, in our area of recreational conservation areas and losing any of them, I think, is something that really needs to be contemplated and can we actually replace some of those types of areas or are we going to be losing them forever, so it is going to flood acres of land and take up miles, I think it was, of stream edge and this is going to have an impact on quality of streams in our region, of course. This is a very integrated network of waterways and streams and flora and fauna and the full impact I do not know what that is, but from the choices that were made available and sometimes we need to evaluate what the choices are that are available and pick the right ones and move forward and I think that if the demand is driven primarily by growth outside of our borders, we in the City have very little control over the increased water resource demand and so we have to participate as team players in the development of these water resources and so I feel that that's a workable solution among the choices available.

3. In addition to community concerns about an adequate water supply to accommodate growth and prepare for droughts, recent commercial and residential developments in Albemarle County have had to address inadequate sewer infrastructure. In general, what will the financial impact be on ratepayers for public water and sewer to complete the 50-year water supply plan and update and expand our aging sewer facilities?

Well, clearly these investments are getting ever more expensive. The cost of labor and materials in every aspect of our lives is going through the roof, so we are all expecting that major investments are not going to be inexpensive and in a reasonably well-developed community, the cost of replacing sewer, adding sewer systems, is going to be substantial, so my feeling is that in light of the fact that many of these investments are direct results of growth, that it's reasonable as a City Councilor to expect that there ought to be some sharing among all of the stakeholders in growth in paying for these, to mitigate some of the costs that could be passed on as a growth tax, in fact, which would be existing residents, businesses, would pay virtually a subsidy to the growth. If the growing elements are not paying some fair share of this expanded capacity, the question is should everybody pay the new average costs of providing the resources—sewer, water, whatever—or should the growth elements coming into our community pay more closely what the marginal cost is of expanding the system, so I am strongly an advocate that as growth—The more growth we get, the more the per unit costs of the increase is. You do the cheapest things first and so as you need more and more capacity, it gets more expensive per unit, that we need to ask participation from the growth community to pay some of these.

Now, how can this be done? Clearly, there are the opportunities to ask for proffers of some sort to either have developers build interceptors or expand sewage capacity and if not, if it's not possible for them to do it, but they are overloading parts of the facilities that are not in their immediate domain, that they could conceivably put cash proffers in that could go toward a fund to offset some of these expanding costs that are going to fulfill that capital investment need.

4. How would you define quality growth for our community?

Well, clearly, there could be many different definitions. I'll make a simple definition I think is workable in this context and that if we think of growth as being investments in residential, commercial and industrial construction, that's going to be adding population and economic activity to our community, I think we need to ensure that— Or within the definition of quality growth that all the supporting infrastructure that we just talked about and the increased needs for schools, parks and recreation facilities, transportation facilities, utilities, etc., are somehow rolled into that growth. Again, the issue is that if we are going to be a sustainable community where the quality of life is not diminished by growth, we need to have growth that is an added feature to our region and so, again, the concept of a growth tax could apply here if in fact we are encouraging growth and we don't ask those people to pay a fair share of the added infrastructure or recreation, schools, etc., that we then are subsidizing this growth and so that's fine to some degree.

If we're encouraging growth that's beneficial to the community as a whole, but quality growth means that the growing elements in our community are not causing a real downside cost or an increased cost on all the other existing facilities who would prefer to welcome them in as a part of the community rather than an invasion in the community, so my feeling is that quality growth requires that there's a strong dialogue between the developers or the growing entities, whether they're industrial or government or whatever it might be that's moving into our area and the community that it's a clear agreement that they are participating in the ways that they can participate and perhaps over-participating in some area like providing transportation amenities, etc., where they can't necessarily provide some of the other needs so that would be a sharing, a balancing among the portfolio of demands in the region. So, I think that anything that fits into that and is generally acceptable by the community as a positive benefit would qualify as quality growth.

5. Do you support the Meadowcreek Parkway which VDOT plans to advertise for construction in 2008? Why or why not?

Well, this is a project that I have been intimately interested in for many years, in fact actively since 1997 when I left my job in VDOT and was now living and working in Charlottesville full time. The Meadowcreek Parkway is a project I don't support in its current design and I'm not really sure how much of it I could support if it was redesigned. Certainly, I do not support the portion that runs through McIntire Park and the interchange that would also be added to try to fix some of the problems with the originally designed Meadowcreek Parkway.

The Parkway— The reasons I don't support it is I don't believe it meets our vision of the community that we would like to be. City Council's Vision 2025 is looking for us to be a much more pedestrian-oriented, locally-contained community where people do not have to do as much commuting, driving, as they do now, so we're building infrastructure that we may not need. All the improvements that is claiming to make in the rest of our network I don't necessarily believe can be realized. It's supposedly going to be a small, low-speed, relatively friendly roadway through McIntire Park and further north through the County as well. That's going to take significant traffic off of U.S. 29 and Park Street and somehow the continuity issue if we're going to take significant traffic off of these other facilities by building this one, this is going to be a highly congested facility, so instead of having two congested facilities, I think we're going to wind up with three.

Now, the consultants have never demonstrated, at least to my satisfaction, that this meets our long-term transportation needs without having to make other major investments that would complement this, so my feeling is this is a project that was conceived based on demands in the 1960s to meet the needs of the '80s, but we're sitting here in 2007 and this project is supposed to go into place in 2008 and the City has shown that without an interchange, this project is a total failure in the City. It does not work. It produces no benefit to the intersection at U.S. 250 and McIntire Road and thus the concept of an interchange was developed and, to date, I don't believe that the interchange has even significantly shown that it can meet the increasing traffic demand that this road will produce and actually improve the quality of life in this central part of the City. I think it's going to lead to more cut-through traffic and so in fact, I would recommend and have recommended on many occasions that we revisit the idea of what our transportation needs are, not for this specific facility but for getting traffic between northern Albemarle and eastern Albemarle, Downtown and those areas and consider other alternatives such as a well-designed eastern connector road and better transit in the City and that I believe there may be alternatives which will be far superior to any of the alternatives including the Meadowcreek Parkway.

So I think there are alternatives that were never conceived in the beginning and they have never been introduced in the 40-plus-year history of this project and now is a time to really look at what we want in 2025, not what was wanted in 1980.

6. What are your overall transportation priorities for the City of Charlottesville?

Well, understanding that we are a growing community, certainly around us, the Albemarle County, Greene County, Fluvanna, Louisa, Nelson County, which are all part of our regional planning district, are all growing at very alarming rates. And many of these people I learned, when I was doing my signature collection to be an independent candidate and I stopped people on the Downtown Mall and asked them if they might be interested in signing my petition, I was startled at how many of these people live in Greene, Fluvanna, Louisa, and the other surrounding areas, even Waynesboro. And so my idea of the transportation priorities we have is to be able to serve the full range of people who are moving in and about our community, so I am strongly in favor of development of a regional transit authority that I think transit is our future.

Certainly, from viewed by Charlottesville and we need to be able to get people from the outlying areas into Charlottesville without asking them to drive their cars. It'll keep us from needing to build so many parking garages. It'll reduce energy consumption and pollution, a variety of the impacts of mobility by automobile, so my position on the Regional Transit Authority is that it needs to be a combination of all of these regions in one body, that we need to have representation of the outlying communities. We may not have transit service provided to them on day one of the existence of this facility, but that they need to be at the table. They need to be part of the discussion. They can actually do better planning for their growth if they are connected to transit opportunities for the future. They can link better into the transit system and Charlottesville and Albemarle have been sharing transit operations for a while in some partnership and we see how difficult it is even for people at the table to agree on how development can occur in a meaningful, efficient way and there's been a lot of discussions about paying fair shares for transit service, et cetera, so if we're going to be dealing with a transit authority that is much too small, in my opinion, and trying to link that to other people who are not even at the table, I feel like we're not going to be able to make the headway that we could make if they were connected.

Certainly, in conjunction with a transit authority idea, I am certainly interested in enhancing flexing of road dollars that could be used for transit, biking and walking paths, providing better commuter bicycle ways, computer pedestrian ways in and out of where the residential areas are that are bikable and walkable to various buildings that are employing large numbers of people or commercial/retail areas, so it's a combination of issues. Thinking of ourselves

as clearly the center of a region and that when people get here by other than their own automobiles, that they have ways to get around to do the things they want to do here, so I think it is a regional issue and I am going to be strongly promoting all of those—bike, walk, transit, and regional connectivity.

7. What are your views on working more closely with the County and the University of Virginia to jointly operate a regional transit system? What will you do to promote the use of public transportation, pedestrian trails, and bicycle paths?

Well, that sort of piggybacks on some of what I've mentioned already and I believe that we do need to focus more on the transportation opportunities. We do have a Metropolitan Planning Organization of which the City is a member and we have two City Councilors that sit on the policy making board of that and I would certainly be a strong promoter of actually expanding that body to have much more cooperation. Right now, the University is not a voting member of that body. They are a non-voting member so the City and the County have power to make decisions on the policies of transportation in our region. The University has some influence, so my feeling is clearly all of these parties would have to get together and work out a meaningful relationship within their own charters and their own objectives, but I would like to see some real active partnership where there's more of a discussion.

I think there's too many surprises that each of these communities thrust upon the other that when there's growth decisions in the County that impact the City as is happening certainly in the Fry's Spring area as being hugely impacted by growth and development just south of the City, so my feeling is having a better communication among the City, the County and the University for the local issues is key and I just believe that we need to have more neighborhood inclusion in that discussion, that right now when you see that Fry's Spring feels like they just don't have an opportunity to even address the problems that are being thrust upon them. It immediately comes to my mind that we need to have some way for them to be present, to getting all the emails, be able to sit at all the meetings and to submit their own ideas to meet the needs, so I think it's a combination of better cooperation and maybe even greater inclusion of more stakeholders than just the jurisdictions of the City, County and University.

Follow up: What will you do to promote the use of public transportation, pedestrian trails and bike paths?

Well, I am strong believer in looking at new technology as it becomes available, learning what opportunities it presents. We have done— When I was part of the ACCT, the Alliance for Community, Choice and Transportation, there was a Blue Moon Foundation-funded project to look at a transit option which is the Downtown Trolley, a rail-based system that was originally designed or considered to link the city center and the University and

there were certainly considerations that it could grow. It could go to the airport, so I would certainly promote continued investigation of new technologies as they emerge, be it that kind of transit facility or other sorts of vehicle system or better transit options, whether it's dial ride systems or on-demand, these on-demand systems for people who are not directly served by routes. I certainly would support expanding coverage of transit in the community and I would also certainly link the notion of walk-ability and bike-ability to transit, so all of those I think enhance the use of transit for people who want to get to places in the City.

Some of the other things that I would do— I can't remember the second full— Let me see, what are we on? Number 7— Oh, what would I do to promote the public transportation, pedestrian— Well, I think that, again, the idea of using some of the flexible dollars to enhance some of the trails and to maintain them. One of the things that we don't do a very good job of probably anywhere in the United States is to build in the cost of maintaining facilities. I am an avid walker and I know a lot of the infrastructure is challenging and if you were a handicapped individual or a special needs person, some of the City streets and sidewalks are not really passable. They need to be improved, so there are some micro-level improvements that I would certainly support and I have supported and through my—

When I was writing "The Squeaky Wheel" column for *The Hook*, I actually addressed some of them and worked with some of the City engineers and actually had some change. Some of these micro-problems, tripping hazards and crosswalks and dangerous sidewalks were done, repaired, just shine a light on it, let people know that these are concerns and action can happen, so I will support at that level as well as the level of planning and regional development.

8. What is missing in Downtown's retail sector and what might City Council do about it? What will your priorities be for development in and around the Downtown Mall area, including the city-owned parking lots between Water Street and South Street?

Well, I am clearly a stakeholder in this. I live Downtown and I can tell you what I cannot buy in the retail sector in Downtown, so I— One of my pride and joys of being a Downtown resident is I can do almost everything I need to do walking other than things like grocery shopping although I can get to Reid's Market. It's a little bit of a hike and if you're carrying lots of foods, it's a long hike back and there's no other way to do it. I can do that on a bicycle as well, but I think that if there were more development, not for tourists and not for hotel visitors or the lunchtime crowd at offices on the Mall, if we had things people needed to buy. We used to have a hardware store. We used to have a grocery store and we have some snippets like CVS provides some resident-needed commerce, but as we grow and we have more and more mixed use development in the Downtown area and more and more people are walking to

work, biking to work, we really need the opportunity for them on their way home to pick up the things that they need. It'll keep them from having to get home, get in their car, drive to some shopping center to do their retail shopping, so I don't know exactly how this has been approached in the past.

I know there have been some attempts to recruit grocery store kinds of businesses into the core of the City. I'm not sure what the obstacles are to that, whether the economics don't work, whether the City can provide incentives for that to happen, but that's certainly a priority that I would have, would be to expand that, so development in the surrounding areas. Perhaps even some of the parking lots that you mentioned, if they are going to be redeveloped, I think it would be a wonderful opportunity to have a mixed use development that includes some retail shopping of the type that all of these expanding growth neighborhoods would use, so I believe that in expanding those neighborhoods from the Downtown Mall, the side streets off to Water Street on one side and I guess north one block in that area, that that could become much more of an expanded Mall. There could even be some café spaces. There could be some retail stores that would be not on the Mall. They would be a little more affordable I would guess, but they could still be walkable and within the walkable community.

This is something I experienced in my trips to Europe. You go to places where even major tourist attractions you can still go to the bakery and the grocery store and the hardware store and the shoe repair store and they're really in the same strip as the tourist-related shops, so it happens other places. I'm not sure what the economic disincentives are for it to happen here, but I would certainly explore that and I believe that that would be really beneficial to growth in the Downtown area.

9. The City Council's 2025 vision statement identifies economic sustainability as a key objective. What do you think needs to be done to support that objective, and what role should government play to promote economic vitality?

Well, in getting this question in advance, I read carefully through the strategic plan for economic development and I was a little bit surprised when I looked at it to find out that the strategic plan is really a much shorter-term plan than the Charlottesville City Council vision plan, although they are pinned together on the City's website and looking at the matrix that was in the economic sustainability plan. It's called the Economic Sustainability Matrix. Anything that has a date on it is dated is 2006-2007 and we're talking about a plan that I believe should extend out to 2025, so one of the ideas that I have—

What do I think needs to be done to support this objective of economic sustainability in 2025 is that we need to have some time increments with some intermediate targets as to what it is that we really would like to see in

terms of economic development. Again, just as we mentioned about Downtown development, this would be true all around the City, that there are neighborhoods that could use some economic development activities, local stores. There are zoning restrictions to putting economic centers in some neighborhoods. I think that they need to be looked at and revisited and perhaps a partnership with the City and some of the neighborhoods could look into how can we provide these commercial economic entities that could provide local jobs, that could then spin off some other opportunities for child care for people that once you have some economic activity, more economic activity might work and it might all fit in the residential idea. It would make living in those residential areas even more appealing than just being in a total housing area, so my feeling is that pulling some of those concerns from actual residential neighborhoods into their complaints about why can't we buy what we need, what are the opportunities, mixing those in with some of these longer-term goals and developing maybe every five years having a target and a review of are we achieving the kinds of things that we need to do reach our targets in 2025.

In fact, I feel about the entire Council vision 2025 that in every one of the eight areas that are identified, we could benefit from having some clear intermediate targets that people could use as a reference point. Are we spending enough time on this objective and when a new project comes up, we could then say, well, which of our long-term goals and our short-term, intermediate goals is this addressing and is this an acceptable expenditure of resources? Are we getting enough out of the resources that are being put into this project to get us to that goal in the future? So I think that covers it. Did I miss one of these?

What role should the government play? I think we need to play the role of a facilitator. We need to link independent business people with neighborhoods, with neighborhood leaders, with our economic incentive programs that may or may not assist them or with our planning people and zoning people to say how we can all work together, what is a reasonable set of alternatives and have a conversation and so I think government shouldn't be the arbiter in this, but it could be the facilitator and it does have some clout. It can bring these parties together and it probably can provide some economic incentives to get things started as they have for many other businesses in the community.

10. Do we have appropriate resources in City government to achieve the objectives in our strategic plan? In what way, if any, do we need to make changes? What impact will your recommendations have on staffing and the annual budget?

Well, we have a great deal of resources in the City. I think when I go over to City Hall I see there's an awful lot of people working there and many of them are professionals and they have good credentials to look at how we can move our City forward, so I think that from a point of view of intellectual and human

resources, I think we have a fairly good opportunity to do a great deal of strategic plan satisfying, so one of the things that I believe needs changing is I believe that we as a City Council need to do less what I consider micro-managing of the decisions in the City and adopt the role of being more of a board of directors for the City.

I think that we have too much discussion at City Council. It takes a great deal of time and effort on the part of the Council looking at details that I think would better be handled by professionals that we hire. We pay people a significant salary and I think we can demand professional results from them, that we can rather than as a City Council discuss the details of an issue, I would prefer to direct to the City Manager and the staff leadership and saying we need to have a few more choices, but let's focus in a new direction. We want more of this and less of this kind of thing and what is possible. What are the limits? What are some of the downsides? What are the environmental, economic, social impacts of some of these changes? I don't believe it's really the role of City Council to get into that level of detail. Clearly, they need to review these for consistency with other goals, other vision statements, but I think that the details really should be done by the professionals that we have. We will develop a much higher quality professional staff. They will learn much more about the newer and emerging technologies that are available to meet some of our needs.

We could rely less heavily on consultants if we have a better development of our own personnel— Our own City professional staff and I think that in the end, the impact on our staffing and budget I think may actually be positive. We'll maybe get more value for the dollars that we're spending on human resources and I think that we'll even get more satisfied staff, lower turnover and I think a better understanding and continuity from year to year of what has happened, what has worked, who are the primary stakeholders and actors in making our community decisions and my feeling is that we just need to redirect some of our resources and I am optimistic that redirecting is possible and will lead to more efficient solutions and I think better solutions to our emerging problems.

11. The County Board of Supervisors is currently reviewing the proposed Biscuit Run development. At 3,100 homes, this would be the largest single development in the County's history. Do you believe Biscuit Run will be quality growth in our community? Why or why not?

Well, I believe according to my just proposed definition of quality growth that Biscuit Run is not really a quality development the way it's currently proposed. It is clearly evolving. It has not been approved. It is nearly approved apparently, but certainly in the areas of impacts on infrastructure and how it is going to mitigate some of its impacts, I think it's not really paying its fair share of the growth infrastructure needs which implies that it is going to put a huge

burden on the existing populations and clearly on some of the populations in the City.

Although it's a County development, we'll be adding many more commercial or trips for commercial activity in the City, more cars driving in. It's not going to be a transit-linked development. It was proposed at some point as a transit-ready development meaning that at some point in the future, transit could be put there but basically if there's no real linkage to providing transit at its outset, it's going to attract a number of people who are going to go there and they're not going to be moving there because it's transit-connected. It's close to the City but it's not connected well enough that this will just add to the automobile travel burden of the City and the County, so in that regard, I think that it really needs to do more.

I am not a fan of having very large developments, rezoned in an area that's so close to the City but it's really not in any meaningful way connected. It's a little island of a community and I've done some personal investigations in what some of the situations are and the connecting roads and I think some of the concerns that are expressed by citizens who live in various neighborhoods about the increase in traffic and the reduction in quality of life in their community are certainly worth considering, so my feeling is that a broader discussion of what the actual impacts of such large developments are and how mitigations can take place and if this means some rethinking of how people can get to and from where they need to go on a daily basis, whether it's transit or better bicycle connectivity, whatever, that needs to be part of the conversation and it really hasn't been. It's all been about, well, we'll pay so much money as a proffer and the evaluation of what that really buys in terms of mitigation is not easy to do. It's not clear that it is not going to be causing a huge impact on the existing community.

12. What is your top priority for action by City Council if you are elected?

Well, I think I mentioned in sort of the past question. I'll just summarize what I think some of them are. I think that we really need to refocus. City Council needs to look inward and say, "What is our appropriate role in guiding the City?" We really need to I think take on that role of being the board of directors, redefining what it is that City Council should be considering, how it brings issues forward, how it spends its time, basically, and how much it will delegate to professional staff. I think as the issues grow, the number of times the City Council has recently been evaluating how well a particular project fits our vaguely-defined comprehensive plan or reviewing discussion between developer and the Planning Commission.

Now clearly, Council has a role in that. But I think it really needs to take those conversations as a way of refocusing what the guidelines are that should be handed to the Planning Commission or the Board of Architectural Review and

say we shouldn't have to be reviewing each and every one of these things. We should be setting better guidelines and all the people that we appoint or hire to do the primary decision-making in those areas and then come forward and defend why it is that this is a good idea and if there's no good reason to the contrary, I believe Council needs to have the confidence that the people that they hire and they appoint are doing a professional job and if they're not, they could be replaced. But if they are doing a professional job, their judgment should be taken into serious account and only if there are conflicts between various goals and objectives where clearly a decision by a body like the Board or the Council is necessary to balance out these competing views. I think at that point, they should take more action, but I really believe that that is one of the key issues.

I think I had another note here. Again, focusing our strategic plan ideas so that we make a better statement as a body of what are the kind of milestones we would like to achieve and spend more time learning about are we achieving those milestones and what do we need to initiate rather than being a review body for things that have come to the City, that we should take a more proactive role in saying how can we encourage developers, other stakeholders, to come into the community and get us to the next level or milestone that we want to achieve.

13. In your opinion is the state government adequately funding our transportation needs? If not, what steps will you take to ensure priority transportation projects are actually funded and completed in a reasonable timeframe?

Well this is an interesting question. I found this fascinating because funding transportation projects is really a combination of funding from the federal government, from the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and some even directly from Congress apparently, and the state and local funds and now a discussion of generating even private funds to do many roadway projects, so the state government is only one actor in the provision of funds for transportation needs. I think that the state views—the whole state as a unit—has formulas for how transportation projects are funded.

I think Charlottesville is not typical of Virginia communities. I think our needs are different from the average Virginia community. We do have the opportunity to get more benefit out of funding for non-automobile facilities, so my feeling is that one of the problems that is presented to the city by the state funding formulas is the lack of flexibility in using funds for the purposes that we as a community and a somewhat special community in the state, desire. There is some flexibility. Some funds can be flexed from highway funds to support transit operations or transit capital investments and I'm not really sure what the details are, but there are limitations on what you can flex and into

what it can be flexed. So my feeling is that perhaps one of the ways of insuring the state meets our needs as a City is to work with our legislative delegation, with [State Senator] Creigh Deeds and [Delegate] David Toscano, to say is there a way that we as Charlottesville can make a case through them, not that we're asking for more resources than our fair share of available resources, but that we want more flexibility in what we can do with those resources and I think if that's the case, that will take us one step forward.

Clearly when it comes to provision of new transit services, there is a large front-loaded capital expenditure. You have to build right-of-way, buy right-of-way, build facilities, buy equipment, but it's expensive roadway additions as well and I don't necessarily see how the available funds or those possibly available and certainly my tenure on the Council would be available to the point that we could solve all of our transportation problems using only highway funds for highway purposes and these transit funds for transit purposes, that we're not getting enough flexibility to make the incremental changes that we would like to make and see that could then attract ridership to transit or alleviate some of the critical problems that we have in our transportation network, our highway network, so I think that certainly more money to meet those needs would be great, but I think that using the monies that are available now is clearly a key thing in the next few years.

14. The University of Virginia is moving forward with numerous major construction projects to improve and expand their facilities. In what ways does this impact our community? How would you characterize the level of cooperation between the City and the University and in what way will you seek to make changes?

Three parts— Let's see if I can get all three of them in here. Well, certainly, development at the University of Virginia impacts our community in many ways. It's got its pluses; it's got its minuses. Certainly, it provides jobs. As it grows, it's hiring more people and many of the people in Charlottesville are clearly tied to the success of the University and will work there and commute there. It also provides ever-expanding educational opportunities and now many of these facilities like John Paul Jones Arena providing entertainment activities that have never been available in Charlottesville before. I haven't been there yet, but they now have tractor pulls and monster shows and so a broader range of entertainment is being made available in our community as well other higher cultural events as well. So those are all part of the positive things, that they are attracting highly educated and certainly involved populations to the community that can only be beneficial to us in Charlottesville.

But it also has minuses. Certainly, it's providing competition. They're in the County and we're the City and so the more things that they provide can have impacts on the business community and I think that we need to work with

them and if we do have an ever-growing population and ever-growing demands, it could work for everybody, so it may or may not be a problem. Certainly we need to work better in coordinating that growth and development around the City and make sure that it doesn't eat up most of the core of some parts of the City as being University domain, that we do want to have a community and I think a mix of community and City population intertwined in an urban kind of setting I think would really be beneficial, and it wouldn't be like the edges of the University proper keep growing and creeping toward Downtown, that it could be combined and it would be much more of a mixed use activity, that there would be jobs in the community as well as opportunities for education for people living and working nearby.

As far as the level of cooperation, I think in some areas there's very good cooperation and other areas, it's challenged. I attended a Planning Commission meeting within the last few months where the Planning Commission were surprised to learn about some of the plans of the University that were before them with information being provided at the last minute because the University had already contracted— This is in regard to the South Lawn project and there was a bit of concern on the part of some of the Planning Commission. It was like why aren't we aware of this stuff. Why are we being asked to make an approval that if we deny it, that the University is going to be in breach of some of its contracts. It's like we need to work a little bit more upfront on some of those, so clearly there are opportunities for improvement in communication and I know that it's never going to be perfect and this might be just one of those anecdotal examples, but it's something that just came up recently and it sort of fit in with the last-minute provided question so I'll take advantage, but I think also cooperation in transit is something that is clearly a challenge.

The University is sometimes actively involved, sometimes not, and they're taking a wait-and-see attitude on participating in our regional transit authority, for example, and I would certainly encourage the University to be actively involved and clearly they have other goals and objectives than the City or the County so I respect that but I'm hoping that there would be an opportunity for them to participate at a greater level even if it's just the sit-at-the-table and they participate but they don't feel like they have to make commitments one way or the other, but just being part of the conversation and more a part of the conversation I think would be really welcomed.

15. The City Board of Architectural Review and the City Planning Commission have recommended restrictions on by-right building heights in the Downtown Mall, Water Street, and South Street areas. If elected, would you support ordinance changes that would allow nine-story buildings only with a special use permit? Why or why not?

Well, I think this is an intriguing proposition and I think that changing—dramatically changing zoning and building height restrictions and mixed use development that's happened in the last few years, has opened up a lot of issues that were not contemplated when these changes were made. And I think that we're now beginning to understand what the impacts of the large structure could be in terms of the numbers of people that will be attracted to that facility, the number of residents that will be living in a nine-story building. And so my personal feeling, although I don't have documented evidence to show this, is that if we built at the by-right levels that we now have, that we may overwhelm some of our ability to meet the needs of those structures in terms of infrastructure and we'd just be introducing congestion and we may have provided an opportunity and maybe over-provided an opportunity, so having an opportunity to review projects before they go in could provide some level of control over not having just by chance a number of buildings all being built in one area, really putting a huge overwhelming demand on infrastructure that it can't really be accommodated by the City in the near term.

So I think the idea of having some mechanism— Whether this is the right mechanism or not I can't say without looking at that more carefully, but I think having some mechanisms that would allow review and a conversation with developers about the virtues of various levels of development and what the impact that would be on the City and how the City would like to participate with that developer in meeting both the needs that the developer has and the needs that the City has and the restrictions the City has on available resources that I think not to have an opportunity for that conversation which would occur if it was a hundred percent by-right, I think that that would be really good, especially in areas that require significant attention like in the Downtown Mall area that some more coordination.

It is an overlay district that has a number of other features of review that I think looking at that has— If it can be done as a productive, instructive, constructive dialogue between developers and the City and residents and businesses, that I think it really would be beneficial and I would certainly entertain mechanisms like that. I won't necessarily say that that's the one, but I think it's probably one that should be considered.

16. What are your priorities for improving the City's public recreational facilities and urban green spaces?

Well, first of all, and this relates to a previous question. I think running a roadway through our premier park is more than I could really support. I think that McIntire Park is one of the great resources that the City has in terms of parks and recreation and it provides some of the great opportunities for new, expanded parks and recreation activity, so my feeling is protecting the parks that we have now is really important, very important, but I think expanding— If we are going to be a growing community, and having more people living and working and wanting to have their lunch sitting outside, that the more green spaces that we can provide as a counterbalance to some of the higher density development that's taking place and I think it's a wonderful combination.

I have proposed in the past that the 6th Street right next to the WVIR TV station, TV 29, whatever their call letters are, I think it's WVIR, that that was originally going to be blocked off and it was originally blocked off and I propose that that become a recreational space and that was turned down as a result of funding as typically recreation and park land issues are one of the first things to be cut when finances are difficult, but opportunities where there are little areas that are not really economically viable or suitable for other activity could be converted into a number of different kind of recreation and parkland activities. They don't all necessarily have to be green spaces.

I actually suggested at that time, several years ago, when Court Square was being redeveloped, the new brick road, brick roads and pathways, etc., that that could be a hard-surface park. It could have tables. It could have games. It was on a slope. It could be maybe certain activities that only can function on slopes. It could be like a little, you know, a child play area with presentations, a natural amphitheater kind of thing. Who knows what could happen? We have a lot of creative and artistic people in the community that could be brought into the conversation and say what could you do with a space like this and I think that those things could be done more, so my feeling is every time I hear at a City Council meeting where a parcel of City-owned land is going to be abandoned and given to the adjacent property owners, I keep on thinking maybe this would be a great opportunity for a pedestrian way, to get from point A to point B, that that would be part of the path.

Or maybe it could become like a little micro-habitat for whatever is living in that particular area or it could be an opportunity to expand the tree cover in the City by doing a planting of some sort or other that would require very little maintenance. It could be used by the neighbors or there could be some arrangement that these things rather than being abandoned properties could be converted into park land or a park-like or recreation activities so I think some creative ways of taking small parcels and somehow integrating them

into the parks and recreation system where the maintenance costs and overhead costs of keeping them is not great and certainly natural areas, conservation areas, like no touch areas are perfect. They don't require much and I think that various kinds of groups, be they bird groups or stream groups or whatever else might actually adopt them as being places that they would like to manage and encourage growth and use by their particular activity.

17. What do you see as the primary responsibilities of City Council?

Well, I think in my view, City Council really needs to be outreaching to the community in many different ways, basically getting the pulse of where this community is going, re-evaluating what our current view of our future is and continuously checking in with the community: are we on the right path? We have changes in the population all the time. I don't know what the number of people that turn over in the City every year but I think it's probably very high and that as new people move in and new changes take place, our world is changing in a very rapid way. So is Charlottesville. So is the Commonwealth of Virginia, that we need to keep on checking in as to what are the kinds of goals that we need to be considering as new goals, vetting them through all the various stakeholders and so I think that the City Council really needs to accept as its primary responsibility as being the facilitator to fulfill the goals of our business, residential, commercial, University, other retirement, entertainment communities and try to find what is the workable balance that seems to be something that our entire community feels is constructive and everybody is participating.

That if we're growing, we're growing for everybody. We're not growing just for independent business people or for entertainment activities or as a place for people to live who work at the University but that all diverse interests are satisfied and I think that in itself is a major challenge, just to understand what the concerns are, what the opportunities are, and then clearly, to make sure that the conversations with the City Manager about what kind of activities the City staff can be exploring to give them the green light to go ahead and say let's consider some new, innovative ideas that maybe we as a City can take, whether it's trying to become a much more green city, providing incentives for developers or residents or commercial businesses to just take advantages—take advantage of energy technologies that can work in Charlottesville, but have not happened.

How can we facilitate? Can we be a meaningful player as a City in making the quality of life for some of these stakeholders and hopefully all of these stakeholders better, so I think it's really just a matter of being there to look and listen, to be much more open and in my campaign, I'm a clear advocate for public involvement. I've been a public involvement advocate and practitioner for years and I just feel like we need to open those doors. We have so many talented people in our community that I think could provide

huge benefits that everyone in the City if we opened the doors to them, allow them to come forward with new and challenging ideas and to participate in designing potentially hugely beneficial solutions for the future, so I think it's just a matter of just paying attention. We need to do a better job of paying attention.

Peter Kleeman, thank you very much for participating in our interview.