



CENTRAL STREET NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION MAYORAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: **Stuart Opdycke**

Ward: 3

Voting Address: 1327 Hinman

Years you have lived in Evanston: 66

Campaign Website URL: www.stuartopdycke.com

Campaign Phone: 475-6806

Best E-Mail for campaign purposes: stu@stuartopdycke.com

Other websites on which you post campaign statements or positions:

Campaign Chair:

Treasurer: Sid Ross

Campaign Manager or consultant(s): Katie Trippi

No. of petition signatures filed: 650

Elective or appointive public or party offices previously held including dates:

ETHS Board of Education 1986-1994; City of Evanston Plan Commission 2005-present

Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate: None

What is your primary occupation? Lawyer

Briefly list your past civic activities. If numerous, list here the 5 most important.

ETHS Board of Education; ETHS Booster Club President; Dewey Boys Basketball coach; YMCA Youth and Government mentor.

What subjects have you studied and what experience have you had which will be most helpful to you in the office you seek?

As a practicing attorney I have learned a great deal about negotiation, problem solving, compromise and advocacy. As a member of the Plan Commission I have been exposed to matters including zoning, land use, public hearings, municipal governance, taxation and commercial development.

What candidates have you supported? Please describe your specific role in any campaign.

In the last decade I have supported no candidate seeking public office except for Barack Obama.

Please list all endorsements you have received so far. None

Campaign budget: \$15,000. **How much have you raised so far?** \$15,000.

How many people are on your campaign staff? 1

How many volunteers are on your list? 50

1. How many of the following have you attended in the past 2 years? (approx.)
 - 5 City Council meetings
 - 25 Plan Commission meetings
 - 2 Planning & Development Committee meetings
 - 2 Zoning Board of Appeals meetings
 - 0 Site Plan and Review Committee meetings
 Other:

2. In recent years, the City undertook the Central Street Master Plan, the Downtown Plan, the Lakefront Plan, the West Side Plan, the Climate Action Plan, a Bicycle Plan, a Multimodal Transportation plan. and a blue-ribbon commission on pension funds. Please identify which you participated in, and your contributions.

As a member of the Plan Commission I have participated in all phases of the Downtown Plan, the West Side Plan, the Central Street Plan and certain portions of the Multimodal Transportation Plan.

3. Many Evanston residents feel they are not being listened to. Do you agree? If you agree, please give examples and state what will you do about it. If you disagree, please state why, and how will you combat the perception.

There is a difference between listening to opinions expressed by citizens during a public hearing and agreeing with those opinions. As a member of the Plan Commission I consider comments and opinions from all sources and then I exercise my best judgment.

4. Would you support any change in executive session or how it is used?

Possibly, but it would depend on the specific nature of the change proposed.

5. The City building code is not online. To see if their property meets "Code," a citizen has to go to the library or purchase a copy at the Civic Center. Would you support making all City ordinances available online for free? YES

6. Which of the governmental changes, if any, would you support:

- Returning the Council to 2 aldermen per ward
- Increasing the number of wards
- Adding one or more at-large aldermen to the Council
- Making mayor a full-time paid position half-time paid position

- Eliminating the city manager position; department heads report to mayor
- Mayor-manager form of city government

Other: I would consider any of the above changes but would reserve any opinion until all aspects were fully explored and debated.

7. Which of the following constituency communication methods will you commit to?
- Answer all e-mails within 48 hours
 - Maintain my own mayoral website
 - Regular posts or blogs on community websites
 - Monthly meetings (citywide or in wards)
 - Regular but less frequent public meetings
 - Regular office hours at Civic Center
 - Regular newsletter

Other: These communication methods seem reasonable and appropriate. If elected, I may very well initiate some form of all of them.

8. What is your position on the Civic Center?
- City should stay at Civic Center and repair it
 - City should sell the Civic Center and build a new one elsewhere
 - City should stay at Civic Center and remodel/expand it
- If you checked "stay", should the City sell or lease part of its land at the Civic Center location to pay for repairs and/or remodeling/expansion? YES NO
- If you believe a new Civic Center should be built, please identify what location and cost level you would support:

I have a general bias towards staying in the present building. I would like to see it restored but only if it is restoration of the highest quality. The one caveat to all of this is cost. I have seen estimates that run anywhere from 20 million-90 million. At the moment the City has no money to pursue any option beyond basic repair and maintenance.

9. Should the City of Evanston have an affordable housing plan? YES If yes, what should be the main components? If your answer is no, why not?

The newly formed Housing Task Force is taking up this very question. It is hoped that a comprehensive plan will emerge that addresses all aspects of affordable housing and the question of foreclosures as well.

10. Scientists warn that the earth is at a critical juncture because of greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere. Do you agree? If so, what recommendations of the Climate Action Plan, if any, will you work to implement in your first year of office?

I only know what Al Gore tells me. I would like to see the Environmental Board expand its mission to include ways that the City of Evanston might begin to implement the many suggestions set out in the Plan. It is an excellent document and should find its way into many City policy decisions.

11. Would you have vetoed the planned development ordinance for 1700-1722 Central Street? NO. Will you support or oppose another extension of time for the development of the site?

I would probably support another extension but I would require the developer to take down the fence and plant grass.

12. Has Evanston gotten equivalent value for what it has spent on consultants in the past 2 years? YES. What changes, if any, would you make in the use of consultants, especially for planning and development?

My experience with consultants has been limited to my work on the Downtown Plan; the Central Street Plan, and the West Side Plan. Their help has been invaluable.

13. Is the current blend of City revenues sources fair? How would you change it?

One might argue that cigarette tax and liquor tax is out of proportion to other taxes associated with the sale of goods, but I don't believe that there are taxes or other revenue sources for which there is no articulable justification.

14. What reductions in City spending would you support? Please identify specific measures, departments, programs, etc., and the amounts you believe would be saved.

It is certain that as the recession/depression deepens, cuts will have to be made on the program side and the staff side as well. These decisions will have to be made following thorough consultation with senior staff and other parties of interest.

15. Are there any specific ordinances that should be repealed, modified, or enacted?

The Zoning Committee of the Plan Commission is currently "cleaning up" the Zoning Regulations to reduce redundancy, conflicts and confusing language.

16. What changes, if any, would you like to see the City make in how it has used tax increment financing (TIF)? If none, please state that. *NONE*

17. What changes if any would you support in how the City regulates parking including development requirements, hours, permit parking zones, tickets and towing?

Offhand, I do not see the need for major changes in parking/ticket/permit/towing policies. Like everyone I hate tickets and get annoyed especially when I get two tickets on the same day. The Parking Committee spends a great deal of time discussing parking issues and I think the existing policies are reasonable. They are designed principally to raise revenue and promote circulation.

18. Check whether you support or oppose the following:

Support Oppose

- | | |
|---|---|
| X | Initial proposal for a 49-story building at 708 Church |
| | Revised proposal for a 38-story building at 708 Church |
| X | Raising as-of-right height in the Central Core Dist. to 275'/25 stories |
| X | Raising max. height in the Central Core District to 385'/35 stories |
| X | Raising the West Traditional (Davis St.) district to 42'/88' |

If you oppose any of the above, state what you intend to do to about it.

I believe that any proposal for construction of a building taller than 10 stories should be submitted for binding appearance review.