

## **Volunteer Application Orange County Advisory Boards and Commissions**

**Name:** Mrs. Jeanette Benjey  
**Name Called:**  
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**Year of OC Residence:** 2018  
**Township of Residence:** Hillsborough  
**Zone of Residence:** Hillsborough ETJ  
**Gender Identity:** Female  
**Ethnic Background:** White  
**Age Range:** 60+

### **Community Activities/Organizational Memberships:**

Friends of the Orange Co. Library, Fellowship Board, United Church of Chapel Hill, Communications Coordinator, Greater Raleigh Alumnae Chapter of AGD

### **Past Service on Orange County Advisory Boards:**

none

### **Boards/Commissions applied for:**

#### **Affordable Housing Advisory Board**

#### **Please explain how your background, education and experience is relevant to this board**

I have a BA in Communications from Michigan State University. I owned my own advertising and graphic design business from 1977-2006. Although it is no longer an official LLC I still do graphic design work for several builders and real estate agents. I had a real estate license from 2000-2022, worked for Keller Williams. I have designed and built two homes in the area working with engineers and architects. I also remodeled 3 homes, and owned 3 for rental investment.

#### **Please explain your reasons for wanting to serve on this board**

I feel availability of affordable housing is one of the most important needs in our community and really everywhere. Builders build homes/townhomes at a marketing point where they can make the most profit. Understandable. But this leaves a great percentage of the population unable to afford their own home, no matter how small. This seems in conflict with our American dream. I would like to work with people to share ideas on how we can build homes (getting land the hard part), for the average hard-working American family. The pride of owning your own home is important for every family. It is so grounding and gives such a feeling of belonging. You can fix it the way you want it, you can feel that you have an investment in the American dream. I think it gives people a reason to want to succeed in life.

#### **How would your participation on this board contribute to the diversity of viewpoints?**

Not knowing anything about the current viewpoints, that is a bit hard to answer. But I may have some thoughts on ways to help build homes that are more affordable without sacrificing too much quality. I have a good sense of design, reading and fiddling with floor plans is one of my favorite hobbies. I think I can look at a design and make it efficient and accomplish practical

design even in a smaller space. I am also familiar with interior finishes, durable can still be attractive and affordable. The importance of placement of windows is also a big concern of mine. Good use (location) of storage is important and design that gives some privacy to family members. Discussion of one or two-story designs, duplex, triplex??? Anything but big apartment buildings. Recreation areas and ways to make sure owners maintain their property without high or overly strict HOAs.

**Do you have any personal or business interest(s) that could create a conflict of interest (either real or perceived) if you are appointed to this board?**

None

### **Hillsborough Planning Board**

**Please explain how your background, education and experience is relevant to this board**

BA in Communications/Advertising, Michigan State University Owner of Intensity Advertising and Marketing Graphic and ad designer for the Raleigh News and Observer Real Estate License 2000-2021, worked for Keller Williams Realty Designed and built two homes (Raleigh & Hillsborough) Landlord for 3 rental homes Experience with exterior and interior building materials

**Please explain your reasons for wanting to serve on this board**

I have lived in Hillsborough almost 5 years. Unfortunately because of COVID I have not been able to meet as many people or be active in different groups. I like living here, but I see a lot of small and maybe larger improvements that would make this town more attractive and vibrant. I know a lot of people here go to other surrounding cities for a lot of reasons, would be nice if there was more stores here. Also I found there is a real lack in welcoming new residents and even harder to find out about local businesses. It got the feeling that if you aren't from these parts you don't need to know.

**How would your participation on this board contribute to the diversity of viewpoints?**

I don't know what viewpoints exist, so hard to say. But I am a very visual person and feel I could bring a new perspective to the overall ambiance of the town. It is easy to get used to living somewhere and take everything for granted, sometimes a new eye can be helpful. Not that so much needs changing, maybe just tweaking here and there!

**Do you have any personal or business interest(s) that could create a conflict of interest (either real or perceived) if you are appointed to this board?**

None

### **Boards/Commissions appointments:**

### **Other Comments:**

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