

City of Asheville
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
Application Form

APPLICANTS ARE STRONGLY URGED TO ATTEND SEVERAL MEETINGS OF A BOARD PRIOR TO APPLYING AND/OR APPOINTMENT TO A BOARD

Name of board or commission(s): Asheville City Council

Your name: Rebecca Hecht Home Phone #: 828-582-3337

Street address: 16 Westwood Dr. City: Asheville Zip Code: 28806

Mailing address (if different): _____

Employer: Adorn Salon & Boutique

Your position: owner/stylist Office Phone #: 828-225-8828

Resident of City yes County yes Race Caucasian* Sex female* Age 35 *

Are you a United States Citizen (circle one)? Yes or No

Residence location (check one): Central _____ North _____ South _____ East _____ West X

How did you become aware of the opening? _____ Webpage _____ Current Volunteer X eNews
_____ Government Channel _____ Newspaper _____ Radio _____ Organization _____ Agenda _____ Other

Please indicate the area(s) of expertise that you can bring to the above board(s), and then in detail list education, experience, reasons for your interest, and other factors that support your interest in serving (use additional sheets if necessary). Expertise: _____ Legal _____ Technical _____ Fundraising X Community Contacts
_____ Business Management (Financial) X Business Management (Operational) X Public Speaking

* please see resume and answers to questions from council.

Return to:
Maggie Burleson, City Clerk
Post Office Box 7148
Asheville, N.C. 28802-7148

E-Mail: mburleson@ashevillenc.gov
Telephone: 259-5601
Fax #: 259-5499

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 11/25/08

E-Mail: adornasheville@gmail.com

Fax #: 828-225-8827

* This information is requested for the sole purpose of assuring that a cross section of the community is appointed.

Rebecca Hecht
16 Westwood Dr.
Asheville, NC 28806
(828) 582-3337
(828) 225-8828
adornasheville@gmail.com

Employment

Adorn Salon and Boutique
82B Lexington Ave.
Asheville, NC 28801
Position: owner, stylist
2002-present

Schwarzkopf Professional
Technical Advisor (educator)
2006-present

Carolina College of Hair Design
Platform Artist (educator)
2008

Experience

Downtown Master Plan Advisory Committee
(I've also been serving more intensely in the "small group")

Lexington Ave. Merchants Association (LAMA)
Founding member, president 2004-2007, treasurer 2007-present

Lexington Ave. Arts and Fun Festival (LAAFF)
Vendor coordinator and volunteer 2002-present

1. What motivates you to apply for this position?

I am motivated to apply because I love this city. I have lived here for 13 years and have always tried to participate and be involved. The only way to change the world is to begin in your own back yard. I have organized and pitched in with my community whenever the need presented itself, including everything from volunteering at soup kitchens to being a founding member of the Lexington Ave. Merchants Association.

Much like Asheville, I have grown from almost nothing, so I understand the needs of the city from many different perspectives. I began as renter with roommates; now I am a homeowner. When I moved here, I worked downtown for minimum wage. I am now a downtown business owner, and have most recently been a member of the Downtown Master Plan advisory committee. Working with the advisory committee and city staff has inspired me to become even more involved in co-operating with others to shape our future and improve our community.

2. Where do you fall on the conservative-liberal spectrum in terms of fiscal and social policy?

In local politics, it is important to address and resolve issues based on the information and circumstances at hand without the constraint of a national philosophy. That being said, I am a democrat who is centrally located and leaning to the left.

I fall closer to the center on fiscal matters. I believe that we shouldn't spend money we don't have, while being aware that when opportunities to upgrade our equipment and resources present themselves, we should research options that could provide revenue instead of expenditures. I lean further to the left on social issues, and believe that while success should be rewarded, prosperity comes with responsibility.

3. In your eyes, what should be the top 2 or 3 priorities our City Council should be focused on in the upcoming year and why?

The top three priorities are connected in my opinion. For obvious reasons, we need to keep an eye on the economy both nationally and locally in order to make good decisions in the coming year.

Particularly now, in this economic climate, we must ensure that the availability of affordable housing is increased. For many, including my own employees, it is challenging to find a suitable home that is affordable. Often, the conditions of these properties are sub-standard, but tenants are reluctant to file complaints for fear of being evicted. A lack of standards makes it difficult to attract and retain a quality workforce in our city. Property owners and landlords must take more responsibility for the safety and condition of their property. Doing so protects everyone's property values as well as property tax revenue for the city.

In addition to strengthening the value of existing property, we must continue to ensure that new development provides benefit to the community. We have reached a point in our growth spurt where we can take a breath and choose projects that make sense and meet the vision shaped by the residents and public servants of Asheville.

4. What do you consider the most crucial problem, need, or cause for the citizens of Asheville? How would you approach its resolution or champion the cause?

I think one of the most crucial issues facing Asheville right now is the current process for approving or denying new development. It is currently unclear and misunderstood by both developers and the community at large, leaving everyone on all sides frustrated. The public and the development community deserve a process that is consistent and fair.

I would champion this cause by encouraging council to support the Downtown Master Plan. This would go a long way towards clearly spelling out what is acceptable and what is not, giving developers the security of knowing that investing in the planning process is money well spent. It would also ensure that the process is less politicized and consistent across multiple administrations, giving the public the peace of mind that their input was heard, and the guidelines are solid, reliable and reasonable.

5. 2008-09 and 2009-10 fiscal years will be financially tough for the City. What will be your top funding priorities and what would you like to see reduced to balance the budget?

I am very interested to hear the opinions of city staff and the current council members, as I feel I need more detailed information on how and why money is spent within certain departments. However, after doing some budget homework, I would make existing staff salaries and health benefits a priority.

I would place a hold on hiring new non-essential personnel. I would also want to find out if any more positions could be funded by grants and other programs on a "position has to pay for itself" basis. I'd like to see if any reductions could be made in the culture and recreation category, or if there are programs that could be temporarily suspended or simply reduced. For example, I have many friends and acquaintances who love the municipal golf course, and I understand that it has historic significance. Can the muni course be designated as an historic site or given some other designation in order to receive federal or state funding?

I would also research grants or incentive programs available to progressive communities like ours to develop more efficient uses of technology and resources.