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MARIETTA DAILY JOURNAL

2020 Voter Guide

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Andy Smith

DISTRICT 2

Party: Republican

Office running for: Cobb County Commission, District 2

Job: President, Smith Todd Company, an Interior Construction Firm

Previously held elected office: I've never run for political office.

Family: Wife of 25+ wonderful years, Ann & two children Michael (24) & Marie (21)

University's name and degree: Georgia Tech, Bachelor of Science (Architecture)

Military service: I have not served in the Military.

Residence: Ann & I Live in Indian Hills in East Cobb

Where did you grow up? Born in VA, I grew up primarily in New York & New Jersey.

How long have you lived here? I've lived in GA for 45 years, 32 years in Cobb, 23 of them in District 2.

1. Why are you the most qualified candidate for the position?

In 2018 I was appointed to the Cobb County Planning Commission where I served until March of this year when I had to resign to qualify for the office I now seek. While on the PC, I consistently protected existing neighborhoods, worked with communities to determine their concerns, and incorporated them into District 2 zoning cases. All you have to do is look at my record and know that my candidacy is being supported by many of the neighborhoods with which I've worked. But protecting neighborhoods

goes beyond just zoning. I serve as vice chairman for the Neighborhood Safety Commission, where I supported the Step and Grade plan for police, assisted efforts to promote safer neighborhoods and increase community involvement. I also serve on the Transit Advisory Board. It's one thing to talk about protecting neighborhoods; it's another to have actually done it. Experience matters. **2. What is the greatest long-term challenge facing the community in which you seek to represent?** I believe the greatest long term challenge facing District 2 is protecting what attracted us to this part of Cobb County in the first place. According to county data there are fewer than 1,400 undeveloped/underdeveloped acres of land in District 2. That is only 3.2% of about 44,000 total acres.

Many projections show that the population of Cobb County will increase by one third over the next 30 years to one million residents. Without planning and controlled zoning, this population increase will challenge the very existence of the neighborhoods which have always been part of the fabric of District 2. Quality homes passing from one generation to the next and serving as a safe place for that generation's children to grow up in is what District 2 neighborhoods have long been and should always be. To ensure they will be here in the future, we need to protect them now.

3. What is your solution to that challenge?

We must protect the character and density of our existing neighborhoods, or we have already lost the fight. But to do this, we need to find the right places for growth to occur. Part of the solution is to ensure that we provide the type of housing options that attract all age groups. Recent experience and studies have shown that many younger home owners desire upscale, low maintenance housing located in live/work/play areas. This trend leads to development in the higher density Activity Centers, which will absorb much of the population growth. Another growing segment of the population is the elderly. As neighborhood homes pass from one generation to the next, we must provide additional senior housing, both supportive and non-supportive. Protecting neighborhoods, finding locations for new housing types, and planning for future growth requires zoning knowledge and experience. A mistake now can have long range implications. Again, experience matters.