

## TOWN OF JAMES ISLAND

### COUNCIL AT-LARGE: 4 SEATS OPEN

**Alexandra Purro:** NO RESPONSES

**1.) One of Charleston Moves' top priorities is our Ashley River Crossing — Bridge Package proposal, for which the City of Charleston, the City of North Charleston and Charleston County would commit to work together on a plan, along with other relevant agencies, to make the North Bridge, the Ashley River Bridge, the James Island Connector and the Wappoo Cut Bridge safe for all modes of transportation. If elected, how will you support Charleston Moves' Bridge Package proposal, specifically as it relates to the James Island Connector and Wappoo Cut Bridge?**

**Leonard Blank (I):** I would have to review each proposal. I support the concept of making all avenues available to modes of transportation such as biking, walking and vehicles. People should be able to travel safely through out Charleston County

**Daniel Boles:** I would like to see a seamless path through JI connecting to the city and the bridge across. James Island is more than ready for improved bike and pedestrian routes.

**Cynthia Mignano:** I think that the most reasonable plan for the James Island Connector is to shift the lanes to allow for a protected bike lane with periodic breaks to allow for disabled vehicles and accidents. It is not ideal but will allow for safer bicycle traffic and accomodate vehicles that need to moved out of the lanes of traffic.

**Garrett Milliken (I):** The James Island Connector badly needs to be retrofitted to be safe and usable for pedestrians and cyclists with a dedicated ped/bike lane. I would suggest and support the same for the North Bridge (Cosgrove). Regarding the Ashley River Bridge and the Wappoo Cut Bridge, I have not seen the most recent designs and am interested in whether cantilever designs are being pursued or what kind of retrofitting could happen to make both of these bridges safe for pedestrians and cyclists, which is of high priority. I support the utilization of federal grant funds (combined with state and local funds if needed) for a stand-alone ped/bike bridge for the Ashley River crossing to downtown. I support grant monies, gas tax funds (CTC), County TST Half Cent funds or any monies available to support and fund the above-mentioned projects. Due to the high number of pedestrian and cyclist fatalities in Charleston County, retrofitting these bridges and also our major roads should be a high priority for local and state governments.

**Darren Troy Mullinax (I):** As you know, all of these transportational arteries are within the boundaries of the city, however they are used daily by our Town citizens. It is imperative that all three of the governmental entities continue to work together to ensure that these modes of transportation remain safe for all modes of transportation. Lines of communications should remain open and ideas put fourth by one entitie should be advanced by the others if the final result will yield positive results for our shared community. Quarterly meetings of the intergovernmental committee, of which I am a member, is a good opportunity for this type of dialogue to be advanced.

**Joshua P. Stokes (I):** The James Island Connector and Wappoo Cut Bridge are outside the jurisdiction of the Town of James Island. However, during my last five years on Town Council I have been a strong supporter of overall, multimodal connectivity on James Island and I continue to support initiatives that allow greater and easier access to pedestrians and bicyclists throughout James Island and in the Charleston area as a whole.

## **2.) If elected, how would you improve the progress of the Rethink Folly Road project?**

**Blank (I):** I have supported this project from its inception. I was on the committee that started this concept.

**Boles:** does anyone who lives here even use folly road? It's a nightmare. I suppose I'd start by reading the report that was released by the council of governments.

**Mignano:** I think that a multi-use path is the safest option. I also think that improving public transit reliability and timeliness would alleviate a lot of the congestion. I do not think that a roundabout at Fort Johnson and Folly Road is a good idea.

**Milliken (I):** I would improve the progress of the Rethink Folly Road project by urging and supporting funding at the Town, City and County level for the installation of safe sidewalks, bike paths and multi-use paths along Folly Road as soon as possible. I will also continue to review any applications for redevelopment projects for properties along Folly Road, looking for compliance with the height, setback and buffer requirements set out by the plan and the Folly Rd Overlay for each "village" of Folly Road. It is essential that we support the concept of Folly Road becoming a safe walkable, bikable "Main Street" as properties are redeveloped along the corridor. I support a reduced speed limit for automobiles as well.

**Mullinax (I):** I believe we continue to make steady progress on this project, but only again, through mutual cooperation and regular communication will this project continue towards a successful conclusion. All parties must stay on the same page while any deviation from one could impede progress. This should never be allowed to happen.

**Stokes (I):** One of the most frustrating parts of government is how slowly the wheels of progress can turn and the Rethink Folly Road project is one example. The Rethink Folly Road project includes multiple municipalities and government agencies and their cooperation is paramount to reach the final goals of the steering committee. That cooperation has, and will, take time. I believe, however, that excellent progress has been made recently that will start to push this project forward with greater urgency. It appears that all stakeholders are generally on the same page from vision and regulatory standpoints, and the Town, City of Charleston, City of Folly Beach, and Charleston County have cooperatively hired an outside project manager to assist in all aspects of planning, implementing, supporting, and funding the Rethink Folly Road project.

## **3.) Do you support a complete street vision for Maybank Highway, which would include safe, connected pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, between Folly Road and the Paul Gelegotis Bridge (aka Stono Bridge)?**

**Blank (I):** Yes. I would have to see this project before I can commit voicing my approval.

**Boles:** Yep. And no more apartment/condos along the way.

**Mignano:** I do support a complete street vision for Maybank Highway. The sidewalks, as they are, are dangerous. We need a buffer between the sidewalk and the traffic lanes. A multi-use path for pedestrians and bicyclists separated from the traffic lanes would be ideal.

**Milliken (I):** Yes; this area is a major concern because the City of Charleston has allowed substantial population growth without supporting infrastructure. Further the Gathering Place zoning allowed multi story buildings right on the street thus limiting the potential for bus pullouts or bike paths. Maybank does not need to be a highway between the bridge and Folly Rd. The entire stretch has too many curb cuts and should not allow traffic speed beyond 30 mph. The City and Charleston County should devise a Maybank Highway overlay zoning to help implement a plan for the area infrastructure.

**Mullinax (I):** Yes, I certainly do. All modes of transportation should be safe for all of our citizens.

**Stokes (I):** Maybank Highway is also outside the jurisdiction of the Town of James Island, but possible future annexation could allow for some properties along Maybank Highway to be annexed by the Town. I do support a complete streets vision for Maybank Highway though. Maybank sees heavy car, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic and a safe, accessible street is vital to the residents and businesses along Maybank.

#### **4.) Please list your priority transportation projects and which modes each serve.**

**Blank (I):** Complete streets, sidewalks and bike paths on all major roads on James Island

**Boles:** This city has a ton of room to grow pedestrian and bicycle safety and utility. I also like public transportation, but people here do not seem to place a high priority on buses.

**Mignano:** I think that public transit efficiency could really change our lives on this island. After travelling Fort Johnson Road and Camp for more than a decade, I think that multi-paths are a much safer option for bicyclists than riding on the road with vehicles who either don't see them, pass too closely, or disregard them.

**Milliken (I):** My prioritized projects include: sidewalks completed from Fort Johnson Rd to Riverland Dr along Camp Rd., safe sidewalks and bike paths along Folly Road from Ellis Creek to Fort Johnson Rd first and then from Fort Johnson Road to Sol Legare Rd., intersection improvements at Central Park Rd/Riverland Dr, Secessionville Rd/Fort Johnson Rd and Camp/Riverland Dr. that will assist safer commuting for cyclists, pedestrians and car travel. The above-mentioned projects will serve all modes and commuters (walkers/bikers/cars). Another project that is of high priority to implement as soon as possible is the improvement along Maybank Highway near Woodland Shores Rd (City/County) where there have been fatalities.

**Mullinax (I):** I, along with other members of James Island Town Council, have been working on traffic calming plans to reduce speeding in our neighborhoods. The options of speed humps, additional street signs (stop signs and speed limit signs) and flashing radar signs have been explored. I am a fan of flash-

ing radar signs. I see them as a real deterrent to speeding. Since they can only be installed on speed limit signs, obtaining more such signs for the community is a high priority. One of my personal top priorities has been to get a flashing radar sign near the dangerous curve on Fort Johnson Road, near the entrance to Lighthouse Point. I have been working on this and it is my hope to have the DOT install it soon.

**Stokes (I):** My priority transportation projects are focused in the Town with certain exceptions that have a major impact on James Island as a whole but are outside Town jurisdiction. I continue to focus on the Rethink Folly Road project and improvement of the Folly Road corridor. In addition, I am also focused on intersection projects along Fort Johnson road including Folly, Seccessionville, and Camp Roads. Lastly, I continue to focus on the installation of sidewalks and/or multiuse paths that create connectivity across James Island and provide safe passage for pedestrians and bicyclists. Outside of the Town's jurisdiction, I would list Maybank Highway and the intersection at Riverland Drive and Central Park Road as priorities to increase safety and access.

#### **5.) Please explain your thoughts on the principle of induced demand.**

**Blank (I):** Infrastructure is what is necessary to allow for increased development. If we do not increase our transportation systems as our sprawl happens then we become congested and grid lock occurs.

**Boles:** sounds like "Field of Dreams". It worked for Kevin Costner, right? I'd hate to see our town littered w those electronic scooters but I'm a fan of providing bikes for rent.

**Mignano:** I do not think that we should build a "superhighway" on Folly Road to alleviate the immediate traffic issues. I think the problem is more complex than that. I want to protect the character and charm of James Island that people love. I also want James Island to be a home to people of many income brackets. Part of that is transportation, and of that is affordable housing. I do want our island to have more efficient roadways and more safety for all types of traffic.

**Milliken (I):** The principle of induced demand is that when you widen a road it exceeds capacity almost immediately so you keep widening roads. I am not a believer in this approach. The way you get cars off the road is to have a great public transportation system and safe and easily accessed pedestrian and bicycle features. Road widening occurs because of population growth that exceeds infrastructure. Higher density housing in the James Island/West Ashley regions will induce the demand for the funding and implementation of improved access for all commuters, not just cars (bike lanes, multi-use paths, sidewalks). I feel strongly that we already have a crisis-level need with our current population in James Island and West Ashley to support the full funding for these accommodations at present.

**Mullinax (I):** It is my understanding that more roads bring in more traffic. A top priority should be to repair the roads that we already have, rather than build new ones. Our already existing roads can be expanded on while also making them safer for all modes of transportation. The addition of bicycle lanes, walkways for pedestrians, turn lanes, etc. are better ways to improve area transportation.

**Stokes (I):** I believe the concept of induced demand is completely valid, building bigger roads will likely result in an increase of vehicular traffic if our only focus is bigger roads. I also believe many of our roads are already ill-equipped to deal with the current traffic volume we have on James Island so improvement of our infrastructure must be a priority. My feeling is that there are options available to limit the impact of

induced demand when road improvements are done and that the recent project on Harborview Road is a good example. This project resulted in a bigger/better Harborview Road which includes bike lanes and sidewalks. It also included the addition of two lighted intersections at Fort Sumter and Mikell Drives. Harborview is no longer a straight thoroughfare road without any impediments that is solely meant to move a lot of traffic quickly. The traffic lights allow for the vehicular traffic to be pulsed which slows speeds and allows traffic to empty from side streets without unnecessarily hindering traffic volume. Options have to be evaluated on a project-by-project basis though, one size does not fit all projects.

**6.) What are your personal transportation values and how you would lead on transportation issues if elected?**

**Blank (I):** I am always in support transportation improvements. As situations come forward I will always give my support.

**Boles:** I'm guilty of driving alone in my gas guzzler and I feel a pang of guilt when I do it. I'd like to see a true public transportation option in Charleston.

**Mignano:** I think that we are facing a congestion problem on James Island. I think that if someone wants or needs to bike to work, they should be to do so safely. I think public transit needs to be more efficient and multi-use paths would be the most cost effective and safest options for pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Milliken (I):** I have led on transportation issues by supporting the funding of the design, engineering and construction of new sidewalks and bike paths on James Island in all areas of the island-Town, City and County. I support ALL the elements of the Rethink Folly Road Plan. I also support permeable walkways and sidewalks as flooding on James Island is an issue. I support the County's specified James Island intersection improvement projects that prioritize the safety of ALL commuters—cars, pedestrians and cyclists. My personal transportation values inform my opinion that we badly need more ride-sharing, public (bus/rapid transit) transportation and safety installations for all commuters in Charleston County.

**Mullinax (I):** Transportation should be safe for all modes of transportation. As I said before, only through mutual cooperation and better communication between the governmental entities on James Island can these projects continue to move forward. I would work hard to advance this idea.

**Stokes (I):** My primary transportation values are safety and accessibility, and neither value is subordinate to the other. I am raising my children on James Island and I love the small town feel of James Island even though it is located in the middle of a greater metropolitan area. I want traffic to move through James Island as our roads were designed and I want my kids to be able to walk or ride their bikes to their friends houses. If I am reelected, I will continue to focus on practical solutions to transportation issues that focus on multimodal safety and accessibility.

**7.) If elected, would you support a greater annual funding allocation from your municipality for bike, pedestrian and public transit infrastructure? And, will you lobby SCDOT to increase their spending on bike, pedestrian and public transit infrastructure as well?**

**Blank (I):** As an elected official I do not feel it would be in my best interest to lobby. I would support additional funding for transportation. As a Board Member of The Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester Council

Of Governments I will always support transportation improvements for all of the low country including bicycle paths.

**Boles:** I am not sure JI has the \$\$ for these items, but I would definitely like to see Columbia kick in a few bucks and would be happy to go there and ask.

**Mignano:** I would need to review current budget allocations. Perhaps, the money is already there and just not being used effectively. As far as the SCDOT, I think that there is a lot of waste. I would like to encourage more efficiency in repairs and new projects. I have seen a lot of repetition and "do overs". This would leave more money for the type of projects Charleston Moves wants. For example, there is a pot hole in front of the park by Honey Hill Community. This pot hole has been repaired over 4 times. We, as taxpayer, have paid for this every time!! It is still a problem. As a council member, I would hold their feet to the fire. If I would not pay a contractor to fix their poor work, I would not pay the SCDOT for shoddy work. I think that we as taxpayers should hold contractors accountable for their poor work and not pay them for it. That money could have paid for many of the bike lanes, multipaths, etc.

**Milliken (I):** If re-elected to Town Council, I will continue to support increased funding for all accommodations for cyclists and pedestrians including sidewalks, bike paths and multi-use pathways. I will urge faster implementation of these features on James Island. I would be proud to assist Charleston Moves and transportation advocates to lobby for increased state funding via SCDOT for these accommodations as well.

**Mullinax (I):** Yes, I would. These are all important priorities that should be addressed.

**Stokes (I):** My voting record on issues impacting bike, pedestrian, and public transit issues on James Island speaks for itself. I have been a staunch supporter for all of these issues and will continue to support them if reelected. Over the last five years, the Town has been extremely successful in leveraging multiple funding sources to assist in completing infrastructure projects including SCDOT, BCDCOG, and Charleston County. I will continue to push for leveraging these additional funding sources in helping the residents of the Town and James Island as a whole.