

Appendix C

2010 Biennial Survey Focus Group Transcript Session 1

Moderator: Now let's go ahead and get started. First, let's get an idea about you. All of you live in Cary, right?

[Agreement]

Moderator: Okay. Good. So that's all of you live in Cary. Now I'd like to – now we're not going to use your full names in this, but we would like you just to tell us your first name of course as we go through this and how long you've lived in Cary and where you lived before you moved to Cary. And we'll start out with William.

- I've been in Cary probably 15 years now and seven years in Apex.

Moderator: Okay. Apex. Tom?

- I've been in Cary 5 years, and I moved from Philadelphia.

Moderator: Philadelphia. Sean?

- I'm Sean. I've been here 12 years and North Raleigh before that.

Moderator: Okay.

- Sheldon. I've been in Cary 32 years and prior to that was California.
- My name is Abby, and we've lived in Cary for about a year and a half. And prior to that we lived in Apex.
- My name is Dee, and I've lived in Cary for about 7 years and before that Chapel Hill and before that Buffalo.

Moderator: Okay. Good. Okay. Anybody live in apartments?

- I did. I don't now, but I did. [Agreement that no one else lived in apartment]

Moderator: You did. Okay. That's fine. But all of you live in houses now. Okay. Now growth in Cary showed up again on the survey as a concern. Now the population and the tax base growth rate have been way down recently, and that's due to economic conditions of course. Now how much do you think concerns over growth may be impacted if the Town did more to educate citizens on what the actual growth rate is at this time? William, we'll start and what do you think?

- I don't think that would make much difference to me anyway.
- I mean not really.
- Well, I guess I have to ask what is the concern? I mean are we assuming growth is bad or growth is good and we're just not sure how good we're growing?

Moderator: Well, I think the concern in the survey was exactly – the concern in the survey was a bit that growth was a bit fast. Okay. What is your perception of growth?

- Well, 12 years ago I was a huge fan of it.
- Yeah. What's wrong with it?
- Yeah. I was part of the growth. I loved it.
- Yeah. I've lived here since it was I think it was 17,000 people. So I've seen it grow tremendously, and I've always been a fan of it. I can see where – I can see where it's caused problems and some people wouldn't like it if the Town's growing up around certain people and I can see where they'd resent it. But it's kind of like stopping a flood.
- I am starting to be the hypocrite in the group I guess. Now that I'm here I want it to slow, and now I just want to be the last one in I guess is what I'm saying. Just up the street from me at Old Apex and West Chatham, another three acres just this week and even in this economy surprising was just leveled all the trees. I mean it's been for sale. I saw a commercial lot for sale for the last two or three years. But when you finally see whoosh in about three days something for five years I've been used to, I hate to be not in my backyard, but the only balance that I say is they also just built a big senior home up the street from me. But the good thing I think certainly I don't worry so much in Cary is because it's still the stringent standards about buffers. And there's a certain way things are going to be built. Because even around the property that was just leveled, I already see the whole line of 40 15-foot buffered pines. So in a way I want to see growth slow. Like I said I don't want to live in a metropolis. But I also know Cary does a pretty good job at making sure when things are built they look pretty reasonably pleasing. But if it is going to, you know, I lot more – it seems like a lot more apartment-type units going up, which is making the population multiply so much quicker than the single-family homes of the '90s and the early 2000s that seem to be the mode.
- I agree a lot with what Tom has said. I think that growth is good, and I generally view it as a positive thing. But it can tend to have kind of a negative overshadow with overcrowding and traffic.

Moderator: Okay.

- What's the goal? How does – is 200,000 people a goal or something? Or just making builders richer? Or do we not have enough type citizens? I don't know. I'm pretty satisfied. I mean it was 120 when I moved here five years ago. It's a 140 now. That's a lot of – from where I grew up, that's a whole other town in population.
- I think growth is good, which Cary has done an excellent job of making sure we always have enough water. Other towns have run out of water. So that was the big issue when we moved here. It was right after a drought, and Cary had water and Hillsborough didn't. And so making sure we have enough water and greenways and facilities and that we still have all the things. As long as we have all the things that we're used to, like I use the community centers a lot and I can get my kids into programs in the community centers. I use the greenways all the time, the parks all the time. As long as we have enough of those things, I think it's fine. But that's a concern to me. If you grow too fast, then you don't want to lose those things.

Moderator: So what I'm getting from you is growth is okay. It's just that if it's done properly maybe is what you're trying to tell me and everything and the infrastructure keeps up with it.

- Not growth for the sake of growth. Growth because it's a good planned part of the maturing of the community I think.
- Right. And I think Cary's done an excellent job.
- I have no complaints.

Moderator: That would be my next question. What are the things about growth that people are concerned about? Is it the byproducts of growth? Is it the traffic, the waiting in line? I mean what about growth would be the concerns?

- The concern right now I think about growth would be protecting Jordan Lake, our water supply more than anything.

Moderator: Okay. And I know that you mentioned some of the concerns would be that if the growth is done that they do the buffers.

- You're going to need the buffers around Jordan Lake for the runoffs and everything going into it. I mean it is the main water supply for Apex, Raleigh and probably part of Morrisville and the airport, too, isn't it?
- I think it needs to have a good balance. This is a good group finding out what people are thinking. But making sure that it's not going too fast, making sure that what we need is preserved – the green. You know my children are constantly

commenting on how beautiful and green it is and then they see a whole bunch of trees leveled and it saddens them.

- They can level the trees overnight.
- We live over by where they're building the 540. And we're seeing a lot.
- Mm hmm. I was just out there at the baseball complex today.
- Yeah. We're seeing a lot going on over there. And it's going to be a convenience to have that road being able to take you south and north. But at the same time, I think when you see all the green and the trees being knocked down its kind of sad.
- I do know on Cary Parkway on the Southwest Cary, I can visually already recognize that – I'm not a complainer of traffic. I still think this place is a million times better than many places I've lived on traffic. I don't complain like because I have to wait one second in a traffic light. But there's two or three lights more than when I moved here on High House Road. And then the Fresh Market was built and all that. And I just know on the daily basis to drive on Parkway is not – when I first moved here I was like wow there's never any traffic at all. And then five years later I'm going like you know it's starting to get a little hustle bustle in this little Parkway of ours. But it still flows and I just hope we don't just start dotting every 100 yards with traffic lights either.

Moderator: Okay. Another question is if we look at growth, you can look at growth in Cary, Wake County and the Triangle. As a concern which or all of those, what are concerns for you?

- I don't know if it applies to the schools. But I'm starting to have an ax to grind with the Wake County Schools.
- Yeah.
- It's just too big. It's just too big.
- For me at the schools, when they asked me on the original survey what the one thing I would change about Cary is I said Cary Public Schools instead of Wake County Public Schools. It's the schools.
- I agree with you 100 percent.

Moderator: When we talk about growth is it the growth in the Triangle area, the county or just Cary that's more a concern?

- As it applies to the schools, it's really the whole county.

Moderator: So it includes that.

- Right.
- Because it includes Apex and Holly Springs and all the way up to Wake Forest and Rolesville and all that. And the School Board is certainly – how do you as a School Board or whatever with a number of 15 people and the issues on the Rolesville side of the county are totally different here than in the southwestern part of the county. And they try to put their formula into almost the county that's separate regions. You have city regions, suburban regions, country region and – or the county region kind of because of the northern or western parts and now it just seems to be pretty hard to have a one size fits all for all those diverse areas.
- Our children go to a private school, so the public schools don't affect me directly.
- Sure they do.
- Well...
- My children go to a private school, but it's because of the public school that they go to a private school. Yeah.
- Part of the reason, yes, that's true. That's true. But one of the things I've noticed since we've lived here and we moved from Florida four years ago. We lived in Apex. So we saw it in Apex and Cary for a year and a half. Every time I turn on the news something is different. First they want everyone to be this and year-round. Then they want everyone to this. Then they want everyone to go here. Then they want everyone to go here and be bussed and not be bussed.
- It's crazy.
- It just sounds so unorganized and chaotic.
- You think the new Board is going to go in a better direction on that. That's the goal hopefully. And I met a couple of School Board members. So we think that's the new latest fix it all.
- You know as not having any kids, the School Board sends surveys out to the parents, what the parents want. But they never send surveys out to the taxpayers and what the taxpayers want.
- Sorry. I'm a parent. They didn't send me a survey either, because my kid goes to private school.
- Yeah. It's kind of the same.

- And in my development, 50 percent of the students who are eligible for elementary school are not going to Wake County Public Schools.
- Oh, gosh.
- But they don't get surveyed. And we're the people – it's like why aren't we going to public schools?
- Yeah. I mean that's it.
- I mean I have three kids. Why am I spending \$20,000, you know what I mean?
- You know I'd make all the schools year-round.
- Yeah.
- I would actually pay more – God forbid I would pay more in taxes...
- Exactly.
- ...if the Cary School System – and people might think that's elitist, but that's what the squawk is on the others. Oh, Cary is going to – well, so be it. If you want to move here, we'll welcome you in. That's the way that's fair. You vote with your tax dollars. But then again, I guess we could go on for several hours on the schools.

Moderator: What about some of these other folks?

- I'm retired.
- Let's not go there.
- I'm retired, too. Now my concern would be for my grandchildren.
- My kids are in private school, too. So this would be interesting.
- It's affecting your property values, though.
- It's affecting the property. Well, I'm not – I don't want to get political. I'm a big – I've always been a big proponent of community based schools. It's just...
- Logical.

- ...logical. If my kids can walk to the school – I mean when I was a kid growing up, I walked to the school in two feet of snow and all that – up hill all the way both ways.
- But I knew that if I stayed in that neighborhood that my kids would go to that school. Their kids would go to that school. I mean it may have changed. I haven't been back in a long time.
- Everywhere – it hasn't changed anywhere else except in Wake County, USA. Or maybe there's another county in Missouri. Who knows? But I know the rest of the country does it the normal way.
- In my development, there's eight families of kids eligible to go to elementary school. Only one family sends them to the base school. So even if you were like oh I want to send my kid to the school that all the other – no kid – only one family in the neighborhood is going to that school. Their friends aren't going there. And I can't – so I mean there's just no option.
- It's just insanity.
- We could go on and on.

Moderator: Schools are an issue.

- Yeah.
- Just on that issue just from my perspective as far as Cary, Triangle and the Wake County, I mean maybe it's because I'm retired. I would focus on Cary. I mean I like Cary the way it is, and I'd like to keep Cary the way it is. I mean just so if you want to know what my perspective is in that priority, it would be Cary. I don't – I used to work in the Triangle. So maybe four years ago my focus would've been different and I would've been concerned about growth. Although to be honest with you with the economy the way it is now, I'm not sure I see the Triangle growing economically. Who knows? Maybe it will actually take off again. It's changed a lot of focus.
- I'm glad actually that the recession put the brakes on – it slowed down a lot. Maybe it forced everyone to take a breather. The growth proponents, the non-growth proponents, the recession maybe put everything – it gave us all a chance to take a breather and stop battling and everyone trying to do their particular issues. So that may have been a good thing. I think it was nice to see Western Cary slow down and just take a breather.

Moderator: Well, let me ask you another one. When you think about the Town government and what they've done regarding growth in the past two years, what does come to mind? And it could be positive or negative.

- The Greenways, the Tobacco Trail, getting people outside to really experience and enjoy the nature of North Carolina and Cary.
- I don't like the new posts, though.
- You know I think that's to keep vehicles off – out, you know?
- Yeah. It just says Greenway. I've seen a couple of those.
- Yeah.
- It's a personal preference. It's just like that doesn't seem necessary.

Moderator: Are these posts on the Greenway?

- Yeah. They're like on Cary Parkway. They're about five feet tall. They say Greenway on them. They're very modern-looking. I don't think it just doesn't fit in with the green.
- It seems like it doesn't need a sign.
- No, it hasn't in the past I don't think. No.
- Maybe they're trying to draw attention to it.
- Absolutely. I'm sure that's what it is. And there's even one more. Like I went out to the baseball park today, out where you were mentioning. I just saw it and there's another one of those posts.

Moderator: And what about growth? Anything about growth per se that the Town government has done positive or negative in the past two years that comes to mind?

- Well, I mean the thing that comes to mind is the fact that I think Cary was very responsible as far as the government goes in halting the spending on all these projects they had on the books. One was Downtown Cary. There was a lot of – I've just been reading the articles in the paper about the millions of dollars that they've not spent in the last two years. And to me it was – I think it was a positive thing. Don't keep spending that money.

Moderator: Were those mostly like fiscal?

- They were capital projects. They put – I won't say it. It was in tens of millions. It could've been as much as \$70 or \$80 million of capital projects were put on hold. And definitely some of them they delayed them for a couple years, and then they're going to take a look at them. They've been running articles in the

paper about as small as \$200,000 for one and as much as \$5 or \$6 million for maybe redoing pavement. The downtown area of Cary was scheduled for a major revamp.

- I had seen the entire architecture of the downtown project. The thing was going to be an awesome – gentrify these property values I think it would be through the roof in ten years. I can see what they're getting at from older cities that I've lived in. I think it's an awesome thing. But I think it is awesome the Town of Cary said great idea. We're going for it, but in this economy we're going to be smart. It's just as though with all their building permits down, they seemingly maybe through attrition or whatever have not kept the staffs up in City Hall. Just because we might start having a million building permits again, it just seems they've been pretty pragmatic during their session saying hey we're going to keep doing what we're doing and stay smart on this thing.
- Yeah. I think at the end of the day, I think they've done a good job.
- They've done a good job.
- Yeah.
- I mean the city's done a good job of it as far as managing the budget and keeping it in line.

Moderator: Okay. Another question on this. Anything they should – you think they should do that would better manage growth? Or do you think they're doing all they should have?

- I mean the thing that comes to my mind is sort of on Tom's – a little bit on Tom's point. Sometimes we get I think they get carried away, because they get pushed by developers to go out to the fringe parts of the Town and develop that, which means projecting a lot of infrastructure out there, which is expensive. Whereas there's still an awful lot of Town area that could be – I think the term is infill, right? If I was running the Town of Cary, I'd focus my growth on infill. I don't have to add infrastructure. I don't have to run sewers to them. I mean to me that would be a proper place if I wanted to improve my tax base, get more people to live in this Town so that I had more money to spend as a government. Then I would focus my growth on infill. That would be my focus as opposed to saying I'm going to go down to Holly Springs – past Holly Springs where people – the Swift Creek area where they have all these people that don't want to be part of Cary and have websites and everything. As opposed to going in, maybe that's in our extra judicial territory where we're allowed to go, where we could go and extend it. I'm sure developers want to go and have us pump sewer lines and water lines down there.

- Well, builders want to build – I want to build 100 houses at a time. I don't want to put one here and one there and fill in dots.
- Right. And that's the only thing I think I'm glad that hopefully maybe with this current mayor and with the recession, hopefully this speculation – hopefully our politics have gotten out of the pockets of developers. In my opinion there's a lot of comfort there between developers and making guys who probably lived in California or Florida super-rich with these huge construction companies. And they know how to follow the rules, do Cary's rules, but ultimately they're taking the money out of town. They're just here to build and say good-bye.
- I know a lot of builders. I don't – I kind of like...
- They're not the devil.
- ...your comment was – seemed pretty reasonable. I mean, dang, you want to put a new development way out there? I never really ever even thought about, jeez, it costs a lot of money to get the services even out there.
- Right.
- So, yeah. That – it seems like following something like that gives you a better – it's not that you don't build out there, but maybe you balance it better.
- Right. That's the ten year approach as opposed to what I'm going to for the next few years.
- There's a lot of donut holes to fill in. And I live right by where they're building Governors Row. And that makes total sense, because you're right by us – just develop that area instead.

Moderator: I probably should've mentioned this. And some of you have already been doing it. If you have any comments that maybe on stuff we didn't go over in the presentation, the notepads are there for you just to jot it down and they'll still be here at the city, the Town. So anything that you – we don't cover you think maybe we should look at next time in the survey or something that we need to do, just jot it down. And we'll make sure the Town does know about it.

- I mean if I could, I mean I travel a lot for work. And we are so lucky to be in a growing area. So and I respect you want to ding the developers for just getting fat, dumb and happy. Okay. You don't want any – no one said this exact same way, but don't build another house. We don't realize how lucky we are. I mean every town I go to – not town. Every city I go to, my gosh, we are so fortunate. And we're so fortunate to have a problem called, hmm, how do we manage growth?

- Yeah.
- I mean it's – there is a lot of blight out there.
- Well, what we don't want to build houses so fast that the current inventory of non-new houses won't sell.
- That's for sure.
- I mean that's basically the concern. I mean as long as we can turn over all the houses, then more is good.
- Well, but I also think that the market will determine that, whether we put a clamp on the developer or not in my opinion.
- Right.
- So whether you put a new \$10,000 per lot surplus on a developer to try to stem growth, they'll probably keep building it, and people – we're in an area where things will keep turning.

Moderator: One more question. What would the – if you could give the ideal growth situation for Cary, what would you say it should be, the ideal? I think some of you sort of hinted at things already.

- I think it's determined by water facilities and housing turnover. I don't think there is – that it will fit through at some very high rate. As long as you have those things, I think it's fine.

Moderator: Infrastructure type of things.

- Infrastructure and housing – as long as you can sell the current houses. You want to live in a place where you can sell your house afterwards if you have to move.

Moderator: Okay. Do others agree?

- And I think moving slowly is important, too. Because if you move too fast and just keep developing and developing, you get to a point where you stop and say wait a minute. What have we done? It's too late. So to kind of go slow and evaluate it and then keep moving forward.
- Because if you figure if you keep developing, you're going to have to hire more police, put more fire stations in, more EMS stations in.
- More schools.

- More schools. You're going to have to tax more to supply.

Moderator: So more controlled growth is that what you're saying? Does everybody agree that more controlled growth is what you're saying?

- Yeah.
- And my only thing I wonder about it, what is the goal of growth? It's nice to be in a vibrant area as compared to a lot of places that aren't so vibrant. And we can say, hey, we can claim that we are an area that's still growing, but growing for what point? Or even filling in spots, do I want to be filling in anymore? I think 140,000 people in our square mileage, whatever it is right now, seems to be a pretty – I mean what is the goal of growth? I mean keep the area vibrant. Keep the inventory turning over. Get some new stuff going and continue creating I guess. But what is ultimately the goal of growth? Growth is just good because growth is what we do from sea to shining sea? I don't know. What is the goal?
- Yeah. I don't know if I know the goal, but I – every – everything I've read about inhibiting growth has a lot of negative connotations. Chapel Hill inhibited growth through water. They just didn't develop water. It didn't mean that – so it meant the town was a very expensive town to live in. And it also had water problems that are exacerbated when they have droughts. So I mean not having – trying to dampen growth is just as hard as growing nicely I think. I mean most of the inhibitors that you artificially place that I've seen or read about that get put in place on growth usually have consequences.
- So ultimately it is managed growth that you really want. We're going to continue to grow. Growth is probably a good thing in a prudent manner. Inhibitors and being hard to work with never works for anybody whether it's water or anything. So the Chapel Hill's approach was we're just going to make it really hard. And that does – and then it just causes problems secondarily. So I guess – I guess my opinion would be to manage growth, which apparently Cary does and I guess focus groups to say how fast we want to go.

Moderator: Exactly. Well, let's move to traffic. Let's talk traffic for just a moment. Now what are the problems – the problem spots you see for traffic? First of all, are they inside Cary? Are they outside Cary? Maybe – maybe name a few for us.

- There's – I think they're inside Cary. I definitely when I drive my children to school avoid certain roads because of traffic.

Moderator: What roads would those be?

- The 55.

Moderator: The 55. At what time?

- Certain times – certain times of the day. You know the rush hour times are busier. I'd say from even 2 p.m. on it starts to pick up. It does move well. Prior to living here, we lived up north and that's traffic. So really I feel like this is very well-managed. Like you said it's grown from around 120,000 to 140,000. Okay. That's 20,000 more people here and half of them are kids maybe. So 10,000 more cars on the road – I don't know – in a few years. But one of the things that I've noticed that they've done is they were very quick to move over where I live when there were numerous accidents in one particular intersection that was heavily traveled.

Moderator: Which intersection was that?

- It was the intersection of – it used to be called Green Level to Durham Road and Cary Glen. There was a fatality. And they had a traffic light up there within a month or two, which was great, because the Town kind of really asked for it. And I was very pleased with how fast they moved to get the approvals and to get it up. That made a big difference. And one of the other things that I had complained about – I guess complained on the – when I was doing the telephone survey was some of the roads are a mess and potholes.
- Oh, yeah.
- They – I'm starting to see some of that repair work.

Moderator: We'll get to that.

- Okay.
- The area around Cary Elementary is kind of tight if you have to drive in there everyday. That's where my daughter goes to school around there.
- That's a weird intersection.
- It is. I don't know how you'd fix it is the problem.
- They've had fixes in place. They've had proposed fixes for that intersection for at least 20 years. I've seen them, and they've never done them.
- I don't know how.
- Well, the plan that's on hold now is there is a circle that's going to go in there.
- Yeah. But that is a real overhaul.

- It's going to maybe circle around.

Moderator: Is that the Cary Elementary?

- Yeah. The Cary Elementary.

Moderator: And that's during school time?

- Mm hmm. Yeah.

Moderator: Okay. Any other areas?

- I have some pet peeves on how they do the left-turn lanes or now what aren't left-turn lanes. No, not the blinking things.
- You can't see them coming.
- And this is in almost any major intersection area where there's – I don't know how to describe it. So if you're like this, you're coming this way, and there's a shop and you want to go right there, they – you know they now barrier off any left turn before you get to the light. So you have to go up to the light, go down – but then there aren't any left turns from that lane either. So you got to go down sometimes to the next light. It's like we have five-lane wide roads. What is – is there a – and I don't know. I've never seen a problem with like that middle lane being a turn lane just to turn into somewhere.
- Can I visualize like an example of where that is? I have a pretty good memory.
- Like Harrison and Maynard.
- There's a lot of places.
- There's a lot of places like that.

Moderator: Give me an example.

- Like at Davis and High House.

Moderator: Davis and High House. And you said Harrison?

- Harrison and Maynard is like that.
- I think that this is just a general – they made a decision years ago. This is – I mean what they used to do was they'd put these yellow poles up so you couldn't make a left turn even though there was a left-turn land there. And part of that was like if you've come through that intersection that you described, and you've

come through it, they don't want you turning left into and backing into the intersection. And that was the problem they were trying to prevent. So when you came into an intersection, cleared the intersection and then you wanted to make a left turn into a shopping center, that has just almost been routed out of Cary.

- Right. And just because I don't understand it, it takes me longer.
- The reason they came in was a lot of these lanes were still – a lot of these roads were three-lane roads, where the center lane was a turn lane, and there was a lane on either side. And if they let you turn left into that shopping center, that line would back up. No one could turn left coming...
- At the light.
- ...at the light. So their logic there was good. And there were places that they did it back 20 years ago that really made a lot of sense. They haven't – I don't think they've given it a lot of thought to the fact that now these roads are five-lane roads with left-turn lanes. The intersection – they've controlled some new shopping centers where they've put the entrances back further than they used to be. And so they still have the concept that they don't want you turning left into a shopping center from after an intersection.
- And it's just I'm a simple guy. I just kind of want to get where I'm going. And I don't want to have to go through a couple of lights.
- It's just a safety thing I think.
- I think that they're still thinking that it's – it will back traffic up.
- Mm hmm.
- And so they just didn't – in general, everything I've seen around here for the last 15 years, what you've asked what you don't like is what the traffic people in local Cary have made an effort to do. This wasn't haphazard.
- Well, I see it at most major Cary intersections that are either as they're being widened or whatever.

Moderator: Okay. Left turns. Any other areas?

- What I thought you were going to say is there's several lanes where unless you know it's there either your lane will become a left-turn lane or a right-turn only lane. Because I drive them all the time, I know. But if somebody's not used to driving those roads, you can't really anticipate that would happen. And that's Downtown Cary, like Chatham and stuff.

Moderator: Downtown Cary.

- And it's hard for people...
- Maybe just a few more signs like to tell people ahead of time?
- Yeah. The problem is the first couple times you drive it, it's like oh my gosh, and then you never notice again.
- It's weird to go down West Chatham and stuff.
- Yeah.
- But then once you live here, we all – I mean we all probably spend about 98 percent of our lives in our five miles – square miles.
- Yeah. Like the Cary Parkway, if you come Cary Parkway – we live a block from there so we do. I saw this road develop. If you drive in the right lane, you are going to go on U.S. 1.
- Yeah.
- It becomes a right-turn only. That was done a long time ago when that road was – it went – I mean there is a lot of historical fact. They redid it and left it. They could've fixed that and they chose not to put a right-turn lane in. They just left it there. I mean those are I think the kind of little quirks.
- But they don't tell you.
- Well, those are the kinds of things where if you've lived here you know you go left if you want to go through into Town, and you go right if you want to go on U.S. 1. But for people coming into the Town, it's not very friendly.
- Yeah.
- I mean I'd agree with you. I'm agreeing with you 100 percent. Most of those wound up being historical – they just kind of grew. But in that case, I don't know what that would cost to fix it.
- I don't know. But I...
- It's not much.
- ...yeah. I just had a baby. And the people who were going to watch my older children while I had the baby, I had to spend 20 minutes taking them down and make sure you're not in this lane, you know? Because there's no way that this person was going to be able to take my kids to school and not mess this up without me showing them.

Moderator: Okay. Any ideas on how the Town can improve traffic? And I think you've already said some. Anything else you think?

- Well, one of my pet peeves is the Town spent a lot of money on the fiber optic interconnected traffic lights – Kildaire Farm. I mean a lot of them are supposedly interconnected to fiber optics. And so they like to time the streets, and they've I think documented that they've made significant improvements in time. And this is the only time I'm going to say this. I came from – I didn't live in California very long. I didn't like California. But 32 years ago, California had a lot of what they called – I called them intelligent traffic. So if I came up to a traffic signal and there wasn't a lot of traffic coming either way and I pulled into the left-turn lane to go into my subdivision, it clicked an arrow on in five seconds. I turned. It clicked the arrow back off and it left. And it never opened the side streets at all. It just didn't. It didn't cycle them. There weren't any cars on them. Now if I came up to that same intersection and there was a car waiting on the side road, when I got up to that left-turn lane, it didn't give me that arrow. It would go red for everybody, let those guys clear out and then I got the arrow. So I'm a big fan for distributed processing I guess it is. And in this case I'm not a big fan of the – we've got this \$10 million fiber optic system. I can slot the traffic down through Kildaire Farm Road and you know what? I can save you seven minutes. But every road that intersects with it, if you want to make a left turn into the post office, you're going to wait a long time, period.
- Yeah.
- You're going to wait a long time. And if it's at 3 p.m. when there's not a lot of traffic, you're still going to wait a long time. The example of a California – I call it the California light. Lochmere Drive is right by my house and the Cary Parkway – that light behaves independent or has – had until maybe now that they're fiber optics – it still does it sometimes. It behaves like I like it to sometimes. I'll pull up into the left-turn lane, and there's – it's green from the Cary both ways but no traffic's coming. There's nobody on the other side streets. It just clicks to the left turn. I go through it. It clicks. I can see it. It clicks back and it's cleared me. And if there were five cars following me, they didn't have to stop. You know what I mean? Those – and it didn't go red and let nobody coming on the side streets. So I just – it's probably way too technical for them to solve this problem. But I mean I just think that we got in love with this technology we paid for, whereas – and part of that technology is every light now has intelligence with it. They're just driving it from a central focal point.

Moderator: Any other ways you can think of?

- I just have a comment on what is it? It's Cary Parkway and High House. I've noticed at certain times of the day those lights are longer. They're timed longer. And you think you're not going to make it and you do and then ten more

cars behind you make it. Okay. So they're obviously timed to be longer at certain times of the day. I think that can be improved, because there's a huge backup coming on High House to turn left on Cary Parkway. There's one left-turn lane that's kind of short, maybe fits about five cars. And there's 20 cars back, and most of them want to turn left. And I have to stay in that lane. And no one's moving, because they all want to turn left. So now this light is green. Everyone's going. But the people that want to turn left are stuck and they're just kind of sitting there. So that's definitely an intersection.

- And I would like to say to the camera, please, Cary, don't get all excited again about improving the intersection with that plan that was absolutely insane.
- Yeah.
- And you know what? I can live with knowing I live right down there. I know High House and Cary Parkway. And I know it's 6 p.m. I don't want to try to get through there quickly if I'm impatient. But I am certainly willing to live with the extra – they did this study – one minute and four seconds at certain times of the day – blah blah blah. In 12 years it's going to be one minute and 18 seconds. Oh my gosh. There's 18 seconds of my life I'll never get back. I'm willing to kind of live with it.
- Yeah. I've sat there for six to seven minutes quite a bit.
- And guess what? If I know it's 6 p.m. and oh no. I know I'm going to live with that. I mean that's in that area. Now I think it was dumb that they blocked it in so I can't make a left back up towards St. Michael's. Now I got to go – that frustrates me. I got to go Blockbuster and Lowe's, which one do I hit first so I make sure I'm going the right direction?
- Right.
- But the whole plan they had to zigzag people through, that was just unnecessary except for the three hours of the day where it's going to back up. I've been through there rush hour a million times. And most of the time if I have to stop at all, I'm willing to live with that. At 6 p.m. I avoid that left-hand turn lane.
- You just helped my pet peeve, because where I was talking about you can't turn left quite often to get into a shopping center.
- When you said that, I had that one in my head.
- You also have to go – you're forced out through the intersection. So you're – you're forced out into the areas we seem to have the toughest trouble trying to get the most number of people through. So if you let more people out or in without having to go through the intersection, maybe that will help. But I'm not a fiber optical engineer. So I can't...

- And really that's the only intersection in my life – or that shopping center now in my life that I know is my only little headache in the world. So 90 percent of the time I go up to Foodland or whatever. So I don't get too excited. I don't want to see them start getting creative with that intersection, just because then they'll try to do it to five others. And like I said, between 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. you might have to wait a couple seconds. And from 4:30 to 6 p.m. if you don't want to wait, don't go that way. The other 22 hours of the day, it's groovy.
- I'll say Davis and High House, I think there's a lot of – there's a big volume of traffic there. I don't know if it's as much as...
- It's going to get more, too.
- ...High House and Cary Parkway. But Davis and High House, those it seems – I mean I've never had to double-cycle a light. It seems – I don't know – and I never thought about it until now when you were saying that other intersection. It's maybe they're doing something right there, or maybe they're doing something totally different about it.
- Well, there are more lanes, and there is a larger left-turn lane.
- Okay.
- I think you have a center lane there, too, that people can kind of overflow into.
- And the Preston Corners going east on High House, too, there's just no room to do anything to make that left-hand turn lane.
- Right. I know. Yeah.
- At that time of day it's going to back up to the golf course. And that left-hand turn lane does only allow five cars. Coming the other way on the Lowe's side, that left-hand turn lane can hold ten cars, but it's still sometimes back things up. But and you're right about Davis and High House. I remember when they were building it, though.
- It used to be a problem. Now it seems to be flowing well.
- Yeah. Now it's pretty – so it's done.

Moderator: Okay. Let's move on. We talked about street maintenance. Let's get to that. Okay. The other concern was the street maintenance. That's the repaving of potholes issue. Let's get started on the issue. Now who is responsible for paving the streets and fixing potholes in Cary?

- It depends on the roads. Are they State roads or Town roads?

Moderator: Okay. Good. It is. It depends on State roads, Town roads or it could be private roads, too. Let's go into that. Well, we're going to throw out a couple street names here. And you tell us if it's State-maintained, which we'll see if you know that, or if it's Town-maintained or possibly a private road maintained by the people who live on it. Okay. Let's start out first off, who thinks that Kildaire Farm Road is a State road? Raise your hand. [2 hands raised]

- I have no idea.

Moderator: Okay. How about a Town road? [2 hands raised]

- Which one?

Moderator: Kildaire Farm Road.

- I think it's a Town road.
- I don't think it's a State route.

Moderator: Let's start again. Okay. State road, raise your hand.

- No. I don't know. I don't have any idea.

Moderator: Okay. Then you don't have to answer. Do you have to guess? Okay. The rest of you think it's a State road or you're not sure. Okay. That's a State road. Your State taxes go into the repair and maintenance of that one. Alright. Let's try another one.

- How would someone know that?
- If you lived here 32 years.
- There's a number somewhere on it I'm sure.
- Most roads on the – well, I don't want to mess up your – go ahead.

Moderator: Okay. Let's try another one then. How about Maynard Road? Who thinks that's a State road, Maynard? [1 hand raised]

- I'm not playing that game anymore.
- Yeah. I'll say a State road.
- A State road.

Moderator: Well, we're just trying to get a feeling for how the residents see the different roads. How about a Town road? [4 hands raised]

- I think it's a Town road.
- I think it's a Town route.

Moderator: Does anybody think it's private? [0 hands raised]

- No.

Moderator: That's a State road, too, maintained by the State.

- Oh.
- They're all.

Moderator: And your State – your tax dollars that go to the State should maintain that one. Okay. I've got two more. How about Cary Parkway? How about State? [1 hand raised]

- The way we're going, yeah, State.

Moderator: Okay. How about Town? [2 hands raised] Private? [0 hands raised] You're all right. It's both. The northern part of it is the Town's. The rest of that is the State. So that's both. So Cary maintains a part of that. The last one is Academy Street. How about Academy? Is that a State? [1 hand raised]

- It's probably a Town.

Moderator: How about Town? [5 hands raised]

- Town.

Moderator: That one's Town. That one is maintained by the Town, and they're responsible for all the upkeep.

Moderator: Now we know potholes and stuff are a problem and everything. And there's an equity issue here with the Town. Let's get your thoughts on this. Should the Town and should the citizens in this Town pay twice to have the State maintain – the State road maintained? In other words, once through State taxes and once through local. In other words, if the road's not good, should Cary come in and fix it even though it's a State road? Now what Cary is presently doing is when they find a State road that needs repair in their area, they just simply call them and say fix the road. What's your feeling towards that?

- I was under the impression that in some places Cary has actually paid for the pavement redone and then got reimbursed by the State. Is that not true?

Moderator: Would that be the option you want to see then?

- Well, no. I was under the impression the city's already done that.
- Okay. I was under that impression.

Moderator: That might have happened in the past. But presently what they do is they contact the state and say this road needs repair. So that your city – it's all of your state taxes that go to repair and not your city taxes.

- Well, let me just focus into it. Are we talking again about potholes or are we talking about half-mile stretches here? If it's potholes, the Town of Cary does everything great. I think they'd step up to the plate and fix the pothole. The State very well anyway will show its stuff and maybe they'd do that.
- Of course the Town's opinion would be that if we started doing that, then they're going to let you fix all the potholes.
- Yeah. That's the problem.
- Why wouldn't they? I mean seriously. Why wouldn't they?
- I agree.
- Look at what the State is doing now. I mean they're withholding tax revenue from the city of Cary.
- Number one, I'd pay for it once, period. So for me that's simple. Pay for it once.
- I think the Town paying for it is enabling the State to not do what they should be doing.

Moderator: So keep doing what they're doing is what you're saying.

- Yeah.

Moderator: Tell the State to repair when it comes up.

- And but there's a way we can help. If I knew something was a State road and I knew who to call, maybe I'd call the right place. Or maybe it doesn't matter who I call as long as somebody's calling and letting them know.

- Yeah.
- There are maps that will tell you all the State roads. I mean Cary has a really great website. If you ever go to the Town of Cary website, they'll tell you about road improvements, what's – I don't know if you've ever been there. You can go look at it. They'll tell you what – they'll tell you what like road projects and what roads they're going to pave this year versus so like there's private roads or the city roads that they'll pave. They've laid it all out. You can go click and see what right now Cary is going to pave in this coming paving season. It's a great website.
- I'm sure if you called somebody here, they'd say that's a State road but I'll pass your message on. Just so we know who to call.

Moderator: Okay. Let's move onto revenue. Go ahead.

- So you might just – I don't think anybody in here but me has ever looked at the Cary website.
- I have all the time, but not that. But I mean it's a fantastic website. You can find everything about like when to put out your garbage. I mean just all kinds of good information.
- It's a great resource. And I was just going to point out the city might want to somehow try to tap that a little more to people.

Moderator: Have all of you looked at the website?

- Yeah.
- Yeah.
- I've been there, but not to the road section.
- I didn't look at the roads.
- Not to that extent.
- But that's where they have all the parks information.
- The parks are in there, yeah.
- Yeah. The parks are in there. And we use the community centers for the kids all the time.

- I'm signed up for something, and I get – periodically I'll get an email that a concert is coming.
- Oh, yeah.
- Yeah.
- I get emails all the time.
- Or there's a traffic accident on this road and to avoid it. And I think that's very helpful.

Moderator: Excellent. Well, let's move onto revenues and spending money. Now in the survey there were conflicting ideas in the survey this year, and we'd like to get your thoughts on those. Many of the people that answered the survey want to keep taxes and fees low and keep growth somewhat slow or slow but at the same time spend money on roads and move forward on some projects. And as you can imagine, the revenue the Town gets from consumer spending like sales, wine, beer tax, they're way down, because the economy has impacted the spending of consumers, so they don't spend as much, so there's not as much tax revenue. Now Cary has not raised property taxes in 20 years, and growth is down. And if you look at this, the revenues from sales tax and growth have really been a big part of the money Cary spends on new and better things. So remember you were asking where does the money come from? Well, it's mostly the tax revenue and the growth. Now keep in mind to live within the means and not raising your taxes, Cary has cut back on its operations, cut them way back. And it has cancelled projects or delayed projects. And you guys all had seen that in the paper. That's good. We'd like your ideas on how to deal with the conflict between citizens wanting the Town to slow growth further or not raise taxes yet still pay for improvements. What are your thoughts?

- I think you can't have both. That's just not logical.
- I kind of wonder why they don't make more effort to ask the voters in some way.

Moderator: In what way would you like us?

- Maybe have it on your website where you say, hey, here are the 22 projects that we have now put on hold. And there's \$15 million. We actually have \$2 million that we'd like to allocate to do these projects. Either they're going to make a decision because they know fixing this particular road is the most critical thing they do. But there may be ten projects on there where they go you know what? This is a game. There's five people or ten people on the Council. And those ten people may or may not know – they may or may not know or have any idea what the priority of those should be. And if that's the case, then why don't you just say, hey, go look at our website and vote for what the project that you'd like to see. And then the people have sort of a mini-referendum on what projects

of those projects – of these projects that we've said, hey, we've got a block of money. We're willing to put it out to say bring some of these cancelled or postponed projects to life and what would you people think the most important one is? And if you get – if you get a distribution of ten percent, ten percent, ten percent, hey, you can guess as well as they can. If you get 80% of the people say I want this project to go and 20% don't, then I would think the Town Council would be very happy to say 80% of the citizens that looked at this wanted this project, 20% didn't. On the other projects, we just made our best guess like we were going to do anyway by the way with what information that we have.

- Sheldon, if everyone was like you and I, it would be a practical idea. But I think we have to rely on Town officials. We don't – how many people participated in the survey? I don't know. What's the report back?
- It's more people than attend the Town Council.
- Yeah.
- If 1,000 people – no look. You have to – you can put down every new idea and every way to impose it. All I'm saying – and I'm not saying that, hey, if you put that up there and five people vote on it that you should say that's the way I want that to be. But if you get a town of 140,000 people and 10,000 people vote and cast a vote and say 80% of them said that's the one I want, then I think you can be fairly confident that that's a good deal. If you've got 5,000 people that voted on it and they were completely 20%, 20%, 20%, then you could say guess what? That project doesn't have a lot of people that really are in back of it.
- I'm not trying to get in an argument or win an argument, that's just too fraught – with 5,000 or 10,000, how many people had to vote on something to make it. We don't live in a referendum. We have elected officials.
- Well, right now your Town Council is using a focus group of eight people. They're going to get a pretty good idea of...
- Well, the Town Council was elected by the citizens. What was the turnout of the primary last week? I mean people aren't participating.
- I'm just offering a wider perspective that allows people that didn't get contacted for the survey and didn't get contacted for that to express their opinion about how to spend some precious dollars that the Town has. I mean it just seems like one approach that we could do.
- A big project like the downtown project, since there are fiscal problems right now I think it should be a vote. I don't think it should be a survey actually. I think it should be a vote on the voting ballot. But depending on how – I mean it's so large. It's an expensive project. But I'm from the north and my parents were just here. And they are shocked by how low our taxes are. The number of things

and the services we get for our money in Cary is phenomenal. I mean I do not think our property taxes are too high. I don't have a problem with paying more money for beer. That might be a good thing. I think it's just great here. And I don't think – compared to other places, our taxes are very low.

Moderator: I see some of you agreeing with that, too.

- Well, that's one of the reasons we moved here. I mean and it wasn't necessarily these were too low. I thought some of the other areas were too high.
- High, right. I agree.
- So I'm not implying you said oh please raise my taxes. I don't think you said that.
- Right.
- I think she did. No. But I think there was a current of I'm willing to accept some increase, right?
- Do you want to pay more for beer?
- If it was a choice between losing certain services in Cary – if it was a choice between – I mean I use the greenway everyday. And I remember at one point, there was a housing project going on and there was all this runoff on the greenway. And this one little area got slippery and slimy. I thought I should call my Town. I should call the Town. And the next day I thought I should call the Town. I didn't. But the third day there was somebody out there fixing the greenway. I mean if it's a choice between having a greenway that I can fall on and my kids can't bike on and paying a little more in taxes, I'd rather pay a little more in taxes. I mean I want those services.
- I think we've been getting a steal. I mean no raise in 20 years. I think my tax rate is tremendously more than fair. And if they said I had to pay some more bucks next year to make sure I have everything like I want it here in Cary, the reason I stay here and love it here, yeah, I'm willing to put in a couple or however they're going to – frankly if they made it higher, it might be the schools would be blah blah blah and get everyone in the schools willing to pay more. I mean it's a matter – and if it was too much for me, then I would have to move somewhere where it would more meet my needs I guess.
- Yeah. We're probably getting off topic here. I have a different – different perspective.

Moderator: Go ahead.

- We're assuming that all the spending is great right now. And, well, if we spend a little more we're going to get all kinds of new things. I see us spending things on things we don't need.
- I agree with you.
- So don't raise my taxes until we get a chance to get more efficient.

Moderator: We'll hit that up in just a second, too.

- Right. I agree with you. I'm not disagreeing with you.

Moderator: Let me ask you this question, too. So you actually got into the next question. We said certain types of projects or activities you think should have a higher priority over others. And you mentioned that's true. Do you think the Town should focus more on maintenance and upkeep of existing facilities and focus less on new things? Or do you think the Town should strike a balance between the two or what?

- I can't think of anything that this Town needs that it doesn't have. I mean we're very happy here.
- Yeah.
- So I think focusing more on maintaining what they have. That's my opinion.
- I agree with that.

Moderator: Do you agree?

- I tie it back to your comment about maybe the economy got hit a little bit and we put some things on pause. It kind of gives you a chance to – well, let's get our own house back in order. And I'm using the wrong words.
- Yeah. I agree.
- Don't embark on any...
- Upkeep and maintenance.
- I think it's maintenance.

Moderator: Okay. Let me ask you one more – just a minute or more on this here. Is Cary spending the taxpayers' money wisely? Do you think the Town is spending the money from the tax base wisely and appropriately? And if not, what sticks out in your mind as something maybe the Town shouldn't have done?

- So I'll preface this with I think they've done a very good job of spending the money. The thing that sticks out in my mind is the information signs that they stuck around.
- Yeah.
- A complete waste of money.
- They haven't turned them on.

Moderator: The information signs?

- Yeah.
- The information signs seem to be – I don't know how much money that was.

Moderator: Are those the ones on the highway – are those the ones on the highway?

- Yeah.
- It's money long gone.
- And by the way – and by the way, the State did the same things, like the one on 40. When that sign was on, I was sitting in it. When I could read it, it was too late.
- Yeah.
- Now, the Amber Alerts, there's something – they do Amber Alerts and that may be a positive thing.
- Yeah. It gives you a phone number to call.
- Yeah. It gives you – I mean but as far as – I mean I don't know what else they put on those. If it's traffic, it's too late. So I think they pretty much wasted their money on those.
- Sometimes with the 40 it does help me, but you're right. None of the other ones help.
- The ones in the city did on the side of the road, you know? There was one on Lilly Atkins. There's Holly Springs has one – not Holly Springs. Davis has one. And I know they get federal monies, but to me that's not the point. To me it sounds like someone heard about a grant that it would only take this much amount of our city money and we're going to get all this other federal.

- It's cool stuff.
- But no one said is this a good thing?

Moderator: The signs are what you mean.

- Yeah.

Moderator: Okay. So would most of you agree the Town is spending the money wisely, though?

- I think mostly.
- Yeah.

Moderator: And you said the signage is one issue that's not so good. Anything else?

- I think they could spend a little bit more on road improvements. Out where I live it's still really bad.
- I mean I have to basically...
- But that gets back to that issue. See if all those roads you were talking about were State roads.
- I don't know if they're State roads.
- I think we just told him we don't want the city to spend money on State roads.
- Well, you know what? I don't know. How long does it take from the time you say there's a bad road until the road's repaired? I mean I've lived there for a year and a half and it's a mess still. I think that's too long.
- No, no, no. My point is I don't like bad roads either. And all I'm saying is if it's a State road, we just told the city don't spend money on it. So they don't – right now we told them don't spend the money on it.
- I agree. But I don't know if it's a State road or not.
- Right.
- I'd like to find out, so I'm going to go home and look. I'm going to look at the website.

Moderator: Anything else they spent money on inappropriately or you had concerns about? It's good that you have to think.

- I mean the things that pop into my mind are things like you mentioned the baseball field, the aquatic center, which I don't think we've built yet.

Moderator: Which baseball field?

- The USA Baseball Field.

Moderator: Okay.

- So they've done things that are clearly meant to attract people to the Town. The SAS Soccer. I don't think it's called SAS anymore, but it used to be SAS Soccer Field.
- WakeMed.
- All those things are things that a Town feels compelled to do. I don't think Cary's gotten carried away with them. I think there's the potential to get carried away with them. I mean if I look at a town that's getting carried away with them, I think it's Raleigh. Raleigh has to have a big new convention center. Raleigh has to have this new...
- The amphitheater downtown.
- ...amphitheater that they're spending that's going to compete with Koka. And you know I think on average they've done a good thing. But I think there's – I bet that if you looked at the \$90 billion – or \$90 million worth of projects, there's probably some of them in there like, hey, we want to have a swimming pool. And some people in this Town think that's a great idea. And some people in this Town are probably on the other side that say I don't use it. If you want to build a swimming pool, throw ten bucks in each month and maybe you guys will build that swimming pool for yourselves, right? So I mean I just think there's – and I'm not trying to pick on the baseball or the soccer field or whatever, but I think there's a propensity I think for towns to feel like they have to – that they're compelled to generate this kind of...
- Amenities.
- ...amenities.
- But I think some of us probably agree that's part of the good thing that you've been to the dilapidated recession gloomy places, but I can say, wow, we have USA Training Complex and we have things going on I can be proud of.
- I forget it's here.

- But I tell people that it's exciting when people from other areas, I say, wow, we've got this exciting event going on that draws attention and makes us this little Cary seem like again a pretty vibrant, a pretty great place to live. So I'm pretty proud of it.
- And I'm not trying to knock it down. I'm just saying there's a – there's always a balance. And I think that if you get in – if your town gets in a race that way, they can start spending money that's never going to appeal.
- Who could compete with Cary?
- Well, I think part of it is what you're talking about is that aquatic center was expensive to build. And I don't think that many people use it. Whereas when I look at the parks and the greenways and some of the other things, I use them all the time. And I know people who are using them constantly. And I don't think those greenways are anywhere near as expensive to maintain and use as the aquatic center.
- I love the greenways.
- Right.
- I live in a subdivision that has a bunch of greenways.
- And the aquatic center does sort of target a much more narrower audience.
- Right.
- Swimmers. Whereas even the baseball park, we were out there for little league opening day today. Well, today wasn't opening day – but the Division 2 championships out there. The U.S. Olympic Team practices out there. So that's a facility that gets used a lot. WakeMed Soccer is going to have the NCAA Lacrosse. They got the soccer. They got the – I watched the professional lacrosse there last year. So it's another field in use, whereas definitely the swim center was definitely saying for swimmers only, and the other 90 percent of the people aren't swimmer families.
- I suspect you could make the same case, Tom, if people are into swimming, they think we could have the center here.
- Oh, absolutely.
- The swim center is actually the only thing I use.
- I'm not opposed to the fact that they did the baseball diamond. But just like you said, there's all these people that enjoy it and everything. I've never been

there. I've never watched a game there. I probably won't ever go there. So there's probably a lot of people in the Town that never use that facility. Is it nice to have? Probably. Do more people enjoy it than the aquatic center? Maybe it is and maybe it isn't. I don't know.

- It's not so much about the Town people using it, though. It is about the guests and people coming into our Town.
- Money coming into our Town.
- Yeah. Hotels and things like that.
- Of course.
- I think Cary has done a nice balance of providing a little bit of this, a little bit of this to kind of meet everybody's needs.

Moderator: Good. Last area – communication. The Town is very interested in having citizens participate in the governing process. And they want to create and implement a very – make good decisions on the programs, the projects, the policies, the laws. They want these decisions to reflect the wants, needs and values of the community. In other words, they want you to be happy with what's going on. First off, let's start by defining involvement. When you think about being involved in the Town government, what kinds of things come to mind?

- Voting.

Moderator: Voting. Okay.

- Voting first off.

Moderator: What else?

- I'd say voting would be first off. I think going to Council meetings and observing especially when there's a topic that's important – that might be important to me or important to that person.

Moderator: Okay. Do you guys watch them on TV?

- No.
- Occasionally.

Moderator: Occasionally.

- Mm hmm.

Moderator: Okay. What else do you think?

- Well, typical of anything political, you'll just always have a certain segment of the population that will go. I mean it's great to say we can all get involved and go to Town meetings. Guess what? I'm not going to go either, because I don't have the time with my family and things. So it's not a slight. It's just the practicality of the thing. One thing I think they could do that's been on my mind for a number of years is increase the number of people who sit on Town Council. When I moved here I was amazed at – in fact I ran for my former Town Council, and we had 54,000 residents and 15 wards. So I think we had 15 people on our Board for 54,000 people. And here we're got A, B, C and D. And the way to get more fair representation, because there do become more localized issues. I mean there's basically four elected districts for 140,000 people now. I don't know what the total number is. But I would think that hopefully get a little bit more of a spectrum of opinion on issues. I think we need to cut the electorate districts in half at least or something, so that if I ran for district council – I mean I know who the person is, but she's representing like 50,000 people. I mean that's more than a Congressman. I don't even know what that is – maybe it's 200,000. But I don't even know what neighborhood she lives in or whatever. But I've had specific issues, too. I live right by Bond Lake and my greenways and things. I don't want to go down the street on Saturday morning and say, hey Tom or hey John, you know, here's some issues going on. But I think we definitely could cut that down. It's not a growing government for all those people that think we're just trying to double the size. I mean it's elected officials. I mean we're not increasing Town staff. But I think we could use some more districts to get a better representation so the people – that's probably why half the people don't vote at the local elections. It's like one person for these huge areas.

Moderator: Okay.

- I think that's a good idea.

Moderator: Everybody agree with that?

- It sounds reasonable. Yeah.

Moderator: Excellent. The next thing – what kinds of things would motivate you to get more involved?

- I think the reason I'm not involved is because I don't see a lot of problems. I mean if I saw a problem, I'd get involved.
- You are involved. You're sitting here on a Saturday afternoon. I'm not trying to be smart, but we are probably doing 150 percent more than anybody in this Town.

- But the same thought occurred to me. You know what would make me get involved? The Town doing something I don't like.
- Right.
- Yeah.
- Right.
- Right.
- I mean sadly, but I mean if the Town said they were going to build a new aquatic center, maybe that would make me motivated enough to go and say I don't want you to do that. I don't have any reason why we'd spend the dollars.

Moderator: So the issue could make you.

- I think an issue would be. It's sort of a negative.
- So it's not because of apathy. It's actually more because of satisfaction that maybe we're not that involved.
- Mm hmm.
- We're so content. I mean I'm very content with the Town of Cary.
- I agree.
- It's a great place to retire to.
- It's a fantastic place to have kids. I mean I actually used to not – I didn't like it until I lived here. And now that I've lived here for six months, I said I could never go back to Chapel Hill. I just can't live in that place again after living in Cary. I mean I love Cary. And so I don't want to mess with a great thing.

Moderator: Would all of you agree compared to the previous places you've lived?

- Mm hmm.
- I think it's a great place.
- Yeah.
- I mean I think it's a great little city. I like it a lot.

Moderator: That's good.

- I think we get the billing as one of the retirement communities. It's a high net worth. I don't want to make us out to be the Florida of the south. But I don't want a million and one New Yorkers coming down like Florida to move to North Carolina. But I do like the idea of less families, which means less schools. I think the senior citizen population is a good thing.
- I mean every aspect of age in the Town – I mean I actually didn't ever think of it as a retirement – as a good place to retire to be honest. I mean I guess it is.
- It's starting to be.
- It's wonderful.
- It's starting to get out there in the world.
- But I mean it's mostly – actually my parents when they come here, they're like it's biased towards old people. You have all these spaces for pregnant moms and people with kids. But I mean it's a great place to have a family.

Moderator: Let me ask you this. Outside of participating in the survey and the focus group, which is participation, how many of you have had a level of involvement in Town issues in the past two years? Raise your hands. None of you. You have not.

Moderator: Well, that eliminates two of my other questions overall. The last question. Very quickly. How many of you read print media and that do read print media are now reading it online?

- I do both.
- Both.

Moderator: You do both?

- Yeah. I do both.

Moderator: You do both? All of you do both? Some of you do only print media. Okay. That's very good. Alright. In closing, anything else you want to tell the Town of Cary today before we wrap it up?

- The email distribution list – the Freedom of Information. People are getting our names for the email distribution list, and if there's any way to stop that, my family would appreciate that. I don't know if there is a way to stop it.

- No. They're getting to it. I think I read in the paper last week – I mean a lot of people have been not too satisfied with that in subscribing to an email where it's not necessarily participating in the Town meeting where you become part of the Town record or something like that. But I think it is already being addressed. Whether we get satisfaction, I agree with you, though. You don't appreciate those little reminders – Joe from John's Financial got your email, you know?
- Yeah.
- We think a Town as sophisticated with the brainpower of Cary could do a little better. I mean they're complying with the law I guess to the tee. But I'm sure there's a way they can not have to share our email addresses.
- It maybe would've been nice if we knew beforehand. And then we could make any changes.
- I don't know what you checked, but I agreed in the statement.
- I know. But they have the whole do not call thing now, where you can call into this number and get...
- That doesn't work.
- It has worked for us.
- Really?
- It helped us a lot.

Moderator: Going to the State and trying to get that not to be public – that was in the survey also. And just to let you know it is something we're very happy not to let that go. So I think Cary will address that issue, but we'll let them know. Anything else? Excellent. I appreciate all of you coming in. A great focus group. Thank you so much.