

Kevin Conlon
City Editor
news@corlandstandard.net

Local News

Democratic primary in 7th Ward

By ROBERT CRENNAN
Staff Reporter

rcrannan@corlandstandard.net

Former Cortland 7th Ward Alderwoman Linda Ferguson will run against city Planning Board member Troy Beckwith for the Democratic nomination to challenge incumbent Republican Adam Megivern, who unseated Ferguson two years ago, in the general election.

The 7th Ward neighborhoods have many old homes and elderly residents. Residents are concerned about the number of empty houses in the ward, the neighborhood water, and traffic lights taken down at Pomeroy and East Court streets, the candidates said.

Ferguson was alderwoman for three terms before losing to Megivern in 2015. She has been a resident of the ward for 20 years and said she feels the

needs of the constituents are not being met. Ferguson enjoyed the position when she served and said she got requests from both Democrats and Republicans in the ward to run again.



Beckwith

"I've gotten complaints from residents just walking around the neighborhood," Ferguson said. "All I can say to them is, you need to call your alderman."

Beckwith was born and raised in Homer and has lived in Cortland for the past 20 years. He has been on the city Planning Board for the past six years and is a building superintendent for

Chris Calabro Properties.

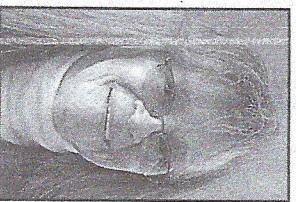
He decided to run because he heard about a lot of issues raised, the most significant being Megivern's conflict of interest from being an alderman while serving as executive director of the Cortland Downtown Partnership.

"I don't think it's fair not giving 110 percent to the job," Beckwith said.

Ferguson has similar concerns with how Megivern is not able to vote on all issues. At the most recent council meeting, Megivern had to recuse himself from voting on changing the use of a \$68,000 loan to the Downtown Partnership.

"We need full representation, not partial representation," Ferguson said. "We need an alderman who's serious about the job and needs of constituents." Beckwith said he would like

to see empty homes in the ward redeveloped, have a four-way stop or traffic lights put up at Pomeroy and East Court streets, make better use of green spaces, and he is against a proposed stage in Courthouse Park.



Ferguson

"It's something not a lot of people want," Beckwith said. "I would leave it the way it is right now."

Ferguson said she would take phone calls personally with residents and manage ward meetings. She said a representative must understand the needs of senior citizens and

will fight for them.

"This isn't New York City, this isn't California, this is Cortland," Ferguson said. "We're a small city and we're used to the old ways."

Beckwith said his dealings on the Planning Board have him out working seven days a week. He considers himself a go-getter with plenty of energy and enthusiasm and believes the ward has strong, good people in it who do not ask for a lot.

"I would like to develop houses not just in the ward, but the whole city," Beckwith said.

The 7th Ward lies on the east side of the city, bordering the banks of the Trounhioga River. Its street boundaries are Port Watson Street, Clinton Avenue, Pendleton Street, Clinton Avenue, Central Avenue and Main Street.

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