
Profile

Whenever possible, submit your application prior to the scheduled meeting of the affected advisory board so that they can consider all applications prior to making a recommendation to Council.

Public Records Statement

I acknowledge that all information submitted in this application becomes a public record and will be searchable online. The Town is not able to remove information from the public record once it has been posted.

I Agree

rmdowling1954@gmail.com

Email Address

Robert

First Name

M

Middle Initial

Dowling

Last Name

1536 Pathway Drive

Street Address

Suite or Apt

Carrboro

City

NC

State

27510

Postal Code

Mobile: (919) 448-7769

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Residency within the Town limits is required for membership on most Council advisory bodies. Memberships of some committees and task forces may be composed of up to forty percent of non-Town residents.

What district do you live in? *

Carrboro Town limits (Light Pink)

[Please consult the town maps HERE if you are unsure.](#)

If you are a Chapel Hill Resident, How long have you lived here?

None Selected

The Council encourages you to visit a meeting of the group that you are interested in serving on. Please choose no more than two groups from the list below to which you would like to apply.

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Housing Advisory Board: Eligible

Question applies to Housing Advisory Board

Select a Seat Category for the Housing Advisory Board *

Housing, Planning or Public Policy Expert

Which Board is your First Choice? *

Housing Advisory Board

How did you find out about this opportunity? (select all that apply)

Other (provide additional information below)

If you chose "Other" from the advertising opportunity listed above, please specify:

Town staff person

Interests & Experiences

What perspective(s) do you bring to the board(s), commission(s), committee(s) or task force(s) to which you are applying?

I was employed by affordable housing nonprofit organizations for 25 years, until I retired in January 2020. My experience is mostly in affordable homeownership, but I have some experience with rental housing as well.

Please provide a brief summary of any other relevant qualifications (skills, abilities, interests and/or experience) you bring.

You may upload a supporting document (e.g., CV or resume). **Please be advised that any information submitted becomes a public record and may be searchable online.**

Demographics

The Town Council seeks to attract persons from diverse backgrounds and believes that childcare and transportation is a potential barrier for qualified and interested applicants. See the [Childcare and Transportation Assistance pilot](#) for further details. In order to consider this application and provide some balance to the various boards, this personal information is required:

Ethnicity *

Caucasian/Non-Hispanic

Gender *

Male

If other, please describe:

Please select your age from the following list. *

over 55

Retired

Occupation

Are you a caregiver for or identify with a disability?

Yes No

Have you participated in the Peoples Academy?

Yes No

Are you a Town of Chapel Hill employee?

Yes No

Ethics Statement

ETHICS GUIDELINES FOR TOWN ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Members of advisory boards and commissions shall not vote on any matter in which they have a conflict of interest or an interest which reasonably might appear to be in conflict with the concept of fairness in dealing with public business. A conflict of interest or a potential conflict occurs if the outcome of the matter being considered is reasonably likely to have a direct, substantial, and readily identifiable financial impact on the member. In addition, members of the Historic District Commission and Board of Adjustment, when these boards are hearing cases, serve as quasi-judicial bodies. Pursuant to General Statute 160D-109(d), members of these boards “shall not participate in or vote on any quasi-judicial matter in a manner that would violate affected persons’ constitutional rights to an impartial decision maker. Impermissible violations of due process include, but are not limited to, a member having a fixed opinion prior to hearing the matter that is not susceptible to change, undisclosed ex parte communications, a close familial, business, or other associational relationship with an affected person, or a financial interest in the outcome of the matter.”

Any member who violates these Ethics Guidelines may be subject to removal from the board or commission. If the advisory board or commission member believes he/she has a conflict of interest then that member shall recuse himself/herself from voting on the matter. In cases where the individual member or the advisory board or commission establishes a conflict of interest, then the advisory board or commission member shall remove themselves from the voting area. Any advisory board or commission member may seek the counsel of the Town Attorney on questions regarding the interpretation of these ethics guidelines or other conflict of interest matters. The interpretation may include a recommendation on whether or not the advisory board or commission member should excuse himself/herself from voting. The advisory board or commission member may request the Town Attorney respond in writing.

I Agree *

Applications will be kept on file from July 1st to June 30th of the same fiscal year. Please reapply each fiscal year if you are still interested in serving on an Advisory Board, Commission, Committee or Task Force and have not yet been appointed.

Robert Dowling
January 2022

Supplement to my application to the Town of Chapel Hill
Housing Advisory Board

Since my application to the Town does not include all that I had written (due to technology challenges), I thought I should write this brief supplement.

As mentioned in my application, I spent the last 25 years of my career working for nonprofit organizations in the affordable housing sector. For three of those years, I worked at Hayti Development Corporation in Durham. For the last 22 years of my working life, I was the executive director of Community Home Trust. I retired in January 2020.

Early in my tenure at CHT, we started using the community land trust (CLT) model to sell homes. This entailed using a 99-year ground lease to enable our homes to remain affordable to successive buyers. Once we began using the CLT model, the Town of Chapel Hill initiated their inclusionary housing program and asked CHT to administer the program. Together with the Town, we learned many lessons and provided affordable homes to hundreds of families and individuals.

Late in my career, we acquired a tax credit rental property in Carrboro called The Landings. We also began managing the Town's master leasing program during my final year at CHT. These two experiences broadened my experience working with extremely low-income households. However, I never participated in the development of housing designed for households below 50% of median income.

Prior to working in affordable housing, I was a banker in New York and Chicago. I had experience with both corporate and retail banking. While working, I also completed a master's degree in finance at NYU. However, my banking experience and finance education is clearly dated.

I decided to apply for a position on the HAB because I believe my experience will be helpful to both the HAB and the Town staff. My goal is to assist the Town in making well-informed decisions about affordable housing. If I am approved to become a member of the HAB, I will be happy to share my experience where applicable and strive to understand new development models that are already in the Town's pipeline. I fully realize that the HAB's role is to advise the Town Council, not to make decisions.

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I Agree

fengming1107@gmail.com

Email Address

Ming

First Name

Middle Initial

Feng

Last Name

214 Napa Valley Way

Street Address

Suite or Apt

Chapel Hill

City

NC

State

27516

Postal Code

Home: (313) 471-0687

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Residency within the Town limits is required for membership on most Council advisory bodies. Memberships of some committees and task forces may be composed of up to forty percent of non-Town residents.

What district do you live in? *

Orange County (Not Chapel Hill limits ETJ or JPA)

[Please consult the town maps HERE if you are unsure.](#)

If you are a Chapel Hill Resident, How long have you lived here?

0-12 months

The Council encourages you to visit a meeting of the group that you are interested in serving on. Please choose no more than two groups from the list below to which you would like to apply.

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Housing Advisory Board: Eligible

Question applies to Community Design Commission

Select a Seat Category for the Community Design Commission

Chapel Hill Resident

Question applies to Housing Advisory Board

Select a Seat Category for the Housing Advisory Board *

Homeowner or Tenant

Which Board is your First Choice? *

Community Design Commission

How did you find out about this opportunity? (select all that apply)

None Selected

If you chose "Other" from the advertising opportunity listed above, please specify:

Interests & Experiences

Question applies to multiple boards

How do you describe your previous advisory board experience?

Non-Chapel Hill Board Experience

What perspective(s) do you bring to the board(s), commission(s), committee(s) or task force(s) to which you are applying?

Stanat's Place (2516 Homestead) Development affects my living community. And I wish to attend the town council virtual meeting to give suggestions.

Please provide a brief summary of any other relevant qualifications (skills, abilities, interests and/or experience) you bring.

N/A

Question applies to Community Design Commission

Do you have special interest, experience, or education/training in design field, architecture, landscape design, horticulture, city planning, green design, place making or related fields? If yes, please explain.

You may upload a supporting document (e.g., CV or resume). **Please be advised that any information submitted becomes a public record and may be searchable online.**

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Ethnicity *

Asian or Pacific Islander

Gender *

Male

If other, please describe:

Please select your age from the following list. *

25-34

Occupation

Are you a caregiver for or identify with a disability?

Yes No

Have you participated in the Peoples Academy?

Yes No

Are you a Town of Chapel Hill employee?

Yes No

Ethics Statement

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Members of advisory boards and commissions shall not discuss, advocate, or vote on any matter in which they have a conflict of interest or an interest which reasonably might appear to be in conflict with the concept of fairness in dealing with public business. A conflict of interest or a potential conflict occurs if a member has a separate, private, or monetary interest, either direct or indirect, in any issue or transaction under consideration. In addition, members of the Historic District Commission and Board of Adjustment, when these boards are hearing cases, serve as quasi-judicial bodies. Pursuant to State Statute 106A-388(e)(2), members of these boards “shall not participate in or vote on any quasi-judicial matter in a manner that would violate affected persons’ constitutional rights to an impartial decision maker. Impermissible violations of due process include, but are not limited to, a member having a fixed opinion prior to hearing the matter that is not susceptible to change, undisclosed ex parte communications, a close familial, business, or other associational relationship with an affected person, or a financial interest in the outcome of the matter.”

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I Agree

rexmercer@live.com

Email Address

Rex

First Name

Middle Initial

Mercer

Last Name

406 New Parkside Drive

Street Address

Suite or Apt

Chapel Hill

City

NC

State

27516

Postal Code

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Residency within the Town limits is required for membership on most Council advisory bodies. Memberships of some committees and task forces may be composed of up to forty percent of non-Town residents.

What district do you live in? *

Chapel Hill Town limits (Purple)

[Please consult the town maps HERE if you are unsure.](#)

If you are a Chapel Hill Resident, How long have you lived here?

Greater than 10 years

The Council encourages you to visit a meeting of the group that you are interested in serving on. Please choose no more than two groups from the list below to which you would like to apply.

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Housing Advisory Board: Eligible

Question applies to Housing Advisory Board

Select a Seat Category for the Housing Advisory Board *

Homeowner or Tenant

Which Board is your First Choice? *

Housing Advisory Board

How did you find out about this opportunity? (select all that apply)

Email

If you chose "Other" from the advertising opportunity listed above, please specify:

Interests & Experiences

What perspective(s) do you bring to the board(s), commission(s), committee(s) or task force(s) to which you are applying?

As a resident of Chapel Hill for more than 20 years, I am very familiar with the town and have followed closely the local issues that affect our residents. I am particularly interested in the issue of housing and see the need to have adequate and varied housing options for residents of all income levels as well as appropriate student housing availability. The most critical current need is for more housing options for very low income residents (<30% AMI), including housing providers who will accept subsidies (e.g. Housing Choice Vouchers). All housing should be planned, constructed, and maintained in ways that help create a high quality of life for all residents. This would include attention to things like housing density, traffic impacts, proximity to retail and services, transportation options, walkable/bikeable access routes, diverse neighborhoods, protection of historic neighborhoods, and appropriate architectural designs.

Please provide a brief summary of any other relevant qualifications (skills, abilities, interests and/or experience) you bring.

Current and past relevant employment, volunteer experience, and education include: - SOAR SOCIAL WORKER, Orange County Department of Social Services. Represented people experiencing or at risk of homelessness to the Social Security Administration as they applied for SSI/SSDI disability income/insurance. The objective was to enable these individuals to secure housing. - HOMESTART PROGRAM MANAGER, Inter-Faith Council for Social Service (IFC). Managed operations and social work/case management support at shelter for women and families experiencing homelessness. Also served as case manager and client services rep in previous roles with IFC. - HABILITATION COUNSELOR, Alberta Professional Services. Supported residents of a Chapel Hill group home for adults with severe and persistent mental illnesses. - ORANGE COUNTY JUSTICE UNITED. Affordable Housing Research Team. - ORANGE COUNTY PARTNERSHIP TO END HOMELESSNESS. HOME Committee, Project Connect, Point-In-Time Count. - HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD, Town of Chapel Hill. Vice-Chair. - PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE (renamed Grievance Hearing Board), Town of Chapel Hill. - CDBG REVIEW BOARD, Town of Chapel Hill. - MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK degree from UNC-Chapel Hill. - (Also see attached resume.)

[Rex Mercer - resume - Dec_2021.docx](#)

You may upload a supporting document (e.g., CV or resume). Please be advised that any information submitted becomes a public record and may be searchable online.

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Ethnicity *

Caucasian/Non-Hispanic

Gender *

Male

If other, please describe:

Please select your age from the following list. *

over 55

Social worker

Occupation

Are you a caregiver for or identify with a disability?

Yes No

Rex Mercer

Have you participated in the Peoples Academy?

Yes No

Are you a Town of Chapel Hill employee?

Yes No

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REX MERCER

Chapel Hill, NC

Social worker with proven success providing human services support to individuals experiencing poverty and homelessness

SOCIAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Orange County Department of Social Services, Hillsborough, NC

SOAR Social Worker (August 2019 – November 2020)

Using the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) model, represented people experiencing or at risk of homelessness to the Social Security Administration as they applied for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

Inter-Faith Council for Social Service (IFC), Chapel Hill/Carrboro, NC

Program Manager, HomeStart (July 2017 – July 2019)

Managed operations and social work/case management support at shelter for women and families experiencing homelessness. Applied housing-first, low-barrier, and trauma-informed models.

Case Manager, HomeStart (July 2016 – July 2017)

Provided case management services to resident families. Facilitated goal setting, follow-up, and community resources connections. Served as agency HMIS database administrator.

Client Services Rep, Community Services (August 2010 – August 2012)

Provided direct services (financial assistance, food, clothing), advocacy, referrals, and information to clients experiencing poverty. Trained, supervised, and assisted volunteers.

UNC Psychology Department Community Clinic, Chapel Hill, NC

Therapist, MSW Internship, UNC School of Social Work (August 2013 – May 2014)

Independently conducted mental health assessment and therapy sessions with clients using cognitive behavioral therapy and other interventions as appropriate.

Freedom House Recovery Center, Chapel Hill, NC

MSW Internship, UNC School of Social Work (September 2012 – April 2013)

Assisted with biopsychosocial intake assessments and individual/group therapy sessions for clients with substance abuse and mental health issues.

Alberta Professional Services, Chapel Hill, NC

Habilitation Counselor (September 2012 – August 2013)

Supported residents of a group home for adults with severe and persistent mental illnesses.

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Fidelity Investments, Human Resources Services, Durham, NC
Director/Vice President, Talent Management Operations (July 2005 – October 2008)
Senior Manager, Compensation and Performance Management (August 2002 – June 2005)

IBM, Human Resources Department, Research Triangle Park, NC
Human resources management and generalist positions (January 1990 – July 2002)

EDUCATION

Master of Social Work
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Master of Personnel and Employee Relations (Human Resources)
University of South Carolina at Columbia

BS in Business Administration
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

COMMUNITY / VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Orange County Justice United, Chapel Hill, NC
Affordable Housing Research Team (2021 – current).

United Church of Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC
Board of Justice, Outreach, and Service (2020 – current).

Human Services Advisory Board, Town of Chapel Hill, NC
Vice-Chairperson. Assessed local human services agencies' needs and recommend funding levels to town council. Appointed for 3-year term (2014 – 2017).

Community Development Block Grant Review Board, Town of Chapel Hill, NC
Assessed applications for CDBG funds and recommended funding levels to town council (2016).

Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness
HOME Committee (2016 – 2020); Project Connect (2013 – 2019); Point-In-Time Count (2013 – 2014).

Personnel Appeals Committee, Town of Chapel Hill, NC
Conducted grievance and appeal hearings for town employees and provided advisory opinions to the town manager. Appointed for 3-year term (2011 – 2014).

Chapel Hill/Carrboro CROP Hunger Walk, Church World Service, Inter-Faith Council
Coordinated community fundraising event, raising \$47,000 for hunger relief efforts (2011).