

## **Danny Turner: Martinsville City Council candidate**

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Danny Turner's campaign for a Martinsville City Council seat in Tuesday's city election is based on the second article of Virginia's Constitution, which states that all power is vested in and derived from the people.

He wants to see the interests of the average person better represented in city government, he said. For too long, too few people have had too much power in the community, he added.

"The perception was that people were being excluded from the decision making. It was closed to a handful of people," he said, adding that now people have become so apathetic that "only people with a vested interest get involved."

Turner predicts voter turnout of about 20 percent of registered voters.

He said he tried to organize a debate among council candidates but only James Clark agreed.

"I guess they're satisfied to not have a discussion of the issues. I hope to change that. The city's business is the people's business," he said.

City council members "need to be open and answerable to the people," he said.

However, incumbent Kimble Reynolds Jr., who is running for re-election Tuesday, said the time, place and presumably the agenda for the debate were set by Turner. Reynolds did not feel it would be an "objective, unbiased and balanced" discussion so he did not attend.

Turner, 52, of 1807 E. Church St. Ext., is a retired UPS carrier and now is the owner of Dominion Media, a digital imaging company.

Making sure Martinsville is prepared for economic development is his main concern, he said. He believes new industries will locate here in the future if the necessary infrastructure is put into place, he added.

That infrastructure includes the New College Institute evolving into a four-year university and building the planned Interstate 73 through Henry County, as close to Martinsville and Patriot Centre at Beaver Creek industrial park as possible, he said.

Turner also believes that tourism has a major role to play in the Martinsville area's economic development. He indicated, though, that efforts to attract tourists should be aimed toward people in the surrounding region.

As gas prices rise, he said, "people are not going to be able to go long distances on vacation" anymore.

With affordable land prices and a well-trained work force locally, economic developers "should be able to sell this place" easily to prospective firms, Turner said.