

ELNA Board 2015-16 Candidate Questionnaire:

YOUR NAME: Amanda Davis

1. From the website: The purpose of the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association is to facilitate understanding with the City of Lawrence and Douglas County; to maintain and enhance living conditions; to foster communication in East Lawrence and to maintain good relations amongst neighbors, businesses, organizations and other neighborhoods in Lawrence.
As a board member, how would you contribute to ELNA's mission?

One of my main goals in running for the ELNA Board is to help build the relationship and lines of communication between the City of Lawrence and the neighborhood association. Over the past several years, that relationship has suffered and I feel like it could be fostered and turned into something that can really benefit the neighborhood through common understanding of ideas, projects and goals.

I believe that my background in Leadership and project management could be beneficial in developing and expanding communication and involvement within the neighborhood. I have a degree in eMarketing and have a great deal of experience in utilizing Social Media to build communities, both virtually and in person.

I am a life-long Lawrencian and have friends and connections, both personally and in the business world, with people all across Lawrence. I have the ability to pull from their knowledge and experience whenever the need arises.

2. How many full ELNA meetings have you been to in the past 12 months?

I believe 4 or 5. Until a month ago, I was working in Overland Park and had to leave for the office at 5am, so meetings in evenings were very difficult for me to attend. As of September 23rd, I work at KU and have the ability to attend as many evening meetings as I need to.

3. Have you volunteered, donated, or attended ELNA events? If so, which?

Yes, in years past, I have volunteered at the Block Party, donated and wrapped many items for the holiday adopt-a-family, baked cookies for the kickball concession stand, attended and supported the YART sale, and I regularly attend every Final Friday event within the neighborhood.

4. What kind of project(s) would you like to pursue for the neighborhood?

I would love to get more young people involved in the neighborhood. Something that I've thought about gauging interest in is an "Adopt-A-Grandparent" program. There are a lot of older neighbors who could use some extra help around the house and a lot of teens and pre-teens who could gain some powerful volunteer hours by participating in a program like this with their neighbors. It might be something that could help reduce the number of people needed for programs like Safe Winter Walkways, etc. and would build a relationship between generations within the neighborhood.

I think it would also be fantastic to have quarterly pot luck meals, as a neighborhood. It wouldn't have to cost anything. People can bring a dish to share, their own beverages and tableware and we could all sit down in a non-meeting style format to just get to know each

other on a personal level. I find that there aren't a lot of opportunities to get to know our neighbors and think that people who are new to the neighborhood may feel intimidated when attending meetings without knowing anyone. I really believe that if we allow for more regular opportunities for engagement on a personal level, we will have much more interaction and collaboration, as a neighborhood.

Another project that might be a bit of an undertaking, but would be well worth it is to canvass the neighborhood a couple of times a year. Each Board member would take a section of the neighborhood and go door to door, talking to those neighbors about their concerns, needs and desires within the neighborhood. This would be a good way to hear the voices of neighbors who may not be able to make it to meetings regularly because they work 2nd shift, have young children, are home-bound, or otherwise unable to make the regularly scheduled meetings. If there are neighbors who are struggling, this would also allow us the opportunity to reach out to them to offer assistance.

5. How long have you lived in East Lawrence? Why did you move here?

I have lived in East Lawrence since 2007. My now-husband, Joshua, bought the house we own now a few weeks before he met me.

Having lived in Lawrence my entire life, East Lawrence had never been on my radar, but if I could go back in time, I would have looked for a home in East Lawrence far before I met Joshua. East Lawrence is a fun, funky, friendly, fantastic neighborhood, filled with people from all walks of life. East Lawrencians have some of the most fantastic life-experiences and stories I've ever heard and have a wealth of information to share.

I wouldn't choose anywhere else to live.

6. What are the major issues facing East Lawrence today?

Major issues facing East Lawrence today include:

- Development concerns
- Homes that have fallen into disrepair
- Keeping our neighborhood school off the chopping block
- Safe Routes to Schools
- Building a better relationship and improving communication with the City (and other entities we interact with)
- Allowing more voices to be heard when responding to issues that impact the neighborhood and making those voices feel welcome at meetings
- Progress of the East Ninth plan

7. How would you characterize the essence of the neighborhood?

East Lawrence is a true melting pot of culture, generations and politics. East Lawrencians come from all walks of life and have diverse opinions and experiences. The neighborhood is a hodge podge of just about everything you can think of and it is unlike any other neighborhood in Lawrence. I find it refreshing that, with most neighbors I've encountered, even if you have a difference of opinion, everyone is still friendly and supportive. It's truly a unique and wonderful place.

8. What other community / city boards/ groups do you belong to or attended regularly this past year?

I have been volunteering and working with charity organizations for the past 20+ years. My early years were spent in a youth service organization, learning how to run meetings, create agendas, plan events and honing my leadership skills. Through that organization, I have worked with the Lawrence Humane Society, Willow Domestic Violence Center, Hannah's House (I don't believe this exists any longer), American Red Cross, various area nursing homes, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Just Food, and a multitude of other local organizations.

I am currently in my 3rd year serving as the Event Co-Chair for the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life of Douglas County. In my time as Event Co-Chair, the event has remained as the largest event in the State of Kansas, raising more than \$500,000 over the last 3 years for American Cancer Society programs and services for cancer patients in Douglas County. Prior to my time as Event Co-Chair, I had spent 5+ years volunteering with the organization as a Team Captain and on the Planning Committee.

On a City Government Level, I have been an active participant at City and County Commission meetings, as well as at the East Ninth Citizens Advisory Committee meetings.