



Businessman Raymond Strebel Announces His Platform For Third Ward Alderman In Alton Position

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ALTON - Raymond Strebel has announced information about his campaign for Alton Third Ward Alderman for the April 2021 election.

Strebel, 48, is a self-employed businessman and has restored homes exclusively in Alton for the past 15 years.

"I have a passion and dedication to this city and feel that I am doing my part to safeguard Alton's charm by restoring architecturally significant homes that are in dire straits. The most prominent example of my work is the current refurbishment of the well-known Bruch-Guertler on the corner of Blair and Alby. A home on the National Historic Registry that Landmarks Illinois listed in 2012 as one of the 10 most endangered historic places in Illinois.

"I was born and raised in Alton and after graduating from MCHS in 1990, I received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Planning from SIUC. Before being devoted to my current passion, I lived in Kankakee, where I co-owned and operated a successful small business, and subsequently worked and consulted with municipalities to support environmental quality. My experiences while in Kankakee afforded me the lessons of owner/operation of a business and the sacrifices that are necessary to remain profitable both personally and professionally. Also, with being so close to Chicago, I was fortunate to gain a very intimate knowledge of the internal workings of municipalities in a different part of the state.

"After six years in Kankakee, my wife and I realized we were homesick and found our way back to Alton a year later. Our story is not a unique one, there are many people that I have met who have a similar experience; leaving only to realize that Alton is such a special place."

Strebel said he is excited and nervous about Alton's future.

"Even after being rewarded with so many hopeful gifts I feel Alton is still regarded as a drive by town. I look to the creation of the Clark Bridge, pedestrian bridge, amphitheater, and train depot for the high-speed rail as examples of why this city should be a destination town. However, the case remains that there are communities in the metro east with growing populations and economies while Alton remains challenged on both fronts.

"As alderman I will address the vacancies in not only my ward but throughout the city. I feel an examination of our demolition policy is due. I feel that if homes are not structurally compromised then they are opportune properties for first time home buyers or lifelong renters. Instead, we are currently using Strong Programs grant money for urban development to pay for demolition and cleanup of these properties. I strongly believe that this money could assist in the empowerment of our citizens and the strengthening our community.

"With the upcoming opening of the Alton Square Mall Theatre, American Cruise Lines port, the collegiate baseball team, and the prospective revitalization of Alton's downtown, it is imperative we have the right leaders in place. When elected to City Council I will bring the foresight and experience to prepare the city for opportunity of growth while preserving the unique characteristics that make Alton worthy of "destination town" status. I will push as a community leader to run a far leaner and economically efficient city. With these attractions that are already in place and those coming, I will work with the council and the mayor to shed the negative connotation that has been unfairly associated with our city and look for ways to generate revenue to diminish our 9-million plus deficit."

Strebel closed by saying his family has lived in the Third Ward in Alton for at least three generations.

"My grandmother not only lived in our ward but also spent her working career in our neighborhood," he said. "I know the strengths and weaknesses of our area. When elected I promise to respond to all my constituents needs and make decision that best represent them while pushing Alton to a better place."

If you have a candidate profile you wish to submit, contribute your platform and biographical information with a clear head and shoulders photo and phone number and e-mail news@riverbender.com.