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# OPINIONS

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The Journal & Topics Newspapers

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## Schmidt Not Running For Mayor

**Editor, Journal:**

Every so often, it becomes necessary to dispel a political rumor lest it detract from the most important function of government, which is to represent and act in the best interests of the citizens. Now is such an occasion. In recent weeks, many people have told me the word on the street is that I am planning on a run for mayor. At first, I laughed it off, although I confess to feeling a great sense of pride that people would even think such a thing possible. However, the truth is that I have no such plans. Since the rumors seem to be getting out of hand, I felt it was time to clear things up.

There is no question that widespread dissatisfaction exists with the current state of city government among, at the very least, a sizable and increasingly vocal group of citizens who have increasingly felt effectively disenfranchised. This dissatisfaction was clearly evidenced by the overwhelming vote in favor of the referendum to slice the City Council in half, a vote which was in direct response to a widespread

view that the aldermen elected to represent them had abandoned any pretense of doing so. Unfortunately, the new City Council has exacerbated the problem by recently voting, in its first major act, to approve a zoning variance for a politically-connected developer despite overwhelming opposition from those citizens most likely to be affected. The prevalent view, whether or not accurate, is that the city government, including the council and the mayor, are beholden to the interests of developers who view Park Ridge not as a place to live but as a place to make a quick bundle of money. Most recently, the council rejected a recall ordinance at the committee level without more than the slightest discussion. I doubt those voters who supported the last referendum will appreciate efforts by the new aldermen to insulate themselves from the same will of the voters that led to their very presence on the council.

I confess that many individuals whose opinions I greatly respect have in fact urged me to run. Perhaps they see me as the best chance to stem the decline of what they

see as the Park Ridge way of life. Others who do not love the mayor no doubt view me as a thorn in his side and would support me simply for that reason. In my mind, the honest truth is that any such talk is hopelessly premature. I have only been an alderman for six months.

There are many things I hope to accomplish as an alderman, such as seeing that council and committee meetings are televised and enactment of an effective preservation ordinance. And frankly, I am still learning the ropes of my duties and my important responsibilities. While talk of me running for mayor is a surefire ego boost, there are many people far more qualified than me to take on that task if voters decide Mr. Frimark is undeserving of a second term, and I do not want to mislead them into thinking that my hat is in the ring. It is not. For now at least, the only job I want is representing the First Ward the very best I can.

**David F. Schmidt**  
First Ward Alderman  
Park Ridge