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## A Primer for Local Elections

By Jim Kleinkauf/Daily News staff

In Hopkinton, where local elections involve political parties, Selectmen Chairwoman Muriel Kramer, a Democrat, faces Planning Board member R.J. Dourney, a Republican.

... The selectmen's race will be the hottest one.

Because, in Hopkinton the divide is less between political parties than it is between those who favor managed growth and those who want no growth. Kramer is in the latter group.

A lifelong Republican before switching parties for an unsuccessful bid to unseat then-incumbent Selectman Ron Clark, a Republican, Kramer's initial political agenda was to block E.L. Harvey's expansion.

Although yesterday, Kramer said her main concern during her first campaign was making sure monitoring wells were in place on the Harvey site.

Kramer has opposed the Fruit Street wastewater treatment facility and Boulder Capital's purchase of Weston Nurseries.

But yesterday, she said, "I am firmly committed to making sure Legacy Farms is a successful project."

In December, when selectmen, under Kramer's leadership, named a committee to negotiate with Boulder on the project's impact, she said it was important to keep the public informed as negotiations progressed.

"I don't see this ever not being an open process," Kramer said.

Since then, the negotiating committee has held unposted weekly meetings that frequently include Dourney, Kramer and Selectman Mary Pratt, but from which the public has been barred.

Dourney, who is the owner of Hearthstone Associates, a Hopkinton-based restaurant franchise, said he plans to bring a strong business background and a professional approach to the board.

Dourney serves as vice chairman of the Planning Board, vice chairman of the Zoning Advisory Committee and is a member of the Downtown Revitalization Committee.

While Dourney touts the need for more commercial growth to lessen the burden on taxpayers, he said, "We need to encourage companies that will complement our community to come to Hopkinton."

Dourney has pledged to "stimulate responsible economic development" and to "provide leadership to govern the town according to the charter."