

Planning Board member vying for selectman's seat

By Richard Conn/Daily News staff

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HOPKINTON —

Planning Board member R.J. Dourney announced yesterday that he will run for a seat on the Board of Selectmen.

Dourney, a Republican, will challenge for the seat currently held by selectmen Chairwoman Muriel Kramer.

Kramer, a Democrat, said yesterday that she hasn't decided if she will run again.

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

"I think the people of Hopkinton deserve leadership that they can be confident in," Dourney said. "I think I'm capable of providing that leadership."

Dourney said many people around town have asked him to vie for the seat, which factored into his decision. "Over the last year, I've had a significant number of people approach me and encourage me to run for selectman - a very diverse group of people," Dourney said.

Elected to the Planning Board in 2005, Dourney said while he's differed with some board members on several issues, he's always valued their opinions. He said he would bring that same tenor to the Board of Selectmen.

"Regardless of position, my style is to treat people with respect," Dourney said.

While Dourney touted the need for more commercial growth in town, he said the town should also encourage more "green" development that is environmentally friendly.

"We need to encourage companies that will complement our community to come to Hopkinton," Dourney said.

Ken Weismantel, chairman of the Republican Town Committee who also serves with Dourney on the Planning Board, said he is "fully supporting" Dourney's candidacy. He said Dourney listens to all views before making decisions and is not a "partisan-type person."

"He's an incredibly decent guy and a good decision-maker," Weismantel said. "I think he'll make an excellent candidate."

Dourney, who also serves on Hopkinton's Downtown Revitalization Committee, planned to obtain nomination papers from the town clerk's office yesterday afternoon.

Dourney is also a member of the Archdiocese of Boston's Child Abuse Prevention Advisory Board. He is married and has three daughters.

The annual town election will be held May 19.