

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS SPECIFIC TO THE POSITION OF TOWN OR VILLAGE BOARD MEMBER AND IS TO BE FILLED OUT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE. If you have not received the general questionnaire, please contact us.

Please email your responses back to us, or mail to:

New Paltz Green Party

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2009 TOWN/VILLAGE BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONS

What is your position on Town and Village Unification?

I led the discussion at the January 2009 joint town/village meeting to apply for funding to study the unification of the Town and Village. I stated that the prior opposition to unification was much lighter than has been anecdotally reported and no documentation of the data used for the original referendum can be found. I voted to apply for funding this study because I believe some form of unification will save taxpayers money; will enable the transfer of development rights from the rural parts of our town to higher density zones in the village and because, ultimately, we ARE one community who care as much about the historic character of our village as we do for the irreplaceable ecological assets of our town.

New Paltz Green Party Town/Village Board Endorsement Questionnaire

2. If elected, would you work to stop the common practice of municipal vehicle idling?

Yes.

3. Are you in favor of the Ban Pesticides in Ulster County initiative?

I do not want to invalidate my ability to vote on this issue by “pre-judging”. If an elected official pre-judges a piece of legislation before all the data, pro or con has been reviewed, that official can be prohibited from voting on the final piece of legislation. I want to be able to vote if this legislation comes to the town board.

4. Are you in favor of granting a PUD to the Crossroads project on Paradise Lane?

PUD status has already been granted to that parcel, but not to the development known as Crossroads. I have frequently voiced my concern that the data provided by the developers of Crossroads does not adequately address the issues of impact on our schools, environment, traffic, rural, historic, community and business character.

Are you in favor of a moratorium on building and subdividing until new zoning ordinances are passed following our soon to be up-dated Comprehensive Master Plan?

I voted in favor of such a moratorium.

Will you support a wetlands law?

I voted to pass our previous wetlands and am working hard to get the new version on our Town Board agenda.

Will you support and encourage the work of Town and Village clubs and boards?

Yes. I supported the town ENCC becoming a board rather than commission and voted to fund the Greenworks committee. I serve as liaison to both these committees. I also serve as liaison to the Historic Preservation, Shared Services Study and Master Plan committees.

What steps will you take to improve current tenant/ landlord relationships as well as the current housing situation in general?

Most housing in the town is not zoned for rentals. I support amending this so that seniors can stay in their homes and create apartments that they can rent. The truth is that despite 200+ new

units at Woodland Pond, there is still no affordable housing for seniors. Accessory apartments will provide affordable housing in well-maintained properties and will promote greater interaction between generations, something that is missing in “seniors only” and student housing. This will not only provide income for the seniors, it will mean they have a neighbor who will be aware of any health or other concerns.

What will you do to ameliorate current traffic problems?

I support the recommendations of the joint Town/Village land use and transportation study. In particular, I have strongly advocated that every new subdivision in the town provide walking and/or bicycle paths.

Could you describe your fiscal philosophy?

The town is bound by union contracts to increase wages for the police, Teamsters and other municipal employees every year. The police budget alone accounts for more than a third of taxes. My philosophy is that residents and local businesses pay more than they should because of the enormous number of tax-exemptions granted in our town and I have consistently fought for more accountability from the Industrial Development Agency, the county agency responsible for granting these exemptions.

What will you do to improve the relationships between SUNY and municipal governments?

Working with organizations like CRREO, a research organization based on the SUNY campus, is helping to bring SUNY and our community together. Common projects like these will, I believe, foster improved relations.

What concrete steps do you plan to take to increase transparency in your office and make it easier for the public to participate in the governing process?

- 1) I have supported broadcasting meetings of the Town Board, the town planning board and the police commission. I voted to create the New Public Access Committee and serve as

town liaison. I voted to fund PATV; to accept their mission statement, and to accept their policies, which preclude any interference from local government in the management of public access.

- 2) I notify members of the Green party of all master plan update meetings.
- 3) I voted to hire a secretary to the town board because the town clerk is not required to keep minutes of any discussions, but merely to record votes and expenditures. Town Board minutes including all discussions will soon be available on the town website. This is crucial for anyone wanting to research a specific topic, such as the new wetlands law.
- 4) I developed the neighbor notification law so that residents are informed of any public hearings taking place on property next to theirs.

Will you appoint members of the Planning Board who have a track record of ecologically-minded policy making and environmentalism in general?

Yes, and I already have. I voted to appoint Margaret Human, Jonathan Wright, Peter Muller and Terence Ward, a former Green Party Member, to the Town Planning Board.

Describe what kind of person you think would make an ideal appointee for the planning board and why.

I look for people who will take a hard look at every proposal and will not feel pressured to make decisions until they are satisfied that the data they are reviewing is accurate. I also want them to understand and respect that the ENCB is the one board which has a mandate to safeguard the environment through recommendations to both the town board and the planning board. It's more important to me that planning board members show a willingness to attend training and educational sessions than to have previous planning experience.

Will you promise to do whatever you can, making code changes if necessary, and by directing the village employees and consultants, to facilitate access to data and the gathering of data on environmental impacts of developments in the

village/ town of New Paltz, and to ensure the transmission of that information to the Environmental Conservation

Commission/ Environmental Conservation Board?

I cannot comment on the Village code, but the town planning board has assigned one member to attend ENCB meetings and this has proved to be very helpful in bringing environmental concerns to the forefront.

Thank you for your interest in the New Paltz Green Party. We will contact you about setting up an interview. If you have questions about this form, please email us at lagusta@lagustasluscious.com.