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# Examiner

MEDIA



## ELECTION PREVIEWS

*A Guide To the Candidates*

**Vote November 2, 2021**

# After Surprise Victory, Langley Seeks Four More Years as Putnam Sheriff

By Sherrie Dulworth

Four years after a shake-up victory that elected him as the new Putnam County sheriff, Robert Langley Jr. said his priority is to continue implementing positive changes to make the community safer.

"I will continue to keep Putnam safe as the people's sheriff," he said.

Langley said the county has had overall crime reduction along with decreases in opioid-related overdose deaths and domestic violence during his administration.

"All of this has made Putnam County, which has historically been one of the safest counties in New York State, now one of the top 20 safest counties in the United States," the sheriff said.

Langley, 58, is the Democratic incumbent who is pitted against Republican challenger Kevin McConville.

A Garrison resident, Langley has spent 40 years serving in Putnam County's emergency services, including time with local fire departments and ambulance corps. His law enforcement career began in 1984, starting in corrections and later as a deputy sheriff with the K-9 unit. In 2002, he was promoted to a criminal investigator working in forensics and identification.



Robert Langley Jr.

If re-elected, Langley said he would like to see crime-fighting technology expanded throughout the county, including automated license plate readers and adoption of officer body cameras. He explained there is a misconception that license plate readers are used for traffic enforcement, but said their purpose is to identify stolen vehicles and to protect the public.

"They can help find a missing or endangered person and to exonerate the innocent of crimes," Langley said.

He wants the Sheriff's Department

to become accredited by the state Department of Criminal Justice Services, meeting all 110 standards to be in complete compliance.

"When I came into the office, the policies and procedures had not been done since 1996," Langley said. "So, we had to start from scratch."

Langley would like to see more officers and patrol cars to help ensure community and officer safety and better address complaints. The department has 160 personnel, about half of whom are law enforcement officers. The current national staffing standard is three officers for every 1,000 residents; Putnam has one officer for every 8,000 residents, he said.

Traffic-related infractions such as speeding in residential areas are common throughout the county.

"I would like to see eight patrol cars per tour, which would provide two cars for each of the towns that don't have their own dedicated police agency," Langley said.

He noted that additional personnel would also assist to maintain better training.

"We all do crisis intervention training, but I would like to see our office have a program in place that maintains that

level of training. Having our own training officers would enable us to do that."

To improve crisis intervention, a new initiative to launch in early 2022 will equip officers with electronic tablets, providing them 24/7 access to mental health providers.

"It's going to enable officers who go to calls for someone having a mental health crisis to actually have an evaluation done in (the resident's) own home," he said.

Langley said the department has re-established relationships with local law enforcement agencies and has built relationships with federal agencies. He brought in a retired FBI agent as a captain who heads investigations.

A criminal investigation initiated by the sheriff's office resulted in arrests and a 13-count indictment last year of a criminal fraud scheme known as the Felony Lane Gang, which involved multistate vehicular and identity theft.

"His knowledge of navigating the federal law enforcement field has enabled us to expand and better serve our community," Langley said.

Langley grew up in Carmel, graduated from the Mahopac School District and is married. After initially retiring from the Sheriff's Department in 2007, he was active in conducting private criminal fraud

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## McConville Hopes Experience Can Help Him Capture Sheriff's Seat

By Sherrie Dulworth

As he campaigns to become the Putnam County sheriff, Kevin McConville said, "my vision is for the sheriff's office to be the premier law enforcement agency in Putnam County."

His first priority would be to create a command staff made up of the best and the brightest.

McConville said that if elected he would create a transition team to initially vet qualified applicants with extensive law enforcement backgrounds and experience. He said he hopes to collaborate with every law enforcement agency in Putnam and surrounding counties.

"We truly are brothers and sisters in law enforcement and when we work together, we are better together," he said.

McConville, 64, is the Republican and Conservative Party candidate who is challenging the Democratic incumbent, Sheriff Robert Langley.

Until 2008, McConville was chief of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Police Department, where he oversaw a 770-member force and a \$100 million budget. More recently, he was director of security and emergency management services for NewYork-Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital, a position he left in February 2020.

McConville wants to see the Sheriff's Department receive accreditation with the state Division of Criminal Justice Services.

"Accreditation to me is one of the most critical aspects of law enforcement," McConville said. "It gives greater public confidence in the agency, and it diminishes vulnerability to civil liability and costly settlements."

"By meeting those standards, it puts you (the department) in the upper tier of law enforcement," he said.

The candidate noted past experiences that exemplify his leadership experience and style.

"As a captain in the MTA, I was there (in New York City) during 9/11. It was the first time in the history of New York City that the entire transit system was shut down," McConville said. "We were one of the lead agencies on that."

"We shut it down, we performed inspections and security sweeps of critical infrastructure points and equipment to ensure safety," he added. "We got that accomplished in six-and-a-half hours."

As the MTA Police Department chief, when London and Madrid suffered public transportation bombings, he described how they enhanced their counterterrorism intelligence unit including extensive training programs and performing security sweeps when



Kevin McConville

information pointed to potential security events.

On the local front, McConville cited countywide auto theft and property stolen from vehicles at residences as a top concern he wants to tackle. He would create a task force with law enforcement in Kent, Carmel, Brewster and Cold Spring along with the state police. His strategy would also include surrounding counties and a bi-state task force with Connecticut.

McConville said that the sheriff's office must identify and address specific local issues based on discussions with town

governments.

"I am adamant about cooperation and communication with every level of government, beginning with the county executive and extending to the legislative bodies and each and every town and village department," McConville said.

Narcotics use is another local priority McConville would address.

"Putnam County is a great consumer of drugs," he said. "It becomes a local quality-of-life issue."

He believes enhanced community policing and targeted enforcement are parts of the solution, as is treatment. Addiction programs must be in place to fight the increased use and addiction to drugs.

A Marist College graduate, McConville has an undergraduate degree in criminal justice and a graduate degree in public administration.

He was first inspired by law enforcement at about 14 years old when he saw a state trooper performing CPR.

"I was struck by that act of attempting to save the life of another," McConville said.

He had an older brother who became a deputy and was also with the state police.

McConville, a Cold Spring native, is married and has three children and two grandchildren.

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# Latimer Seeks Second Term With Opposition From Ex-Astorino Adviser

By Martin Wilbur

This year's race for county executive features two very different candidates. But they both know their way around county government.

Democratic incumbent George Latimer, 67, is running for re-election, which will be his last term in the seat, after introducing a term limits bill that the Board of Legislators approved. He has never lost an election dating back to the 1980s when serving on the Rye City Council, the Board of Legislators, including a stint as its chair, before moving on to the state legislature.

"I think I've done a good job for four years; I'm asking for another final four years," Latimer said. "I've shown in every way, shape or form I can work across the aisle, we can work well and now I put that before the voters."

His challenger, Republican Christine Sculti, 57, of Harrison, may have never held public office, but she served as former county executive Rob Astorino's chief adviser for two terms. She stayed on as head of the Taxi & Limousine commissioner under Latimer for one year before leaving.

Along with her work in the Yonkers mayor's office and for that city in economic development and building a successful business, Sculti said she has the acumen to provide excellent services, economic prosperity and more affordable taxes.

She would be the first woman to hold the office and is the first to run on a major party line for the seat.

"I have an extensive background in assessing and operating government, overseeing the operations of government and policy and economic development," said Sculti, who developed a successful family business and also worked as a corporate business development manager. "I think these are all things we need today from a common-sense perspective. That's what I want to bring."

The response to COVID-19 has dominated the second half of Latimer's term, and some issues have been waylaid because of the pandemic. However,



George Latimer

Latimer pointed to the emphasis on capital projects, including refurbishment of the Sprain Ridge pools and saving historical landmarks such as the Tarrytown lighthouse and Miller House, fiscal stability and partnering wherever possible with local governments.

"We have invested in things that were neglected a long time and we were able to do it," Latimer said. "The results are tangible."

In a second term, Latimer said additional capital project funding focusing on affordable housing and climate change will be a priority as will reaching out to stakeholders to devise a long-term plan for the nearly 90-year-old County Center.

Writing a revised Master Plan for Westchester County Airport and addressing ground noise issues experienced by residents in surrounding communities will also be tackled once the threat from COVID sufficiently diminishes.

Latimer said his administration stopped privatization of the airport and there are no plans to increase capacity.

Sculti said the airport must thrive because it is a key tool for the county's economic development. She said the Astorino administration was well aware of the ground noise issues for residents in areas surrounding the airport and she would address those, if elected.



Christine Sculti

Much of the challenger's issues with the current administration revolves around fiscal policy. Sculti said county spending has been excessive under Latimer, reaching more than \$2 billion, a roughly \$250 million increase during his term.

In addition, at about \$220 million in fund balance, the county is holding too much taxpayer money, particularly after raising the sales tax in 2019 to 8.375 percent, she said. Sculti believes that about half that level of fund balance is sufficient.

"From a fiscal perspective, we do have one-party rule," Sculti said. "I think that's a problem from an accountability standpoint. I do feel that spending is out of whack, as are the taxes."

She said that Latimer positioning himself as a tax-cutter belies the fact that the sales tax increase took about \$150 million out of taxpayers' pockets while the meager budget cuts the past two years amounted to about \$1 million each year.

"There's a way to do it, and from my perspective, that would come with common-sense policy, meeting your obligations, making sure you have a sound safety net, making sure that we're fine when it comes to economic development," Sculti said.

Latimer agreeing to raise county legislators' salaries 52 percent was another outrage, she said.

For his part, Latimer said that when he took over in January 2018, he immediately reached out to state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli to fully understand the county's financial position. He said he took over

a government which saw deteriorating outlooks from the rating agencies and an inadequate fund balance.

Savings from a variety of new agreements such as reaping another \$17 million over 10 years with the Wheelabrator contract in Peekskill, and coming to terms with NuEnergy, which allows the county to go off the grid during times of low consumption, saves bits of money that help balance a budget.

"All of that together represents what happens when you govern and you care about how you govern," Latimer said. "If your philosophy is we don't like government, we think government stinks, we want to reduce government, that's ideology and that's rhetoric."

Sculti said along with fiscal responsibility, public safety would be top of mind in her administration. Westchester residents and visitors must feel safe if they are going to stay and do business in the county. She opposed the Immigrant Protection Act that Sculti believes handcuffs law enforcement by prohibiting them from picking up undocumented immigrants.

Sculti also criticized the county for looking the other way concerning the landing of flights containing migrants from the southern border at Westchester County Airport.

"People are looking at the flights full of people who may not be vaccinated, illegal, and they're very concerned from a public safety and public health issue," Sculti said. "I did call Mr. Latimer out on this."

Latimer said the migrants have been flown into Westchester and other airports around the nation for family reunification and placement into foster care, a federal government operation where the county has no say. He said when migrants were brought to the region, including Westchester, during the Trump administration, there was no outcry from Republicans.

Despite her significant underdog status, Sculti said she's been receiving good vibes when campaigning around Westchester.

"As somebody who has the experience, the background, the knowledge at multiple levels of government, private sector, too, they like what I have to say and I'm telling it to them straight," she said.

## After Surprise Victory, Langley Seeks Four More Years as Putnam Sheriff

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investigations.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges for law enforcement. Langley said the department kept all employees and inmates safe from the virus within their jurisdiction.

"I think we've done extremely well at protecting everybody. We put forth a policy on how to address and other agencies were reaching out to us so that they would have guidance," Langley

stated.

He is proud to have returned integrity to the Sheriff's office.

"The sheriff has to be non-partisan," Langley said. "The sheriff has the responsibility to represent all the people regardless of what party affiliation they have, and that's equally and impartially. The sheriff doesn't get to pick and choose what part of the constitutional rights they are going to protect."

## McConville Hopes Experience Can Help Him Capture Sheriff's Seat

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"I love Putnam County. I was born and raised here," McConville said. "My family lives here. As my kids were growing up, I volunteered in the athletic programs."

He said that more recently he and his wife Janice participated in a local food drive for those in need and volunteered

with a local pharmacy to set up distribution points where community residents could receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

"That is what public service is and should be about, the reward of helping and assisting others when they are unable to do so for themselves," McConville said.



# Four Seek Two Available Seats on Cortlandt Town Board

By Rick Pezzullo

With Supervisor Linda Puglisi retiring at the end of the year and Councilwoman Debbie Carter giving up a chance for reelection by running for Receiver of Taxes, the Cortlandt Town Board will be changing a bit in 2022.

While Councilman Dr. Richard Becker has his sights set on succeeding Puglisi, Councilman James Creighton is running for a second four-year term. Joining him on the Democratic and Working Families lines is current Zoning Board of Appeals member Cristin Jacoby.

Looking to upset the apple cart on the Republican and Cortlandt United lines are newcomers Tom Walsh and Warren Smith.

## James Creighton

A former Planning Board member and chairman of the town's Parks, Recreation and Conservation Advisory Board, Creighton, an attorney, said he feels his experience is crucial in implementing policies he played a role in crafting the town's master plan, dubbed Envision Cortlandt.

"As a collaborative problem solver with a wide range of expertise in municipal planning and sustainability, I seek to continue the successful work I and our team have done to keep town taxes low while mitigating the impact of loss of revenues from Indian Point's closure and keeping Cortlandt vibrant with jobs and revenues," Creighton said. "I have raised my family here in Cortlandt and volunteered to make it better for more than 25 years. I am passionate about making Cortlandt more inclusive and sustainable. I am accessible to residents and fight for the issues I believe in – both big and small. I am not afraid to think outside of the box to arrive at solutions for our community."

Creighton served as chairman of the Cortlandt Police Task Force, a diverse group of citizens that discussed policing in the town. He noted he comes from a law enforcement family but is "conflicted" with the state law legalizing cannabis.

"I am in favor of opting in but significantly restricting zoning of dispensaries so that they are only allowed in appropriate areas of our town away from our schools, houses of worship and residential neighborhoods," he said. "Smoking of this substance must continue to be prohibited in any parks, public buildings and any restaurants or other places where smoking of any kind is prohibited."

Creighton said the most pressing issues facing Cortlandt revolve around three topics.

"With respect to Indian Point and taxes, we must continue to push the federal and state governments to ensure a safe and complete decommissioning of the Indian Point Energy Center property while at the



Cristin Jacoby

same time continuing to keep the town's taxes low as we mitigate the impact of the loss of IPEC revenues," he explained.

"Regarding economic development, we must encourage smart development along our main business corridors to keep Cortlandt vibrant with jobs, revenue and a mix of housing opportunities for our residents (especially for our working families, seniors and young adults)," Creighton said. "Finally, we must continue to build on Cortlandt's leadership as a Climate Smart Community with green energy initiatives and ensuring resiliency and public access to our beautiful waterfront."

## Cristin Jacoby

Jacoby, a married mother of two, has lived in Cortlandt for almost 10 years and works in the financial services industry.

"I have education and work experience in municipal finance that I want to bring to the table as the town grapples with the loss of Indian Point's revenue and jobs," she said. "As the mother of two children in public schools, I also want to represent the busy young families in town and ensure everything we do honors the future of our youngest residents. I am forever grateful I chose this wonderful town to raise my family."

Jacoby said the closure of Indian Point presents many challenges for local officials.

"We need to ensure the decommissioning is done in a safe manner and that we are able to replace the jobs and revenue lost without bringing industry to our town that disrupts residents' quality of life or raises environmental concerns," she said. "This will require someone who isn't afraid to ask hard questions and do deep research to get the best solution. I can promise you I am that person."

"My parents raised me to always do what is right, even when there's pressure not to and even when nobody is looking," Jacoby added. "It is something I carry with me every day."

## Warren Smith

Smith, a lifelong Cortlandt resident,



James Creighton



Warren Smith

encourage all concerned citizens to make their voices heard, to share ideas and to help improve our town."

"I think that it is imperative that the pervasive political disfunction in our government, that we witness on the news each night, gets fixed. The remedy begins here at the local level," he said. "Each and every one of us must get involved. If elected to the Town Council, I would make it my mission to continue to encourage civil public participation in the our government."

Smith said Cortlandt faces many critical challenges that demand immediate attention.

"Two of the most pressing issues are the Indian Point closure and subsequent Holtec cleanup. These matters have serious implications for all of us. Cortlandt's cost of living, public school systems, public services sustainability and our general well-being are at stake," he said.

## Tom Walsh

A member of the town's Zoning Board of Appeals since 2018, Walsh, who has been a Cortlandt resident since 2009, also serves on the North Cortlandt Visionary Committee. For the last 23 years he has been employed by Burnham Nationwide, Inc. in New York City where he started as a Project Manager and worked his way up to Executive Vice President and Director of NY Operations. Burnham Nationwide specializes in Building/Zoning Code Consulting and Building Permit Expediting.

"I have dealt with 100's of different municipalities throughout my career as a Code Consultant and know what works and what doesn't work for the public in dealing with moving construction projects more efficiently through their Planning, Zoning, and Permitting process," Walsh stated. "As a member of the Town of Cortlandt Zoning Board Appeals since 2018, I have been part of our towns review board and been part of the decision-making that affects the



Tom Walsh

works for a multi-million-dollar commercial printer in New York City. He is president of the Verplanck Residents Association (VRA), a 40-year member of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Society and a lector at St. Patrick's Church in Verplanck. He has also been an adult leader with Boys Scouts of America for more than 22 years.

He said he decided to become more proactive in the town after being involved in fighting to stop the "Port Cortlandt" project that was under consideration.

Since leading my community in defeating the Port Cortlandt Project I have developed the VRA into a group that is proactive in charting the future of our community. As President of the VRA I put together an executive committee tasked with developing a vision for the wise development of our beautiful Hamlet of Verplanck," he explained. "We are seeking out projects for our community which utilize both business and recreation initiatives that will organically grow our tax base, provide jobs and enhance our waterfront amenities. Through the VRA I am continuing to raise awareness and encourage ALL of our citizens to get involved in our local government. I

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# Becker, Ryan Face Off in Cortlandt Supervisor Race

By Rick Pezzullo

The supervisor seat in the Town of Cortlandt has been occupied for the last 30 years by Linda Puglisi. However, with Puglisi retiring at the end of this year, a new administration will take over in 2022.

Not afraid of the challenge of succeeding Puglisi is Dr. Richard Becker, a cardiologist who has been a councilman for the last 14 years, and Laurie Abbate Ryan, a newly retired high school Mathematics Department chairperson and teacher who served 12 years on the Hendrick Hudson Board of Education.

Becker is running on the Democratic and Working Families lines, while Ryan will appear on the Republican, Conservative and Cortlandt United lines.

"I think I represent what a lot of people are looking for," Becker said. "Philosophically we (Puglisi and Becker) are similar, but we are different personalities. I have the personality and skillset to bring our community forward."

"I want you to know that I am a good, fair, honest and compassionate person," Ryan said. "I have the utmost respect for seniors, veterans and law enforcement. And just because we have different views politically, we should all just want the best for our town."

The two-year term position carries with it an annual salary of more than \$179,000

## Dr. Richard Becker

While practicing at Hudson Valley Hospital, Dr. Becker established the largest private practice cardiology group in Westchester, as well as served as President of the Medical Staff, and as Chairman of The Medical Board. Dr. Becker also established the hospital's inpatient hospitalist group, and the outpatient Westchester Medical Practice.



Laurie Abbate Ryan

In 2014, Dr. Becker joined Phelps Memorial Hospital as Vice-President of Physician Services. He established Phelps Medical Associates, an outpatient medical group at 15 locations. With hundreds of professional employees, he said he honed his management and leadership skills.

His involvement in the Cortlandt community began when he established the Dickerson Mountain Preservation Association, a group that resisted development on wetlands adjacent to the tallest mountain in Westchester. Having attended Planning Board meetings for almost 20 years, his group succeeded in preserving 120 acres. Concurrently, he served on the town's Zoning Board of Appeals for three years. In 2007, he was elected to his first four-year term on the Town Board. He was reelected in 2011, 2015 and 2019.

Becker said he plans to keep "a very limited practice" with only patients he has seen for years, devoting only about



Dr. Richard Becker

five hours a week.

"I will be a full-time supervisor," Becker stressed. "It will never interfere with my primary responsibilities as supervisor."

Although the Indian Point nuclear power plants have shut down, Becker said town officials must still ensure the decommissioning of the facility is safe and the process is transparent.

He said municipalities in the area of Indian Point can't rely any more on one large industry footing the bill and must look for ways to jumpstart the economy. Becker mentioned a desire to have a hotel developed around Annsville Circle, which he said he has already begun exploring.

On town finances, Becker emphasized Cortlandt has "a terrific record." "Everything Linda Puglisi and the comptroller have done is above board."

Besides preserving more than 3,000 acres of open space, Becker said his biggest accomplishment was establishing the successful CHOP Oil Program, which helps residents save money on heating oil.

Becker said Ryan hasn't served on any town committees nor attended any Town Board meetings. He maintained he was not aware of her qualifications to be supervisor.

He said he hopes to be able to serve a minimum of two terms to be able to leave his imprint.

"I don't think it's fair to run unless you are going to do at least two terms," Becker said. "If I love it I'll stay longer. I like to be busy. I like to be involved."

## Laurie Abbate Ryan

Ryan has lived in Cortlandt for 30 years. She has coached CYO and AAU sports and helped with town swim and dive teams. During her time on the Hendrick Hudson Board of Education, Ryan said she was proud to have been part of teams that successfully negotiated numerous bargaining agreements, passed 12 budgets, and five bonds. She redesigned board/staff/community communications with the creation of Meet and Greets because she believed that the

community was not being heard. She also held positions on several committees including Finance, Policy, Facilities, Safety, Curriculum and Strategic Planning. She worked with the Board and Superintendent for strategies regarding the closing of Indian Point as well as both sides of the school community regarding the controversial Princeton Plan model.

"I believe the Board of Education did not listen to the people of the school district," Ryan said of the Princeton Plan controversy. "Communication is key, and we did not communicate appropriately with all residents."

"Quite honestly, being a mom has best prepared me for any job, and all moms know this," said Ryan, a mother of two sons and one daughter. "We make our homes run safely and smoothly. We schedule and plan, meet needs, re-adjust, control finances and budgets, nurture and discipline. We negotiate, stop fights, complete tasks, get the job done and look for no glory."

Ryan said she was satisfied with the job Puglisi did, but for years she kept noticing things that led to her decision "to put my money where my mouth is" and become a candidate.

She said the town needs a greater police presence, claiming the Town Board's recent decision to negotiate with Westchester County Police to dedicate another officer to the town came about because of her.

"Response time is long, crime is rising and we simply need a greater police presence," Ryan stated. "They truly do their best but the area is just too big."

Ryan said the most pressing issue facing Cortlandt was keeping it safe---physically, fiscally and environmentally.

Fiscally, Ryan said she would conduct a forensic audit, target wasteful spending, maintain a 2% cap, balance the budget, increase grant writing, enforce the Town Code to create revenue, and expedite in-rent properties to get them back on the tax rolls.

Ryan said there were many differences between her and Becker.

"The major difference between me and my opponent is that I will be a full-time supervisor and he will not. He will be hiring an assistant at taxpayer expense," Ryan asserted. "My opponent did nothing to fight for Indian Point but rather looked forward to its closing."

"I truly believe all of our local officials did what they thought was best during 2020. This was a new virus and no one was an expert. They followed what the guidelines were," she said. "However, I would have opened Town Hall much sooner, including the court. The Town Hall was closed, yet they received outrageous raises. I would never have allowed that to happen."

## Four Seek Two Available Seats on Cortlandt Town Board

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landscape of our community. I need to hear both sides of every issue, research and analyze the issues before I make any decision."

Walsh has been a vocal opponent of the rezoning of his neighborhood where a few large mixed-use projects have been proposed in the Medical Orientated Zoning District. He maintained the projects would turn a residential area into a commercial district.

"Working to save our neighborhoods from this proposed re-zoning I have become aware of several other areas of Cortlandt that need a sensible voice. Someone to speak for the citizens that saved their money to buy their homes to raise their families," he said. "We need people in office who care and make the right, sensible decisions for all residents

of Cortlandt, and I want the chance to prove this to all residents."

Walsh would like to see an increase in police patrols in neighborhoods to deal with "the rise of petty crimes" and control government spending.

"We need to foreclose on the houses that are in rem and get them sold at a Public Auction and back on our tax rolls. We need to build our tax base with new business and smart developments that maintain the character of our town. We need to maintain our services and give our hard-working front-line town employees respectful wages and well-deserved raises," he said. "I am excited to face the challenges ahead and I hope to work with everyone in our community to make Cortlandt an ever better place to call home!"



# Three Incumbents Look for Second Terms on Peekskill Council

By Rick Pezzullo

Three incumbents and four challengers are jockeying for three available seats on the Peekskill Common Council.

Incumbents Dwight Douglas and Ramon Fernandez are running on the Democratic line, while Vanessa Agudelo, who was snubbed by the Democratic district leaders who supported her four years ago, has been forced to run solo after her Progress 4 Peekskill teammates stopped actively campaigning following their June Democratic Primary defeat. Agudelo is on the Working Families line.

Rob Scott, a local businessman, is Douglas and Fernandez's running mate, while Leesther Brown, Ken Gilleo and Bill Moran are looking to crack the Democratic-dominated council on the Republican and Conservative lines.

## Vanessa Agudelo

Agudelo made history in 2017 as the youngest person (25 years old) ever to be elected to the council and has often clashed with her Democratic colleagues on policy issues. A first-generation Colombian-American, Agudelo is the New York Immigration Coalition's Hudson Valley Member Engagement Manager and worked alongside coalition partners to pass the "Greenlight" bill in 2019, giving all residents in New York State access to driver's licenses regardless of immigration status.

"We need leadership that represents our entire community," she said. "My loyalty is not to a party, it's to the people. I didn't come into politics with any political aspirations. I came into it as an environmental activist. I want to be a vehicle for change. We all have a different role to play. I'm committed to certain policies. I'm committed to my community."

Having drawn comparisons to U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, which she considers a compliment, Agudelo has insisted the city is facing a housing affordability crisis that is creating financial hardships for residents and pricing out many others. She maintained six out of 10 residents in Peekskill are living in housing they can't afford and 40% are paying 50% of their income on housing costs. She also noted Peekskill has the highest rate of foreclosures in Westchester since 2018.

"This to me is the issue of this year and this era in Peekskill," said Agudelo, who has been in the minority on the council in pushing for a requirement of 20% affordable housing for developers in the city's proposed affordable housing ordinance. "Housing should be viewed, not as a commodity used to manipulate the tax base, but as a right every person should have access to. We need to find solutions for the hardships our residents are facing, not just ignore them or try to circumvent them by pushing those



Leesther Brown

residents out and bringing wealthier folks in."

With the Hispanic population rapidly growing in Peekskill, Agudelo said the council should implement a language access policy and have its meetings aired with Spanish captions.

"It's important to be able to see yourself in the leaders that you have," she said. "My colleagues are out of touch with a lot of issues. When we set out on this we knew it would be a long shot. This campaign has opened our eyes on the work that needs to be done to get there. I'm not looking at this election as an end to Progress 4 Peekskill."

## Leesther Brown

Brown has been a city resident for 33 years and is no stranger to the Common Council, often confronting members at meetings. She ran for mayor in 2009 on a third-party ticket and served on the Peekskill Housing Authority Board for five years. She worked for many years in the public health field. Her late sister was Mayor Andre Rainey's grandmother.

"I don't consider myself a politician. I'm just someone trying to make a difference and bring solutions," she said. "I decided let me give it a go. I would represent all. I want to be the change that everyone wants to see."

"The people like me have a voice. People come to me with issues. I go to the council and never get any answers," Brown added. "The people never get any answers, especially under this administration. I don't want to fight. I just want to bring solutions and get along. I want to make a difference."

A registered Independent, Brown said housing has been an issue in Peekskill for 30 years. She favors developers having to build at least 20% affordable housing units.

"We need mixed housing. With stringent criteria it can work," she said. "We have public housing which has always been a hot mess."

Brown opposes Peekskill opting in now to the state cannabis law, contending having dispensaries and lounges will bring more crime to the city.

## Dwight Douglas



Vanessa Agudelo



Ramon Fernandez

Douglas has served on the council since 2020 after being appointed to fill a vacancy. During his career he worked as a professional city planner and village administrator. He is former chairman of the Planning Commission and is currently Vice Chair of the Westchester County Planning Board.

"I am running for reelection because I have the skills and experience that can be helpful to our city, and after the last four years of national chaos, I understand that there are serious threats to our democracy, so serious that I cannot sit on the sidelines and be a spectator," he said. "I will continue to work to make Peekskill be the best place to live and work, and to welcome those who come to stay whether short or long term."

"We have carried out a progressive agenda which has resulted in over \$30 million in grants targeted to downtown revitalization, affordable housing and waterfront development," Douglas stated. "We have conducted and now are implementing a comprehensive reform of our Police Department to strengthen what is already a good Police Department and address identified needs in our community."

Douglas maintained Peekskill is already a major provider of affordable housing "with a track record that is second to none." He said Peekskill currently has three affordable housing developments with 364 units under construction.

"We can and will be supportive of both market rate and 100% affordable housing



Dwight Douglas



Ken Gilleo

developments in the future," he said.

## Ramon Fernandez

Fernandez, who is Dominican, was elected to the council with Agudelo in 2017. While on the council, Fernandez said he has worked with county officials on public transportation issues, advocated to diversify the city's workforce and assisted downtown businesses.

"Actions speak louder than words," he said. "My top priority as a council member has been working to make Peekskill affordable to all residents. If reelected, that would continue to be my main mission in office. On the city council, I introduced the affordable housing ordinance, which is currently under discussion, along with a proposal that residential foreclosures be sold at affordable prices as part of a lottery giving preference to low-income Peekskill residents."

## Ken Gilleo

Gilleo has lived in Peekskill for 28 years. He is Captain of EMS and First Lieutenant with the Montrose Fire Department and is an EMT with the Westchester County Parks Department. He has been employed as a school security guard in the area for 28 years.

"I believe the most fundamental job of local government is public safety and that will be my highest priority when elected to the Peekskill City Council," he said. "Hopefully we've said our piece and called the city out and people see how messed up the city is."

Instead of opting in to the state cannabis

*continued on page 7*

# McKenzie Looks to Make History in Peekskill Mayor Race

By Rick Pezzullo

Peekskill Councilwoman and Deputy Mayor Vivian McKenzie could make history on Nov. 2 by becoming the city's first female Black mayor if she outlasts Republican candidate Emiliano Perez.

"As a mother, business owner, and lifelong resident of this city, I know every inch of Peekskill, from the families feeling squeezed by affordability, to the businesses struggling through COVID and the communities who have felt marginalized," McKenzie said. "I am committed to continuing to build a 21st Century City that represents all of our values. We need leadership that has the experience to guide this city as it grows and ensures that we grow in a way that brings everyone along for the ride."

Perez, who operates a Guatemalan restaurant in the city and owns several rental properties, is running for office for the first time.

"After watching Peekskill deteriorate rapidly in recent years, I decided that I should stop complaining and be the change the city desperately needs," Perez said. "My entire ticket would like to regain a true sense of what it means to be a public servant. We need to serve the people of Peekskill. I am not running for mayor for the salary or for my ego but rather to help save our city from its downward spiral. She (McKenzie) hasn't done anything in eight years. She won't do much in two years (as mayor)."

## Vivian McKenzie

McKenzie has been on the Council since 2013 after she was appointed to replace Councilman Don Bennett. The last two years she has served as Andre Rainey's deputy mayor. She is owner of Kathleen's

Tea Room, which was demolished a few months ago after the roof caved in. She said she hopes to rebuild and reopen in 12 to 18 months.

"It's a long process. I have to go through the process like everyone else," said McKenzie, who noted she will be operating a food truck in front of the site, starting in the spring.

Born and raised in Peekskill, McKenzie maintained Peekskill was experiencing a revitalization and stressed while affordable housing was an issue throughout the region, Peekskill was addressing the issue with more than 300 units of affordable being developed or in the pipeline. She also supports the 10% clause the Council is considering in an affordable housing ordinance that is being reviewed.

"I'm looking for developers that want to invest in Peekskill and want to make development affordable for all," she said. "Some municipalities don't have any affordable housing at all."

McKenzie said the Council's recent decision to advertise for a paid full-time fire chief was not intended to be a replacement for the department's volunteer officials.

"We need as many volunteers as we can get," she said. "This is something that has been looked at for a very long time. Utmost is the safety of our city. As we grow, we need to be accountable."

## Emiliano Perez

Perez has lived in Peekskill for 15 years. He has unveiled an eight-point plan to address several issues "immediately and aggressively."

"I see people getting tired of the same promises and them (Council) not doing anything about what they're saying,"



Vivian McKenzie



Emiliano Perez

Perez said. "Peekskill has a lot of potential. It's a beautiful city. Our priorities will be infrastructure improvements, public safety, bring back transparency and an open-door administration, code enforcement to keep the city clean and financing. We have to investigate where our money and taxes are going."

Perez said he would eliminate "unnecessary and illogical spending."

"We will improve Peekskill's current fiscal situation. The current administration has managed to raise their own salaries while severely raising taxes. We must learn from past mistakes so that we can intelligently, carefully and responsibly spend moving forward. If we continue down the current path, we are on then we will sadly watch this beautiful, historic city sink beyond repair," he said, adding he didn't feel it was a priority for the Council to hire a full-time fire chief.

He also pointed fingers at city officials

for the discolored water that has residents up in arms in recent weeks.

"If people ask me for a glass of water at my restaurant, I say no. The water is brown," Perez remarked. "It's been months with the same situation."

Perez said his Stand Up for Peekskill slate will focus on youth in the city by working on an effective preventative violence plan.

"2020 was rough on everyone, but the youth were hit hard during the best years of their lives. They are the future and they need resources immediately," he said. "Peekskill has already tragically lost too many young lives to senseless violence. We will help them reach their highest potential. We will bring in a variety of successful people with diverse backgrounds for motivational speaking, mentoring and to help show the youth that anything is truly possible."

## Three Incumbents Look for Second Terms on Peekskill Council

*continued from page 6*

law, Gilleo said the city should bring in a retro arcade like recently opened in Croton-on-Hudson.

"Let's change it up a bit. Let's see something different," he said.

Gilleo contended the council demonstrated a lack of transparency when it recently advertised for a full-time fire chief and said City Manager Andy Stewart should be required to reside in Peekskill.

## Bill Moran

Moran, a 51-year city resident, was employed by the Peekskill City School District for more than 24 years and retired as a school security guard at Peekskill High School. He also has coached and mentored youth in Peekskill for years.

"During my time with the school district and being a part of many programs run by the city, I saw firsthand how treating everyone equally and fairly is important if you were going to have success with

whatever it was you were teaching," Moran said. "In today's world, society seems to have forgotten that and I believe this is the primary reason for the problems that we have. Peekskill was a place where everyone felt safe and wanted to walk around and enjoy our beautiful parks and surroundings. I'll work hard to bring that feeling back to all of our citizens."

Moran said he's a big believer in transparency and if he's elected there will be "no secrets." He also stressed he would be an independent voice.

"I can't be swayed. I'm a thick-headed Irishman," he quipped. "I'm not a yes man. If I'm against it, I'm against it."

Moran said he was "100%" behind mayoral candidate Emiliano Perez and is proud to be running on a strong team.

"I think we have a fighter's chance," he said. "You never know."

## Rob Scott

Scott has been a resident of Peekskill for more than 20 years and is owner



Bill Moran



Rob Scott

of PK Blendz Juice Bar in downtown Peekskill. He is also a singer/artist who has performed at numerous venues in Peekskill.

"Peekskill is my home. It's a place where I chose to start a family. It's a place I chose to start a business," he said when he was nominated. "Peekskill is a special

place and I think anything is possible. But I can't do it alone. Peekskill is a diverse city. I want to be someone who is listening and open to anyone. Together, we have the power to define and redefine our city.



# Two Incumbents Running for Reelection on Somers Town Board

By Rick Pezzullo

Incumbent Republican councilmen Anthony Ciriaco and William Faulkner are running for reelection to the Somers Town Board, but to earn new four-year terms they will have to defeat Democratic opponents Margaret DiLorenzo and Thomas Newman, Jr. on Nov. 2.

## Anthony Ciriaco

Before joining the Town Board nine years ago, Ciriaco served six years on the Somers Board of Education.

"Somers has made a 15-year investment in me. My background in finance, knowledge of our community, network of people, and relationship with numerous civic organizations uniquely situates me for continued success as your councilman," Ciriaco stated. "I enjoy challenging roles and bringing people together for common goals. I take pride in my contribution over the past years to implement the towns strategic direction and preserve Somers standing as an affordable, desirable, and friendly town to live."

Ciriaco said he played a role in elevating the town's strong financial condition, organized and led the Telecommunication Task Force Storm Response Effort, and fought against opioid abuse through community and government partnerships.

"I bring an enormous amount of business and community experience to the town board as Somers manages through changing economic times. My family and I believe community leadership is a valuable example for our youth," he stated.

## Margaret DiLorenzo

DiLorenzo, who has lived in Somers for 25 years, is the granddaughter of a New York Times White House correspondent who had bipartisan relationships with five presidents, (FDR, Truman, Eisenhower, JFK, and Johnson).

"This relationship-building inspired me to follow in his footsteps and work with others, especially those with differing points of view, in order to reach understanding and unity," she stated. "This is why I am a part of many organizations that intersect, including Special Ed PTA, PTA Council, and volunteer support for Partners in Prevention and Race Amity. My leadership emerged with the initiation of Recycling Day, sponsored by the Somers PTA Council Sustainability Committee. We diverted 300 Tons of electronic waste and scrap metal over a five-year period while fundraising \$12,000 for the Somers Central School District."

DiLorenzo works as a construction project manager and previously was employed for 12 years at PepsiCo in Somers.



Margaret DiLorenzo

"As a councilwoman, I will provide the town with my professional skills obtained over the past 30 years in the commercial Design and Construction industry. I bring the will to serve, to build coalitions and to share my knowledge of business and fiscal accountability," she said. "I have an eye for aesthetics, producing flawless execution, and an 'On Time - On Budget' focus, with quality and accountability on projects. I am proficient working with bids, contracts, unions and creating cost saving opportunities."

She noted she would like to develop a Somers Hike/ Bike/ Ride initiative by investigating the feasibility of bike lanes, paved hiking trails, and sidewalks projects with connectivity to the existing North County Trail.

## William Faulkner

Faulkner has been a councilman for the last eight years. He has called Somers home for more than 25 years.

"Somers is the greatest town on Earth! I've seen her grow, evolve and improve. I've celebrated with my fellow Tuskers over birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, Eagle Scouts, weddings, State Championships and most every charitable event. There's literally something for everyone. For me, that's everything," he stated. "Our schools are revered throughout Westchester, the town is in the best financial shape EVER, and the people are the most generous that you could ever meet."

And, I want to keep it that way."

He said the most paramount issue for Somers is maintaining its excellent financial status.

"With my business experience and commitment to fiscal responsibility, I steadfastly insist we remain under the tax cap as we always have which culminated in Somers earning a Triple A Credit Rating ... the best there is!" he stated. "Additional issues include infrastructure and quality of life. I initiated and won support to start the Somers Telecommunications Task



William Faulkner



Anthony Ciriaco

Force. Reliable Service and a Customer Bill of Rights are the unwavering objectives. Another Infrastructure improvement is the new more powerful generator for Heritage Hills. This will provide two weeks of uninterrupted power to the Activity Center in the event of a power outage."

"On the softer side of governance, I'm proud of securing funding for the Somers Litter Task Force to designate Somers as the first town in Westchester County to be a member of Keep America Beautiful," he added. "In my next term, I will build on the success and accomplishments achieved, maintain our Triple A credit rating, work with the state to obtain ownership of town improvements to state roads, continue to improve Internet and cell phone reliability and finish the implementation of the Heritage Hills generator. I will maintain my values of Truth, Justice and Liberty to keep my one and only Campaign Promise ... To Do the Right Thing Because it's the Right Thing. This in turn, will keep Somers, The Greatest Town on Earth."

## Tom Newman, Jr.

Newman, who has lived in Somers since 2008, is a small business owner with prior experience in financial services having spent 17 years



Tom Newman, Jr.

working in Operations Management for global investment banks serving as a Vice President at JP Morgan and as a Managing Director at Royal Bank of Scotland. He currently serves on the Zoning Board of Appeals and is on the Board of Trustees of the Somers Education Foundation.

"I'm running for Town Board because I believe it's important that we contribute to our community in the best way that we can, and because I care about the future of Somers," he stated. "I'd like to see a change in focus to a more proactive and inclusive approach to identifying issues and working to resolve them. I believe we can do better, and I will do it with greater communication and greater involvement from community members so that we truly understand what residents need and can work together to find solutions. We need to set ourselves on a course of continuous improvement, always striving to do more and to find creative solutions. Somers is a great place to live, and I believe that with hard work from our town government and the resourcefulness of our community we can work together to make it even better."

Newman cited several pressing issues facing Somers.

"The pandemic exposed how critical broadband access is and highlighted the extreme lack of reliability and choice of internet providers in Somers so addressing this issue should be a top priority," he stated. "Despite recent improvements from NYSEG it is imperative that they continue to upgrade their infrastructure to ensure the reliability of our electricity supply in the future. We have water contamination issues in our historic district which must be addressed, and we need a proactive and comprehensive plan to ensure clean water town-wide. I also believe that we must dramatically improve our efforts and our competency at obtaining grant money to fund improvements without affecting taxpayers."



# Keegan, Scorrano Look to Succeed Morrissey as Somers Supervisor

By Rick Pezzullo

Somers Supervisor Rick Morrissey announced in January he would not be seeking a fifth two-year term. He was first elected in 2013 after longtime Supervisor Mary Beth Murphy bowed out after a 15-year tenure. Another Republican, William Harding, served as supervisor from 1987 to 1998.

Robert Scorrano is hoping to continue the Republican dominance on Nov. 2, while Democrat Stephanie Keegan is looking to stop the GOP momentum. The supervisor seat carries with it an annual salary of \$109,233.

"I am running for the position of Town Supervisor because I love the town where I grew up, and anyone who meets me knows that," Scorrano said. "I am most qualified because of my financial background and career accomplishments; this will help shape the future of Somers for generations to come. I am professionally embedded and personally responsible for making the best decisions for all Somers residents."

"I am so lucky to live in this town and I want to make sure that everyone who lives here feels the same way," Keegan stated. "I want everyone who doesn't live in this town to want to live in this town! I want Somers to be a leader and a shining example to other communities looking to be fiscally responsible but expansive and welcoming with resources and opportunities for all."

## Stephanie Keegan

Keegan, who lives in Heritage Hills, is a former educator who also worked in the medical field. One of her three sons, Daniel, served in Afghanistan for 26 months. When he returned home, he struggled to get the care he needed. After a long struggle with PTSD and addiction,



Stephanie Keegan

he died in 2016. Keegan has been carrying forward his legacy ever since.

She's been to the State of the Union in Washington, D.C. as an honored guest, and spoken on panels with presidential candidates. She's traveled the nation to tell Daniel's story and deliver legislation that puts veterans first.

Last November, Keegan lost in her bid to unseat State Assemblyman Kevin Byrne.

Keegan is looking to represent the needs of all residents in Somers, saying, "I am running for everyone who has a dream for the future. I am running for everyone who wants to see positive change. I am running to honor the history of Somers, serve the citizens of Somers, and nurture the promise of Somers."

"Transparency and communication have been severely lacking in Somers government. I will have open office hours several days a week, town hall meetings at least once a month, and a column in our weekly newspaper to update and inform residents about what has been happening



Robert Scorrano

and what is planned," Keegan stated to the League of Women Voters. "I will also work closely with the Town Board on a Master Plan that will enhance the beauty of Somers while allowing for a more pedestrian, community event, and small business-friendly environment."

## Robert Scorrano

Scorrano served on the Zoning Board of Appeals from 2015 to 2018 and is heavily involved in Somers Youth Sports as a coach.

After graduating from Hofstra University, he set his sights on a fast-paced career in the energy trading industry, trading for such companies as Allegheny and NRG Energy. His then shifted his career to insurance and financial services where he is currently Vice President, Employee Benefits for one of the largest insurance brokers in the U.S. Prior to that he worked for New York Life Insurance Company and Prudential Financial where he managed a team of successful financial advisors which he recruited, trained, and developed.

"My wife grew up in Somers, and we are raising our children in the house she grew up in. My father still lives in my childhood home in Lake Purdy, and both of my brothers are raising their families in town. This reason is why I have value in this position," he stated. "The importance of values lies in our purpose, which guides us. My purpose is to leave an imprint on the community."

Scorrano said he was committed to keeping taxes low in Somers.

"Many residents move and stay in Somers because of our taxes," he said. "A business mindset will ensure the longevity and stability of all businesses we welcome to our town while keeping Somers financial strength intact."

Scorrano stated he would also make it a priority to ensure the State Police remain in town, while also supporting the Somers Police Department to address speeding is significant, invest in infrastructure, encourage smart growth and expand recreational opportunities.

"A Town Supervisor needs vision, creativity, budget management comprehension, business development experience, client relationship skills, and strategic planning direction. Strategic planning is the blueprint to any organization; it helps define vision, mission and helps set objectives consistent with short and long-term goals," he said. "I acquired these skills throughout my career. I have received numerous industry awards for production and team building, leading to speaking engagements at corporate events as a prominent voice in the industry. A career with a market and investment background is vital to understanding industry trends when reviewing real-estate development opportunities."

## Democratic County Legislator Borgia Runs One Last Time

By Abby Luby

Democratic Legislator Catherine Borgia has served District 9 (parts of Cortlandt Briarcliff Manor, Ossining and Peekskill) since 2012.

If she wins next week, it will be Borgia's final two years on the board because she will be term-limited.

She is opposed by Republican Charles Braue a Croton-on-Hudson resident. Braue did not respond to multiple requests to be interviewed for this article.

Borgia chairs the Budget and Appropriations Committee and sponsored the Immigrant Protection Act, the salary history ban, earned sick leave, the Children's Product Safety Act, the fracking waste ban and tax credits for renewable energy homes.

She was recently appointed executive director of the Clear View School and Day Treatment Center.

## Racial Bias Issues

Borgia said breaking down racial barriers entails more partnerships with schools and institutions that offer training to everyone.

"My district is a microcosm of Westchester, with economic levels from wealthy to poor, and inclusion and equity is key to offering all opportunities to everyone," she said.

Education is essential to eliminate racial lines.

"Giving kids good broadband and internet access is one way we can erase that digital divide."

She said the pandemic, policing and the Black Lives Matter movement gave society an opportunity to re-evaluate itself.

## Affordable Housing

Creating more affordable housing leads to a more sustainable Westchester, said Borgia, who cited the county's 2019 Housing Needs Assessments, which stated that 11,000 affordable units were needed to meet demand.

"People are burdened with high housing costs, mortgages, rents and taxes which stifles the economy, she said. Sixty percent of Westchester taxpayers' income goes to housing costs. If you pay too much for housing and not enough for other things that's bad for the county and our communities."



Catherine Borgia

Upcoming legislation has been earmarked for capital housing projects.

"People want to live in different kinds of settings, ones that are not overcrowded, are safe, clean and with access to recreation and schools. We can provide that for families and to those aging in place."

Borgia has advocated for countywide "Cross-

Age Collaboration" programs promoting health and educational and emotional benefits to seniors and children.

## Indian Point Closure

Borgia sponsored a resolution to limit the expected tax hike to Cortlandt and other taxing entities after Indian Point shut down. The resolution calls for state and federal governments to provide economic development assistance and monetary relief to school districts through the Property Taxpayers Protection Act.

"Through state aide, we want to increase funds to replace those who will see a monetary loss," said Borgia.

New York State has passed legislation allowing local communities to charge a property tax to Holtec International who owns the facility. Taxes will be reduced when spent fuel is transferred to a repository.

"We have two trains going at the same time," Borgia said. "How to reduce the economic impact and how to ensure the safety of stored fuel on site during decommissioning and for the expected decades to come."

# Familiar Faces, Newcomer Round Out Field for Yorktown Town Board

By Rick Pezzullo

With Supervisor Matt Slater and Highway Superintendent Dave Paganelli running unopposed this year, the main event for Yorktown residents when they go to the polls on Nov. 2 is the Town Board race, where two seats carrying four-year terms are up for grabs. One of the seats is being vacated by Councilwoman Alice Roker, who decided not to run for a second term.

The lone incumbent in the race is Vishnu Patel, who is vying for a fourth term. Joining him on the Democratic line is former Supervisor and Town Justice Ilan Gilbert.

Running on the Republican line is Yorktown Chamber of Commerce President Sergio Esposito and life coach and mother of three Luciana Haughwout.

## Sergio Esposito

Esposito is a Senior Analyst at Comprehensive Computers, Inc., which he co-founded in 1998. He has also been a part-time Senior Safety Instructor since 2017 at American Arms, a gun shop on Commerce St. which he said operates in accordance with the law and has all the required licensing from both federal and state governments.

A member of the Yorktown Athletic Club, Esposito is secretary of the Yorktown Ethics Board and a volunteer firefighter with Yorktown Volunteer Engine Company No 1.

"I have been involved in Yorktown as a volunteer for quite some time and I am passionate and dedicated to both the Yorktown business sector and the Yorktown citizens," he said. "I believe I can do more, and I want to do more which is why I decided to run for town council. I believe I am uniquely poised to move Yorktown forward given my passion, genuine love for our community and most importantly my intimate knowledge of our business sectors given my many years of dedicated service at The Yorktown Chamber. These are challenging times that require new leadership!"

"Throughout the pandemic I made the hard decisions that allowed my businesses and the chamber to survive. Coming out the other side The Yorktown Chamber is stronger and has never been more of a community partner with the people of Yorktown," he added. "As a town councilmember I will bring this same energy, vision and leadership to help even more of our residents and neighbors."

Esposito believes affordability is the most pressing issue facing Yorktown, along with the need to revitalize the town's business hamlets. He explained implementing Overlay Zone legislation could help Yorktown overcome the



Sergio Esposito

"Amazon effect."

"The fact remains that big box stores are not as successful as they once were and plans to bring in big retailers is not realistic given our community's current demographics. I have met with many builders, developers, retailers and hotel developers and Yorktown almost always fails the market studies these developers rely on," he said. "Overlay Zone legislation will provide greater flexibility in land use within certain boundaries which in turn will encourage reinvestment and transform our commercial areas into revitalized business centers while preserving our many wonderful family friendly neighborhoods."

Esposito said his greatest asset was "my bipartisan nature and positive outlook."

This is vitally important when dealing with the many issues facing our community when politically charged rhetoric is at an all-time high," he said. "Yorktown is a wonderful community that produces a wide range of ideas and perspectives. I have the proven skillset of being able to listen to all sides and foster an environment of collaboration that produce the best results."

## Ilan Gilbert

Gilbert served two years as supervisor before being unseated by Slater in 2019. He stressed that experience leading the town made him an ideal candidate to rejoin the Town Board.

"Clearly having been town supervisor provides me with the necessary qualifications to truly begin the job on day one," he said. "I'm the most prepared candidate to come along. When I took over as town supervisor I became familiar with the issues of the town, the financial needs of the town, and the potential of the town to thrive and grow while still maintaining its history and beauty. As the risk of sounding immodest,



Ilan Gilbert



Vishnu Patel

with the exception of my friend and colleague Vishnu Patel, no one else is as qualified as I am to move Yorktown forward."

"Not only am I already familiar with the projects that are currently underway or proposed, I am also extremely familiar with the workings of both the Town Board, as well as the day-to-day operations of the town and all its departments," Gilbert added. "I've been a public servant for my entire life. It's in my DNA to help people in every way possible. The Town Board has an obligation to represent all of its residents and this can only be accomplished through balance, balance in experience, vision, knowledge, support, and accomplishments."

Gilbert has often emphasized the importance of examining aging infrastructure in town as officials plan for business and residential growth.

"Town Board members require experience and vision so that they can deal with planning, emergencies, conflicting interests, costs and the taxes needed to cover costs, as well as always working towards maintaining the quality of life that residents look



Luciana Haughwout

for when they move to a beautiful town like Yorktown," he said.

Gilbert said he "fully supports" the use of the Overlay Zone to enable new uses for stagnating areas.

"Being able to take the old Kmart store and turn it into a mixed apartment/commercial building is a great idea," he said. "We already went through the justification for the Roma building and during my administration we were working with the owners of the Triangle Shopping Center to realize new, more up-to-date, walkable areas."

"I do have concerns with the Soundview property and the interdependencies with the proposed senior center, neighboring properties, including preserving the historic nature of the area," Gilbert added. "That is why it is necessary to review this proposal pursuant to New York State's Environmental Quality Review Act, and do a complete analysis before going forward. My opponents appear to be predisposed to move certain projects forward prior to full SEQR analysis. It is the duty of a councilperson to gather all of the facts and not be predisposed, in order to make the best decision for the town after a complete and thorough analysis. This does not mean we move slowly, just prudently."

## Luciana Haughwout

Haughwout, a small business owner, is a first-time political candidate. She said she has been involved in her children's schools and is an assistant coach on her son's soccer team in the Yorktown Youth Soccer Club.

"I am running for Town Board because as a wife and mother of three, I am committed to raising my family in this community and want to be a part of the success and growth of Yorktown," she said. "I sincerely have a strong heart and desire to offer solutions to create positive outcomes."

"As a wife, mother, God-fearing American, former New York City

*continued on page 30*





## SCOTT FOR PUTNAM

**We cannot afford three more years of this Putnam County Legislature.**

My name is **Scott Reing** and I am running to represent the people of Legislative District 7. When I wrote a Letter to the Editor in this paper last July suggesting that there were certain crimes and misdeeds committed by our County officials, eight out of the nine legislators responded to that letter suggesting I had committed an ethics violation and libel. It is neither. In response, I want to add some detail to my original statements.

I have long said my opponent is a good man among other not so good men and women...but **Joe Castellano has looked the other way when members of his party have abused their positions of power** [he has not commented publicly on any of the following incidences\* nor has he publicly condemned them]. Are these the acts of a good man?

- **Passing secrecy laws to hide misconduct.** In 2019, when my opponent was Chairman of the Putnam County Legislature, Legislator Paul Jonke ("Jonke") wrote a letter to Sheriff Langley asking the Sheriff to pursue an investigation against members of the Putnam County Sheriff's Department's PBA ("PBA"). This letter came on Legislative letterhead in what appeared to be an attempt by Jonke to exploit his position as County Legislator. In response, the General Counsel to the PBA formally requested that DA Tendy initiate a criminal investigation concerning an allegation of official misconduct (NYS Penal Law § 195.00) into Jonke. Shortly thereafter the Legislature, led by Mr. Castellano, passed a secrecy law which would make it harder for the public to see documents such as the letter Jonke sent to the Sheriff. ***A good man shouldn't use smokescreens to shield bad actors and their misdeeds.***
- **Unethical pursuit of unearned taxpayer benefits.** Mr. Castellano again ignored the misdeeds by his colleague when Jonke attempted to unscrupulously get lifetime health benefits for him and his family. Town of Carmel Highway Superintendent Mike Simone hired Jonke for one day in order to let Jonke try and retire as a town employee and reap potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayer funded health benefits. While the Republican Carmel Town Board did the right thing in rejecting this, there were crickets from Mr. Castellano as to Jonke's behavior. ***A good man shouldn't allow his friend to scam taxpayers.***
- **Impersonating a law enforcement officer.** When the Republican candidate for Sheriff appeared to violate NYS Penal Code §§190.25(3)(a) and 190.25(3)(b), there was again silence from Castellano, even as McConville was forced to duct tape his campaign shirts and lawn signs. ***A good man shouldn't stay quiet when his friend impersonates a law enforcement officer.***
- **Bullying and disrespect of colleagues.** While not a criminal act, when Legislator Neal Sullivan told Legislator Nancy Montgomery to "shut up" at the June 2, 2020 Legislative meeting, none of the other legislators, including Mr. Castellano, did the right thing and reprimand or censure Sullivan. ***A good man should not turn a blind eye to rude and demeaning behavior in the workplace.***

**"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." – attributed to Edmund Burke**

Joe Castellano may be a good man, but he is either complicit with bad acts by less than good men, or he is not strong enough to stop them. Early in this campaign he allowed his name to be used in a lawsuit trying to keep me off the ballot. The lawsuit demonstrates Mr. Castellano is either hostile towards the idea of democracy and his being challenged, or perhaps he is too weak to stop those who are. Regardless, I won that case and will appear on the ballot on Row A as well as Row D.

**We cannot afford three more years of this County Legislature. Vote for me, Scott Reing, this November 2\*\*.**

\*All documents mentioned can be found on my website, [WWW.SCOTTFORPUTNAM.COM](http://WWW.SCOTTFORPUTNAM.COM).

\*\*Early voting runs Oct 23-31.

# Rogers Smalley, Sialiano Look to Fend Off Challenge in Mt. Pleasant

By Martin Wilbur

There was a time when it was the exception that Mount Pleasant would have a contested town election.

Times have changed as the town's Democratic Party has been slowly making inroads in the traditional Republican stronghold.

For this year's Town Board race, GOP incumbents Laurie Rogers Smalley and Thomas Sialiano are seeking re-election against Francesca Hagadus-McHale, who easily captured a special election for a one-year unexpired term on the board in 2018 to become the first Democrat to win a seat in 30 years, before losing by more than 300 votes for a full term the following year.

Also on the ballot for the Democrats is Evan Echenthal, but he has not run an active campaign and did not respond to repeated requests for an interview with The Examiner.

## Francesca Hagadus-McHale

Hagadus-McHale, 68, a retired foreign language teacher, was getting her bearings on the board when her year was up following her defeat. She worked toward unifying the residents of the town and its villages and emphasized greater transparency in town government. In the two years since she served, she said she follows the town's meetings closely.

"I know what needs to be done. I know where I left off and not much has changed on the board," said Hagadus-McHale, who charged that her fellow board members vilified her for trying to make changes.

Hagadus-McHale, a Pleasantville resident, said to create greater transparency, Town Board work sessions should be posted prior to the meeting so the public can stay up on what's going on.

She commended the town for initiating focus groups in 2018 to update the Comprehensive Plan; however, until recently the board hadn't done much with moving it forward.

Hagadus-McHale said focusing on revitalizing the business centers in Hawthorne, Thornwood and Valhalla is the right choice but each hamlet has unique needs. One suggestion for Valhalla is to convert some empty storefronts into shared working spaces while downtown Hawthorne needs foot traffic, she said. Enticing developers to build apartments above ground-floor retail in Hawthorne so residents can walk to stores is the best choice for the hamlet.

For Thornwood, where some more creativity is needed, any development should focus on having people live where they can walk to shopping, Hagadus-McHale said.

Regarding building heights, there should be consistency with surrounding buildings. There are already some four-



Francesca Hagadus-McHale

story buildings in parts of town, so those areas could have similar construction.

The need for targeted development should also be coupled with greenspace, Hagadus-McHale said.

"I'm very much in favor of greenspace, pocket parks, things like that really bring people together and allows them to feel that they can be together, and that's what makes it a downtown," she said.

The town also needs senior housing and some of the downtown should be considered for residences for empty-nesters and young professionals and couples," Hagadus-McHale said.

The area where the almost-finished Columbus Plaza in Thornwood was a missed opportunity for that, she said. It should also have had a sidewalk.

Hagadus-McHale said she would look to hire police officers that aren't only Mount Pleasant residents. While you want people who are familiar with the residents, there should be a better mix, she said.

If elected, she said she is ready to step in and get to work.

"I've looked into the issues, a lot has happened, the pandemic changed a lot of stuff, but I keep up with the issues as much as I can," Hagadus-McHale said.

## Laurie Rogers Smalley

Trying for a third term, Rogers Smalley said her role as councilwoman isn't only to tackle the critically important issues facing the town but to serve constituents, even on a personal basis, if needed.

During the height of the pandemic, she and her husband delivered extra meals from Phelps Hospital to seniors in the community. She also organized Sunday home deliveries from local restaurants that helped the recipients and local businesses.

A lifelong town resident who lives in Valhalla and is a retired registered nurse, Rogers Smalley, 65, is well-steeped in the community and knows its residents and the issues.

"But it really boils down to having the experience to able to guide us through



Laurie Rogers Smalley

the next four years," Rogers Smalley said. "I think I have that, I'm willing to do that. I look forward to it."

A key issue for her is the development of 55-and-over housing in Mount Pleasant to retain empty-nesters and seniors. She is optimistic that negotiations with developer William Balter to take over the Legionaries property where the approved Baker residential project was never built will be a good first step.

Currently, the town has no age-restricted independent residential units.

"We do want to give them something more than single-family homes not only for financial reasons but also because of the care you need to take with the single-family house," Rogers Smalley said.

The potential arrangement with Balter also promises to help bolster the town's recreation facilities, she said. The town would receive about 16 acres of land adjacent to the Legionaries property that Mount Pleasant can use for fields and build a recreation center.

Rogers Smalley said she was looking forward to having the new superintendent of recreation come aboard and see what he can offer. She would also like to see more intergenerational recreation programs and improvements have been ongoing at Carroll Park.

One of the most important issues facing the town is the ongoing process to update the now 51-year-old Master Plan and modernizing its downtown business hamlets. Rogers Smalley said the town needs targeted zoning changes, particularly in the corridor from Thornwood to Hawthorne must be freshened.

The board is grappling with whether to allow four stories, but Roger Smalley indicated she would not go beyond that. The town is weighing how to revitalize with ground-floor retail with apartments upstairs.

"I don't want to see the town turn into the concrete jungle, and I don't think it can," Rogers Smalley said. "But it's very important that there are recreational



Thomas Sialiano

areas and outdoor space with any new development that comes in, that has to be a requirement."

Limiting density is crucial but any rezoning and new development will be in the C-NR zones in or near the downtowns. Rogers Smalley said critics of the proposed form-based code are erroneously mischaracterizing the plan as having the potential to spike crime and attract undesirables.

"Mount Pleasant is a place where everyone is invited to live, and I'm not fearful that if we build new units and if they happen to be apartments, co-ops, condos, whatever, I am not fearful of a criminal element," she said. "I welcome anyone of any background to live in Mount Pleasant."

Rogers Smalley has been proud of the town's fiscal stability while on the board and anticipates another 0 percent tax increase for 2022.

## Thomas Sialiano

Sialiano has served the town for 27 years in various capacities since moving to Mount Pleasant in 1990. A year after he arrived, he started on the Architectural Review Board, followed by more than 10 years on the Planning Board and now nearly 16 years over two stints on the Town Board.

His commitment to public service started by watching his father help community members as a Yonkers councilman.

He likes the steps the town has been taking to improve the downtown and other areas of Mount Pleasant.

"I like the direction that we're headed with respect to the Master Plan, with respect to infrastructure, paving a lot more roads and doing more infrastructure projects," Sialiano said. "We have a very business-friendly environment. We're creating a lot of businesses. We have a great relationship with Pepsi and Regeneron."

Sialiano said the best way to help Mount Pleasant is to isolate the needed improvements to the C-NR zone,

*continued on page 30*



# Fulgenzi Challenged in Rare Mount Pleasant Supervisor's Election

By Martin Wilbur

It hasn't been often that a Democrat challenges the Republican supervisor in Mount Pleasant, but that's what Joe Bonanno is doing next week.

Bonanno, 59, a former longtime executive at Nestle, a Valhalla volunteer firefighter for 20 years and fire commissioner since 2015, is taking on Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi, a decades-long fixture on the Town Board who has served as supervisor since 2014.

Breaking the one-party stranglehold in town would allow for a greater exchange of ideas and produce better outcomes, Bonanno said.

"I'm not saying they're doing a bad job but I look around Mount Pleasant, the one big thing I have to offer is that I have experience outside the four corners of Mount Pleasant," he said.

Fulgenzi, 67, who owned his own plumbing business for 42 years, said there are multiple issues that are coming to a head in town, headlined by the Comprehensive Plan update and proposed rezoning for the downtown hamlets.

"I think my biggest concern is we have so much on our plate that we're working on," said Fulgenzi, who denied the entire Town Board thinks alike. "It would bother me to stop. We worked very hard to get where we are right now, we've done a lot, we have a lot moving forward."

Helping to revitalize the business centers is one of the key issues facing the town. The Comprehensive Plan, which was last updated in 1970, will focus on that issue along with potential implementation of a form-based code in the current C-NR districts. As a lifelong resident, Fulgenzi said those areas need help and any rezoning would be designed to make it more economically advantageous for building owners to improve their properties.

A key decision will be whether to allow for three- or four-story maximum heights. Fulgenzi said it may depend on topography. But allowing up to 10 apartments on a redeveloped property upstairs could provide owners the extra revenue needed to make improvements.

There are no changes planned for the residential zones.

"It's not that I'm looking to bring in

hundreds of people to change the look of the community," the supervisor said. "I love the community. Do I want to see high buildings? No, I don't. I want to see something that's affordable for them and for them to be able to invest in their property."

Bonanno said the town needs to focus on the hamlets, particularly the Thornwood-to-Hawthorne corridor. The 1980 graduate of Westlake High School said when driving around town it doesn't look much is different today than it was then.

But Bonanno would also like to address the acres of empty or underutilized office parks, and there is no plan in the update for that, he said. One possibility to explore is development of senior housing there. A better place to have placed it would have been where Columbus Plaza was built across the street from the Rose Hill Shopping Center.

"There's no plan for repurposing these," Bonanno said of the office parks. "I don't see it anywhere. I didn't see it. It's not even talked about."

Addressing open space also needs to be a greater priority, he said.

Fulgenzi said he has been in talks with developer William Balter about buying the Legionaries property for independent senior housing. Currently none exists in Mount Pleasant. The town approved the Baker Residential project at the site for a 73-acre subdivision but the developer backed out.

Discussions have included the town receiving roughly 16 acres, which could be used to build a recreation center and possibly an indoor pool, which would eliminate costs to rent and open up a potential revenue stream for the town.

"We need something for our seniors to kind of (downsize) a little bit," Fulgenzi said.

Bonanno has taken Fulgenzi to task for having one of the highest supervisor's salaries in the county at \$165,000, calling it "ridiculous." If he were to win, Bonanno pledged to never take a raise and donate \$10,000 a year toward scholarships.

He said the town continues to suffer from a lack of transparency from one-party rule. He would want to live-stream the board's meetings and have office hours every other Saturday at Town Hall for residents to meet with



Carl Fulgenzi



Joe Bonanno

him.

Fulgenzi said the town's communications has improved markedly over the past several years, with the town's website frequently updated and residents consistently informed on a variety of social media platforms.

Addressing his salary, the supervisor's position receives the

same increases as other department heads, he said.

Fiscally, he pointed to his administration maintaining low tax increases, and he anticipated a flat tax rate for 2022.

"I just hope people see we're trying to do the right thing," Fulgenzi said. "I'm just not here to fill space."

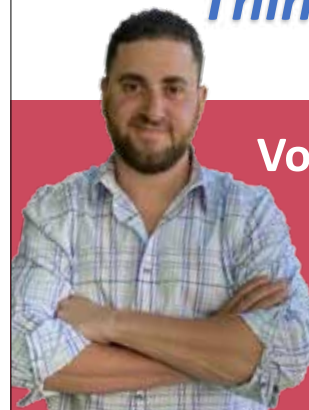
## BIPARTISAN LEADERSHIP???

### DON'T BE FOOLED

The "*Bipartisan Leadership*" slogan from Barbara DiGiacinto, Barry Reiter and Mike Schiliro is just a misleading euphemism for

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# Long New Castle Campaign Comes Down to the Wire Next Week

By Martin Wilbur

It's certainly been an unusual election cycle in New Castle in 2021.

There were two tickets of four Democrats each facing off in the party's primary, including a fourth Town Board seat that is being contested to fill the remaining two years of former councilman Jason Lichtenthal's term.

Each slate secured an independent line. Unite New Castle, which was defeated in the primary, is led by supervisor candidate Lisa Katz while the Democratic endorsed team topped by former Chappaqua Board of Education member Holly McCall will also appear on the 4 New Castle line.

There were two defections from the Unite New Castle slate – Jenni Louis-Jeune before the primary and Andrea Sanseverino Gallan nearly two months ago. Galan remains on the ballot but her running mates have been campaigning with 23-year resident Chris Hildenbrand, who is not on the ballot and not running as a write-in candidate, but would be appointed to replace Galan should Unite New Castle be victorious.

Sprinkle in the contentiousness from the Form Based Code debate, and there have been more twists and turns in this election than the Dragon Coaster at Playland.

## Tara Kassal

Part of Unite New Castle, Kassal said that in the town's haste to accelerate development, it bypassed the needed collaboration with the community to gain wide public support for the Form Based Code. Therefore, the proposed code is "inherently flawed" as a result of the lack of public engagement, she said.

Kassal said the best strategy would be for the town to streamline the approval process and work with property owners to find the best use and appearance for their land that would benefit the town.

"We would work with owners to identify opportunities that create economic, social and environmental benefits for all stakeholders," said Kassal, 49, the managing partner of a consulting firm.

Although the current Town Board intends to limit zoning changes to North Greeley Avenue, Kassal criticized the decision to include all 72 acres in the environmental review.

The board also seemed to demonstrate inconsistency with some of the parameters for the corridor, made worse by the lack of community input, she said.

"This is apparent in the indecisiveness that seems to plague the current Town Board with regard to building heights, first-floor retail and commercial," Kassal said.

She said that while there would be 10 percent affordable units, the code fails to address the need for senior and workforce housing.

If parking at the Chappaqua train station fails to rebound because of changed



Tara Kassal

commuting patterns, Kassal said the town would have to reimagine the space, which could include recreation and green space, cultural, educational, residential, commercial or some combination. However, public engagement will be crucial.

Reconstituting the Millwood-West End Advisory Board is an important step but the next Town Board must ensure the needs of residents on that side of town are met, Kassal said. Millwood and the West End are both ecologically sensitive, but the balance must be met to help Millwood by enhancing infrastructure without having development encroach on those areas.

Kassal said the board should carefully evaluate the goals of the Council on Race & Equity and work to see how they can be part of a strategic plan to achieve a more diverse, equitable and inclusive town.

## Lori Morton

Morton, one of the Democratic-endorsed candidates, is running for a full four-year term after winning the race for former supervisor Ivy Pool's unexpired council term.

"One of the reasons why I wanted to get engaged in the Town Board was that I believed that it's how you make reasonable change in the world, that if you could make incremental change in the place where you are, then the ability to affect meaningful changes here is how we change the world," Morton said.

Morton, 50, vice president of research at Regeneron, agreed with the move to limit potential zoning changes to North Greeley Avenue in the proposed Form Based Code. The Town Board has been responsive in listening to concerns from residents, leading to the elimination of any five-story buildings, to lower the maximum height to three stories on the east side of North Greeley and re-engage the Planning Board on certain applications.

Morton is optimistic that if North Greeley is rezoned there will be some positive results with new exciting businesses and a greater variety in housing stock.

"I think the minimal level of success



Lori Morton

would be the addition of rental apartments in the hamlet because that is, by definition, creating housing diversity, economic diversity in New Castle," Morton said.

A key goal for next year is to seat the Committee on Race & Equity to start addressing some of the key goals compiled by last year's Council on Race & Equity (CRE).

One of the long-term goals of the CRE is to recommend that New Castle have a town pool, which would place a favorite summer activity within reach for many residents, Morton said. Access to a pool within New Castle today is a very exclusive undertaking, plus residents from all areas of town could meet, she said.

Morton would like to see sidewalks installed or extended where possible on some town roads and to pursue grants and federal and state money for the ChappLine.

## Michael Weinberg

Weinberg supports the Form Based Code, a tool that could help invigorate downtown Chappaqua. He likes that the current board has chosen to go slow by focusing any zoning changes on North Greeley, the area in greatest need.

He would consider the process a success if over the next few years a few properties are redeveloped on the street with new businesses and restaurants. That would depend on having people downtown, including living in the hamlet.

"They only work if you have a range of people," Weinberg said. "You can't have 40 or 50 MBAs. You need mechanics, you need artists, you need all kinds of people that aren't financial engineers and they all want to live in \$1.2 million, five-bedroom houses. They have to have some housing."

Weinberg, 62, a special adviser to state Sen. Peter Harckham who operates his own consulting firm, acknowledged that the Town Board over the past two years failed to adequately communicate with residents during the Form Based Code process, allowing the argument to focus on maximum build-out and hundreds of additional students in the Chappaqua



Michael Weinberg



Chris Hildenbrand

schools.

If Weinberg and his running mates are elected, he said there will be an extended period of time where any changes on North Greeley are evaluated.

"We want to see how it's going to go," Weinberg said. "Let's see if anyone actually builds anything."

In Millwood, would only support development in the hamlet center and not in more rural portions of the town of the West End, he said.

One of the benefits of multifamily housing is it generates more diversity, Weinberg said. Facilities such as a town pool or dog park could help people from different areas of town and neighboring communities to meet.

Because of his involvement in government, Weinberg said he has relationships with officials throughout Westchester, which could only help serving on the Town Board.

"I think government is a lot like business, stuff can get done, but things can get done better if you have a relationship," he said.

## Chris Hildenbrand

Hildenbrand isn't on the ballot, but he's been campaigning with Unite New Castle and appears on campaign literature. If Sanseverino Gallan, who is expected to be moving out of town by the end of the year, captures one of the two four-year term seats and Unite New Castle gains a

*continued on page 35*



# Katz, McCall Square Off in New Castle Supervisor's Race

By Martin Wilbur

Two-term Councilwoman Lisa Katz is once again facing former Chappaqua Board of Education member Holly McCall in this year's New Castle supervisor's race. McCall defeated Katz by 317 votes (59 to 41 percent) in the June Democratic primary.

The winner of this election will take over as soon as the race is certified as a result of the June resignation of former supervisor Ivy Pool.

Like in any town, there are myriad issues, but this year the matchup could be viewed as a referendum on the Form Based Code, a proposed zoning code that emphasizes appearance over uses and was introduced about two years ago to help New Castle achieve its goals to improve vibrancy in downtown Chappaqua and help diversify the housing stock. Those were two key goals in the 2017 Comprehensive Plan update.

The outcry against the code has been frequent and forceful, including from Katz and her running mates, who are running on the independent Unite New Castle line. Meanwhile, McCall and the Democratic slate have viewed the Form Based Code as a tool to help the town achieve those goals.

McCall said the current Town Board



Lisa Katz

majority has been responsive to the community's concerns by reducing the scope of any legislation to the North Greeley Avenue corridor instead of the entire 72-acre study area, limiting the maximum height of buildings to three stories on the east side of the street, involving the Planning Board and Architectural Review Board (ARB) on some applications and eliminating any consideration of five-story buildings.

"I like seeing the Town Board being responsive in ways that will still work to



Holly McCall

create the type of development that we need in the community," said McCall, 43, who formerly worked for a financial services company.

Katz, 52, an attorney, said in addition to the recently approved Final Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) failing to adequately address key issues such as parking and impact on schools, including the entire 72-acre Retail Business and Retail Business and Parking districts in the environmental review exposes the hamlet to unwanted

development by a future Town Board, even if initial legislation is confined to North Greeley.

What has been lacking, Katz said, has been a plan that directly communicates what the town would like to see the Chappaqua hamlet become. Rather than the Form Based Code, Katz would prefer to work with the community on a vision and negotiate with developers to execute that vision. For example, if a developer wants a fourth floor, they could offer more affordable housing or agree to bring in the type of retail or restaurants the community wants, she said. A hamlet with five-story buildings would not be acceptable, Katz said.

Most of all, the downtown needs an anchor, whether that be a unique store, restaurant or venue to make a trip to downtown Chappaqua exciting, according to Katz.

"You actually have to do planning and that is what is missing from this code," Katz said. "There is no urban plan and to me that is a huge miss."

McCall said too much time, effort and resources were expended by the town and community to limit the FGEIS to North Greeley Avenue. As supervisor, McCall said she would be cautious about taking any additional action.

*continued on page 30*

## Candidates for New Castle Unexpired Term Face Off Next Week

By Martin Wilbur

This year's New Castle town election includes an additional matchup along with the usual supervisor's race and two council seats.

As a result of last December's resignation by then-councilman Jason Lichtenthal, a separate election for the remaining two years of his unexpired term features Democratic-endorsed candidate Jennifer Bounds and longtime Chappaqua School District Board of Education member Victoria Tipp, who appears on the independent Unite New Castle ticket.

The controversial Form Based Code for parts of downtown Chappaqua has dominated town discussions for the past year, but Bounds said there is a sizeable contingent of prospective voters who also care about core local issues such as sidewalks, or West End residents who are concerned about conservation.

"So, it's the basic quality-of-life issues that are most important to people near where I live and then also other people in town care about them, too," said Bounds, a seven-year town resident in her first run for public office. "They want to be able to walk, I want a park for my kids to play in."

Tipp, a retired attorney who was a



Victoria Tipp

write-in candidate in the June Democratic primary, said running for Town Board wasn't something that she had planned to do, but town officials' poor handling of the Form Based Code process motivated her to run. She entered the race in the spring after Jenni Louis-Jeune announced in May she would be moving out of town.

"I enjoy serving our community very much," said Tipp who has served on the school board for 11 years. "But I really jumped in because I had the sense our local democracy was not functioning



Jennifer Bounds

the way it should. I am a very strong believer in a good democratic process and inclusive governance, to hear the voice of the people."

Tipp said she objected to local developers initially driving the process in the working groups leading up to the Form Based Code public discussions rather than having a wider cross-section of the community involved. The code sets the parameters for height, architect and other features that limit the town if a project is inappropriate but meets the

code.

"There was no initial plan for what the town should look like other than saying here's the code and developers can build up to whatever height the code provides," Tipp said.

"Just building in the option to build four stories on the entire 72 acres will straightjacket us into just that," she later added. "We won't be able to ask a developer to minimize a project."

Instead, Tipp said she would want to lift the three-year moratorium, create overlay zones and apply special permits so the town retains flexibility and leverage with developers, so it can get the type of development the town wants.

Also, only a simple 3-2 vote is needed to implement the code to the remaining acreage by a future Town Board.

Bounds, who works in business operations, said she is concerned about the proposed code's impacts on the environment and parking, but believes town consultants Kimley-Horn did a thorough job in addressing the public's comments and questions.

Limiting the implementation of any zoning changes to the six-acre North Greeley Avenue corridor was a wise move, she said.

"I think that area of North Greeley is

*continued on page 35*



# Challenger Contests No. Castle Race Against Two-Term Incumbents

By Martin Wilbur

In the first contested North Castle Town Board race since 2015, two-term incumbents Barbara DiGiacinto and Barry Reiter will look to return for another four years against first-time challenger Matt Milim.

Although DiGiacinto is a Republican and Reiter is a Democrat, they are running as a bipartisan team against Milim, who will appear on the Republican line.

Supervisor Michael Schiliro is uncontested in his bid for a fifth term to lead the town.

## Barbara DiGiacinto

DiGiacinto's love of North Castle, longstanding family ties to the town and the chance to help her fellow residents sparked her run for a third term on the Town Board.

"I'm third generation to call Armonk home and I love this town and I love serving the people, and I love doing all the work that is part of being a Town Board member," she said. "I'm helping people on a person-to-person basis."

During her first run in 2013, when DiGiacinto campaigned in North White Plains some residents may have expected her to disappear once the election was over, particularly because the hamlet and Armonk are starkly different. She made a campaign promise not to forget about North White Plains residents and has hosted monthly sessions on Saturday at the Community Center on Clove Road for nearly eight years to hear their concerns.

When the pandemic struck and in-person meetings were suspended, DiGiacinto continued them virtually.

"I was thinking about getting elected, but I was thinking what do you do? How do you change that?" she said of the divide between North White Plains and Armonk.

Development pressures in Armonk has been a central issue during the past few years. Attention has focused recently on the 149-apartment, 22-townhouse and hotel proposal at the former MBIA property. DiGiacinto said for that parcel and the nearby Swiss Re site, which has the same zoning, she would have to think hard about granting approvals.

Byram Hills School District officials have also expressed concerns about development of the MBIA property. If the developer can't attract a hotel operator, that could trigger an all-residential proposal and hundreds of more units, said DiGiacinto, 73, a retired Westlake High School English teacher.

"So you realize that you can have the same type of a residential development that I can't imagine the impact on the town, to be honest with you," she said.

DiGiacinto has suggested that the MBIA campus be used as a recreational complex, perhaps with a skating rink, a pool, tennis courts or other facilities.



Barbara DiGiacinto

The 72-townhouse Eagle Ridge proposal with a hotel that the Town Board granted a zoning change earlier this year, fell into a different category, she said. The age-restricted community would have far less impact on the schools and would provide the town with a much-needed hotel.

She would also like to explore senior developments with one-level housing, which have become popular in the Southwest.

DiGiacinto criticized those who characterize developments with condo taxation as a giveaway to wealthy developers. Under state law, builders have a right to that taxation for those types of units, she said.

After DiGiacinto opposed the rezoning of the Mariani Gardens property because of excess density, but then later voted in favor of the special use permit because there wouldn't be negative environmental impacts.

"I was congratulated that I could be so objective and see that there was just no way that this project didn't meet the criteria," DiGiacinto said. "So it wasn't a flip-flop."

The purchase of the Verizon property earlier this year will enable the town to convert that land into additional parking, she said.

The storage of road millings at the highway yards never jeopardized the drinking water, DiGiacinto said. The county takes twice-a-month samples, which are reported to the town, and inspections from the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) never revealed a threat.

## Matt Milim

Milim, a newcomer on the town's political scene, moved to Armonk about eight years ago with his family.

Within the past year, he pressed town officials for improvement of the town's parks and playing fields. Milim said after some initial inaction, he has been mildly encouraged that there has been progress regarding playgrounds but more can be done.

"I think we have a way to go but I think



Matt Milim

we're starting to head down the right path," he said.

That issue was motivation for Milim to jump into the race in hopes of bringing a fresh perspective to the board.

"I just felt like having an independent voice, having a newer voice, I felt like I can contribute and I'm doing it because I care," said Milim, 40, who worked for 15 years as an investment banker and portfolio manager for a hedge fund but left to start his own business.

Having an independent voice on the Town Board is something the current board needs. Too often on major issues members fall in line with the majority, particularly his opponents, he said.

He opposes the board majority permitting five major projects in the past several years, all with condo taxation. Milim said that the tax breaks are not only for the unit owners, which in North Castle can be million-dollar residences, but a value transfer from the town and its residents to developers. The money that's saved on taxes, elevates the purchase price, Milim said.

While he would like to see more senior housing in town, enticing developers with allowing condo taxation isn't the answer, he said. Fee simple construction should be the focus, which encourages residents to put down roots, Milim said.

"I don't think we need to be everything to everybody," Milim said. "I don't think that it's worth sacrificing our budget to say we need to attract 20-year-olds and high-rise apartments."

While DiGiacinto has been a strong advocate for North White Plains residents, Milim said more can still be done to unite the town. He would recommend that Armonk, Banksville and North White Plains each have a three-member hamlet committee that meets monthly and delivers periodic reports to the board.

"So to me, I think if you had more streamlined and formal lines of communication, these problems would be solved, not all problems, but you could solve more problems in a faster way with more community involvement," Milim said.



Barry Reiter

In North White Plains, Milim wants the town to crack down by enforcing the law on the illegal apartments.

Milim said the town should have retained an environmental consultant when millings were first stored. Officials took too great a gamble trying to save a few hundred thousand dollars by storing road millings not far from water sources.

"Even if you're 99 percent sure that it won't cause a problem, you don't take that risk," he said.

## Barry Reiter

Even before Reiter's two terms on the Town Board, he had been a community volunteer for years. He served on the Byram Hills Education Foundation and chaired NC4, a group of residents who under the town's emergency plans operate the shelters, including during Superstorm Sandy. Reiter's also been an AYSO coach.

Enjoyment in serving the community is why Reiter is seeking another four years on the board.

"I like the idea that the town is in very good shape financially," said Reiter, 65, who owns a medical billing business. "From a social standpoint, I think people are very friendly, I think they're happy, very content with things going on."

Given the number of older residents who want to downsize their homes but stay nearby, Reiter has supported age-restricted housing. It's a good opportunity for new families to move into existing single-family homes while preventing large school enrollment spikes generated by the new construction.

It's a key reason he supported Eagle Ridge, which will also bring a hotel to town, he said.

Reiter's initial reaction about the Airport Campus project at the MBIA site is that it's too large, and is skeptical about other modest impacts on services but will wait for the Final Environment Impact Statement.

"You want to keep it smaller and a small-town feel," Reiter said.

He said he has seen no evidence that condominium taxation inflates the sale of

*continued on page 34*



# Four Seek Two Seats on Carmel Town Board

By Rick Pezzullo

The Town of Carmel's next supervisor was decided by registered Republican voters in June when former Police Chief Mike Cazzari handily defeated seven-term incumbent Ken Schmitt.

During that same election, three-term incumbent Councilwoman Suzi McDonough and running mate Steve Baranowski secured the GOP line for the Nov. 2 election with victories over Erin Lee Crowley and Gerard Ahler.

On Election Day, McDonough and Baranowski will also appear on the Conservative line when they vie for two available four-year term seats against Democratic and A Better Carmel nominees April Daly and James Carmody.

## Steve Baranowski

Baranowski worked on Wall Street for 35 years and owns his own CPA firm. He is a U.S. Army veteran and a Mahopac native. He served as chair of the Carmel Conservative Party from 2004 to 2016.

He said he has two major objectives if elected: To work to manage the town's budget to remain within the tax cap and sustain its Aa1 bond rating, and to expand the town's commercial and industrial tax base.

"These two objectives align well with my background," he said. "I have spent my professional career managing the finances of large, complex organizations. In addition, I have a long-time professional and academic interest in economic development, and I have served on two Putnam County economic-development organizations."

## James Carmody

Carmody is a college student studying environmental engineering. A graduate of Carmel High School, he is involved with the Gilead Food Pantry, recently served on the County Police Reform Panel, and has vowed to make turning Carmel Climate Smart a top priority.

"I've lived in Carmel for 17 years, and it would please us all to know that the Town Board cares about being Climate Smart, about creating new community spaces, and about caring for our fellow residents under a responsible budget," Carmody said.

"When I grew up here, I always wished I could go more places than the library or churches without needing to spend cash -- and I'm not the only kid who thought so," he stated. "So being on the Town Board of Carmel, I'd be glad to open some of our town's spaces to the public. Our plazas, for instance, have vacant spaces which go unused, or out-of-business soon after rental. I think it'd be wiser for the town to run a Community Center out of a vacant store lot, especially in the hamlet."

Carmody is also committed to raising awareness and increasing services for mental health, substance abuse and homelessness.



April Daly

"I hope to propose a homeless shelter sanctuary, property tax relief, and rental help," he stated. "To be your public servant, I will listen to every neighbor and be honest on our needs."

## April Daly

Daly, Ph.D. is a scientist and small business owner with 18 years providing international laboratory information technology consulting services. As a volunteer with the Mahopac Chamber of Commerce she participated on the Shop Putnam Expo committee, developed ShopPutnamExp.com, and championed a free programming club for kids called Mahopac-Carmel Coder Dojo.

"I am running for the Town Board to help our town grow and prosper as a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable community," she stated. "We need strategies and precise execution to implement economically viable smart growth while balancing the preservation and development of green spaces for the benefit of our town and residents. My experience in business, science, technology, and regulatory compliance across a wide range of industries can help lead our local government to create the conditions and programs necessary to drive sustainable, growth-based outcomes."

"Change is inevitable and fundamental to the laws of nature. We not only face challenges to our existing water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, but new challenges are emerging from the digital revolution. Our town government is starting to adapt digital scanning technology and data collection," she stated. "Over time, the digital revolution will impact our highway department and water systems infrastructure. These tools will help us stay safe, further reduce crime, and make government operations more efficient, but they also raise new challenges of asset & data security, data preservation, transparency, and privacy. I can provide independent, forward-looking leadership to help Carmel navigate changes resulting from 21st century technology."

## Suzi McDonough

The lone incumbent in the race,



James Carmody

McDonough is a graduate of Mahopac High School and has lived in Mahopac for more than 50 years. The town's deputy supervisor, she formerly worked as Chief of Staff in the New York State Senate and has been spearheading Carmel's Master Plan process.

McDonough was first elected in 2009 on the Democratic line. She switched her party affiliation to Republican in 2011.

"Every day, I do as much as I can, help everyone I can and truly try to make a difference," she has stated. "Currently, I help run a non-profit organization that helps families deal with the diagnosis of cancer, I am a coach for the Special Olympics, continue to participate in the Relay for Life, and provide scholarships to several Mahopac High School seniors."



Suzi McDonough



Steve Baranowski

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# Five Candidates Vie for Two Seats on Kent Town Board

By Ryan J. Degan

Voters in the Town of Kent will head to the ballot box for the Nov. 2 election with a number of important local and regional candidates to choose from, including two open seats on the Town Board.

Five candidates are competing for the available spots in Kent, including Deputy Supervisor William Huestis, who is seeking reelection on the Conservative Line, Conservation Advisory Committee member Anne Campbell and Planning Board member Simon Carey, who are on the Democratic/Team Kent ticket, businessperson Noelle Botte on the Republican line and educator Jorma Tompuri, who is campaigning on both the Republican and Conservative lines.

The lone incumbent and third-party candidate on the ballot, Huestis is seeking a third term on the Town Board (term limits were enacted in Kent after his first term) campaigning on the Conservative Line.

"The last couple of years we've gone through the pandemic, we've also had some community challenges that sort of slowed down government progress and as a result of that I need to continue my efforts," he said.

A public servant for 38 years primarily within the Putnam County Office for Aging, Huestis said his top priorities revolve around continuing to improve local infrastructure without raising taxes, saying that Kent is already "taxed to the hilt."

Huestis said he can achieve this and keep property taxes at reasonable levels through grant programs that can be acquired by local municipalities. Adding that Kent has already hired a grant writer for various recreation and restoration projects.

Democratic/Team Kent candidate Campbell has decades of service in faculty governance at the State University of New York (SUNY) New Paltz including four years as presiding officer (president) of more than 600 staff members.

As a council member, Campbell said she would like to help revise the town's temporary moratorium on mining to protect scenic ridgelines while still allowing commercial development in certain areas.

A champion for Kent's lakes and natural environment, she co-founded the Kent Climate Smart Task Force and is a member of the Conservation



Anne Campbell



Simon Carey



William Huestis

Advisory Committee. For her campaign, she has advocated for grants and other programs that would fund environmental projects and improve energy efficiency.

"The town's component of residents' tax bills is small compared to the county and school taxes, but it is the part that the town can and must control. If elected, I will strive to continue the

current administration's tradition of careful fiscal management," she added.

Joining Campbell on Democratic/Team Kent is Carey, a Planning Board member with an extensive amount of experience in planning and development, having worked for 22 years as a surveyor for a major multinational construction firm.

Like his colleague, Carey also treasures the town's scenic splendor, saying: "One of the most pressing issues that affect the town is one of economical versus the town's natural beauty and how to generate new businesses in the town without adversely affecting the wonderful beauty."

Carey also expressed excitement at the prospect of editing the town's mining laws to find a good balance, saying that his experience on the Planning Board has given him key insights into the issue.

Over on the GOP line, Botte said she has spent a 20-year career working with small and corporate business restaurants, helping them operate and deal with the red tape that comes from interacting with government agencies.

She said the town faces a



Noelle Botte



Jorma Tompuri

plethora of issues under the current administration, primarily revolving around a balancing act between keeping the area affordable for taxpayers while still maintaining the area's natural splendor.

"To confront these issues, the new administration under new leadership would take a proactive stance to seek businesses that are appropriate for Kent. While attracting new businesses we have to be aware of the limits to town water and sewage systems," she said. "As for our lakes, steps will be taken to bring a limnologist to study the water... There is an incentive to hire a lake manager to oversee the lakes jointly."

Running on the GOP and Conservative lines is Tompuri, a political newcomer who has been heavily embedded in the community as

a teacher and coach for young athletes throughout the region.

"My campaign message is simple: Listen to all the residents of the town of Kent and govern in their best interests not the interests of the few," he said. "We love this town, we love this community, it is a great place to live and raise a family. It is far from perfect, but it is perfect for us."

An advocate for local business, Tompuri said encouraging industries to come to Kent will help offset increasing taxes, adding that the town's master plan needs to be updated to encourage businesses along the town's "nontraditional main street."

Residents can learn more about candidates, the election and find their local polling place online at [www.putnamboe.com](http://www.putnamboe.com).





# Candidates Clash in Kent to Replace Supervisor Fleming

By Ryan J. Degan

The retirement of Supervisor Maureen Fleming has created a power vacuum in the Town of Kent, where local Democrats and Republicans are vying to secure the community's top elected position.

Voters in Kent will have two candidates to choose from for the election on Nov. 2; business executive Kathy Kahng, who is running on the Democrat/Team Kent Line, and Councilwoman Jaime McGlasson, who is campaigning on the Republican/Conservative Line. Both have campaigned on bringing responsible fiscal management and growth to the community.

Kahng, a professional manager and business executive who received Fleming's endorsement to be her replacement, said she sees the town as an \$18 million annual municipal corporation that can benefit from her business experience. She has spent her campaign touting her experience, including time managing \$1 million to \$100 million in annual revenue for various companies, and saying she can continue Fleming's success as a responsible steward of town finances.

"I am following in Maureen's footsteps when it comes to fiscal

conservatism and careful and fair management of the town resources," Kahng said.

"For the last 25+ years, I have worked with Business Improvement Districts, major cities, municipalities and transit agencies throughout North America. Because of this experience, I understand how the public sector operates and how important it is to have a clear understanding of the public process and public input. That means balancing town budget concerns while representing the interests of all Kent residents," she added.

Adding that she plans on using that experience to boost the town's economic capacity, Kahng said she'd like to restart Kent's Economic Development Committee in order to attract new businesses. In addition to growing the town's business community, Kahng said economic revitalization will ideally lead to the creation of a true "main street" area where residents can find a variety of retail and commercial establishments.

"Kent is an \$18 million annual enterprise that we underwrite through our hard-earned tax dollars. I have the experience, the commitment to serve and the knowledge to be our next Kent Town Supervisor," she said.

Hoping to flip the supervisor's seat

in favor of the GOP line, McGlasson has also outlined her priorities for the community around economic revitalization, but maintained that her six years of experience on the Town Board gives her an edge in being able to effectively govern.

"My administration will stress open government and increased communication with both members of the Town Board and Kent residents. I will commit to the position of a full-time Supervisor. I will make Kent a more prominent name in not only the county but outside the county by advocating what Kent has to offer," she said.

"I have helped bring to fruition a basketball court, new bulkheads to Beach 3 and a much-improved veterans' memorial site to Terry Hill Road and Lake Shore Drive. In addition, I have been a driving force in improving our recreation program, supporting a much-needed updated online registration program," she added, touting her experience.

Financial issues are not the only key issues on McGlasson's radar, saying that tackling issues around growth management are also top priorities--priorities that are complicated because much of Kent's land lies under watershed restrictions and is state-

owned, which according to her "limits new construction and new business."

"In addition, Kent still uses wells and septic fields. Also, the topography is difficult," she said, stressing the physical challenges around growth in the region. "However, on the plus side, Kent has two exits off Route 84 and is close to both Connecticut and New York City with a train station a few miles away in Brewster. With my new administration, we will seek to bring appropriate, climate-friendly business to Kent to increase tax revenue."

The Kent Town Board is also set to have some turnover, where Deputy Supervisor William Huestis is seeking re-election running in the Conservative line, against Jorma Tompuri who is running on the GOP and Conservative lines, Noelle Botte who is running on the GOP line, and both Anne Campbell and Simon Carey who are running on the Democratic/Team Kent line.

Early voting for both contests began on Sunday, Oct. 23. The final day to vote in the 2021 General Election will be on Tuesday, Nov. 2, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Residents can learn more about candidates, the election and find their local polling place online at [www.putnamboe.com](http://www.putnamboe.com).



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# Annabi, Smith Square Off to Replace Oliverio in Putnam Valley

By Rick Pezzullo

Two Putnam Valley Town Board members are squaring off on Election Day to be the town's next supervisor as six-year incumbent Sam Oliverio has decided not to seek reelection.

Councilwoman Jackie Annabi, who has been on the board for 12 years, is running on the Republican and Conservative lines. She ran unsuccessfully for the position in 2015. Councilman Ralph Smith, who has served for two years, is running on the Democratic and PV For All lines.

## Jackie Annabi

Since 2015, Annabi has worked as district coordinator for New York State Senator Sue Serino. She said insights she received from town residents and relationships she has made with people in Putnam County and the state will serve her well as supervisor.

"One of the other things I will continue to work hard to improve is resident involvement. I am a firm believer in "shared decision making," that is to say, the involvement of the public at large in the process," she stated. "I have worked to increase transparency and communication with our residents and improvement districts by having an open dialogue and ensuring that their voice is heard in how their tax money is spent and on major decisions taken on their behalf. I am proud of the fact that more residents are now involved than in recent history."

"Unfortunately, lack of transparency is sometimes an elected official's best friend, it's much easier to make decisions you don't have to answer for, not me," Annabi continued. "I have fought and will continue to make Town Hall more transparent, open and resident-friendly. For example, I fought to have our board meetings live streamed, so our residents are able to keep up with what's going on in their town government. Still, much more needs to be done, we must use all the tools at our disposal, as technology changes, so must we."

Annabi said preserving Putnam Valley's treasured lakes is a priority and will require a team effort.

"No stone must be left unturned in how we maintain our lakes. The residents of Putnam Valley have a right to enjoy our many beautiful lakes. I will bring together experts, residents and the applicable governmental authorities and won't stop until we have a long-term plan we can implement together," she said. "I'm not naive, I know we will never have complete agreement on any one issue, however, it won't be due to a lack of engagement or a lack of ensuring residents have all the information needed to make such important decisions."



Ralph Smith

"Here's a great example, just recently, a new noise law was being proposed. Only one district was truly part of the process, the rest of the residents were left in the dark until the new law was almost ready to be passed," Annabi said. "Through the use of social media, I informed the residents of what is being contemplated, I encouraged residents to take an active role, review the proposed law and engage the Town Board with their concerns, both for and against. Even when it seemed that the majority of the board was adamant about passing this new noise law, no matter what. There was an overwhelming response from the residents, they posted on social media, passed petitions with hundreds of signatures, sent emails to Town Board members, called board members and encouraged their friends and neighbors to do the same. The proposed new law was removed the agenda the day before the scheduled vote. I was accused of doing this for political reasons, quite the opposite. I don't give myself credit for defeating this terrible, rushed new proposed noise law all on my own, I give all the credit where it is truly due, the residents of Putnam Valley, they deserve all the credit."

Annabi said she takes a simple approach when it comes to town finances and spending.

"One of the ways I find most effective is to treat our town spending as if it's my own family's money I'm spending. As any Putnam Valley family knows, you always have to live within your means. I've seen in the past, it's so easy to spend someone else's money. Especially, when every increase in spending is equated to a cup of coffee a day or a bagel a day, eventually, when it all adds up, we all of a sudden have a 10-course meal," she stated.

"Our fund balance is an important resource, whether for an emergency or an unforeseen one-time expense. I have no problem using some of



Jackie Annabi

those funds when the fund balance becomes excessive based on the NYS Comptroller's assessment," she continued. "However, you won't catch me bragging and patting myself on the back about keeping tax increases to a minimum when fund balance money, NOT decreased spending is used. We are simply returning to the taxpayers their own money that they overpaid in previous years tax increases. Again, I know Putnam Valley residents are smart enough to know the difference."

## Ralph Smith

Smith was a fourth-grade teacher at Putnam Valley Elementary School for nearly two decades and then taught at Putnam Valley High School before retiring in 2011. During his years as an educator Smith held many leadership positions, including President of the Teacher's Union, Chief Contract Negotiator, Grievance Chairperson, and Committee of 100 lobbyist. He later served six years on the Putnam Valley Board of Education.

"There are many more ways that I can help my neighbors as supervisor," said Smith, who noted he was urged by Oliverio to run. "As supervisor, I will continue to advocate for other revenue sources other than town taxes, and one of the best ways to receive funds today is to implement actions that get grant funds as a perk!"

"There are many issues to be dealt with in the near future. However, there will be a different administration and a different approach in place," Smith stated. "Let me be clear. I will be a collaborative leader. I value people working together rather than lone workers. I will require Town Board members to work with each other on projects...no party lines, no personal agendas. I will want community input on issues to guide this collaborative work. The phrase "Many hands make light work" rings true. It also produces better results when varying points of

view are combined."

During his time on the board, which was impacted immediately by the COVID-19 pandemic, Smith said he was most proud of bringing Community Solar to the town.

"Residents can get their electric bills from NYSEG reduced by 10% every month if they sign up, and joining is always free. In addition to the 10% reduction, residents who join during the introduction get a \$100 gift card," he explained. "Also, I applied for and received a \$5,000 grant for our town for running the Community Campaign for Community Solar. In addition, the town has received, to date, \$8,800 from the Solar company as residents join and that number is growing. Remember, grants are monies that don't cost our taxpayers a dime."

Smith mentioned some issues facing Putnam Valley are contract negotiations, completion of the fire house, Air B&B's, the Optimum/Altice contract and business development.

"However, our board/town cannot get bogged down in issues that are currently on the radar or creating concerns," he said. "We have to deal with those and then take the lead as a board and find new ways to improve our town. We have to be aware of what other municipalities are doing to support their residents and see which ones can benefit our neighbors."

## Town Board Race

Joining Annabi on the GOP/Conservative slate for two available Town Board seats are political newcomers Stacey Tompkins and Christian Russo, while Mark Pawera is running for Highway Superintendent.

"I am excited and look forward to being a first-time candidate in the political process and look forward to bringing my experience and knowledge to the town I love," said Tompkins, president of Tompkins Excavating in Putnam Valley.

Russo is a lifelong resident of Putnam County, husband and father of three school-aged children. He is a Doctor of Chiropractic who owns and operates a successful local business, Family Chiropractic and Injury.

"I am running for Town Board because I want my kids to have the same opportunities my wife and I had," Russo said. "Town government is the backbone of our community and I am concerned about our future. I believe my background and experience will be a beneficial force for our town."

Running with Smith for Town Board are longtime incumbent Councilwoman Wendy Whetsel and Terry Raskyn, an attorney and 30-year resident. Shawn Keeler is the highway superintendent candidate.



# Crowded Field Competes for Two Seats on Southeast Town Board

By Ryan J. Degan

It's a crowded field in Southeast with five candidates competing for two available seats on the Town Board in the Nov. 2 General Election.

On the GOP/Conservative/One Southeast lines, incumbent Eric Larca and Planning Board member Eric Cyprus are hoping to keep the seat on their side of the aisle, while on the Democratic/Team Southeast lines advocate Zach Disador and writer Gail Levine have launched a joint campaign to bring innovative perspectives to local leadership. Carla Lucchino is hoping to shake things up while running on a third-party ticket. Incumbent Councilman John Lord is not seeking reelection.

## Eric Larca

Larca said while he's proud of his accomplishments thus far, there is still much work to be done.

"It has gone well and looking forward there's a few things I'm very excited about," Larca said, highlighting that under his tenure Southeast has maintained the lowest tax rates in Putnam County and that the town portion of property tax is only 7% of what residents pay annually.

Touting the town's fiscal stewardship, Larca said for 2022, Southeast's tentative budget is well under the tax cap and will in fact decrease by 1.03%, adding that while



Eric Larca

financial management is a top priority, investments must still be made in local recreation.

Larca also said that the board is working on partnering more with the Village of Brewster in an effort to bring the communities closer together.

## Eric Cyprus

Joining Larca on the Republican side is Cyprus, a Planning and Architectural Review Board member who, like his incumbent colleague, offers voters a candidate similarly experienced in local government.

"With over a decade of experience on other boards, I have historical knowledge of town issues and projects and am comfortable working with our consultants



Eric Cyprus

and other government agencies," he said.

Pitching himself as a candidate who will work complimentary with the Town Supervisor and Board, Cyprus noted he would like to see more investment in recreation and community spirit.

"For example, Councilman Larca, Legislator Castellano and I recently repainted the gazebo in the village and since then it's held multiple events over the summer. I love seeing the community together and we need more events like that," he said. "I'd also like to see us streamline processes and remove obstacles to allow small businesses to be successful."

## Zach Disador

Over on the Democratic/Team



Zach Disador



Gail Levine

Southeast lines, candidates Disador and Levine have stated that their priorities for Southeast revolve around improving the quality of life of residents, particularly when it comes to cost of living.

An experienced worker and advocate for disabled residents, this will be Disador's second run at a Town Board seat.

Some of his priorities for Southeast revolve around cost of living, saying: "many of the people I went to school with can't afford to live here or start a family and that is truly a shame because growing up in Brewster is a gift.

"I would like to see parks and communal spaces as well as restaurants

*continued on page 23*

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# Three Seek Two Village Trustee Seats; Two Face-off in Special Election

By Bailey Hosfelt

*In the Village of Cold Spring, Jeff Phillips, Cathryn Fadde and Eliza Starbuck are running for two open seats on the Board of Trustees. In a special election race to fill a vacancy, current appointee Tweeps Woods is running against Yaslyn Daniels.*

## Jeff Phillips

Phillips, running on the Better Together party line, grew up in Cold Spring and has served his community ever since his childhood days as a paperboy.

As a lifelong member of the Volunteer Fire Department and carpenter with 35 years of experience, Phillips wants to lend his expertise as a trustee.

"My father was mayor for 16 years, so I lived through knowing what the village should be doing," Phillips said. "What it looked like then, as opposed to what it looks like now."

Phillips highlighted the deteriorating infrastructure in Cold Spring, ranging from sidewalks and roads to recreational properties.

"I always have something to say to the current administration and the one previous, now it's time to step up and try and do it myself," he said.

Right now, Phillips sees departments not running efficiently as a major issue in Cold Spring.

"Former administrations did not plan for retirements of their chiefs," Phillips said. "So, when they retired, they had no one groomed to step up and they didn't make it appealing for the next people."

Phillips said it's crucial to build back Cold Spring's workforce. He criticized current Trustee and mayoral candidate Kathleen Foley for wanting to subcontract everything.

"We don't have enough revenue to get anything done," Phillips said. "You can't subcontract things because it's just not feasible."

In addition to improving infrastructure, Phillips wants to improve Cold Spring's parks and recreation to make it more accessible for everyone from children to the elderly.

"We have a beautiful area in Cold Spring," Phillips said. "It's really unique, but it's just not accessible and it's substandard."

Phillips thinks that his background in construction, working alongside architects and engineers, will allow him to work well as a Trustee.

"I have expertise in multiple fields to know what we need to fix and how to get it done."

## Cathryn Fadde

Owner of Cathryn's Tuscan Grill,



Jeff Phillips



Yaslyn Daniels



Cathryn Fadde

Fadde, running on the Better Together party line, is seeking a spot on the Board of Trustees.

Fadde declined an interview with Examiner Media due to scheduling constraints.

## Eliza Starbuck

Business owner and leader of the Cold Spring Chamber of Commerce, Eliza Starbuck, running on the Lemonade party, is seeking a spot on the Board of Trustees.

Starbuck declined an interview with Examiner Media due to scheduling constraints.

## Tweeps Phillips Woods

Tweeps Phillips Woods was appointed by Cold Spring Mayor Dave Merandy to fill a vacancy after Trustee Heidi Bender resigned four months into her two-year term last April. Running on the Service Party, Woods is looking to serve the final year of Bender's term.

"I stepped up because I wanted to be involved in the community," Woods said. "It seemed like the obvious natural step to continue serving."

After six months of getting her feet wet, Woods wants to continue doing the work and serving the Cold Spring community.

Woods has a master's degree in public administration from Columbia University and is a graduate of New York's Coro civic leadership training program. After completing her master's degree, she worked at the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

"It was an amazing opportunity to really cut my teeth in city government and learn the process of government," Woods said.

From there, she moved to the New



Tweeps Phillips Woods



Eliza Starbuck

York City Mayor's Office of Operations and then worked for the Taxi and Limousine Commission. Woods worked in the private sector afterward, but she found that her heart was always in government.

She sees two major buckets of areas where she would like to focus her energy if elected to continue serving out the term: the day-to-day management of Cold Spring and bigger opportunities to manage public spaces and the waterfront.

"Whether that's garbage pickup, recycling, major storm management, the budget of the village, sidewalks, parking, those are all kind of daily things that need to be managed well," Woods said.

Woods said Cold Spring is a beautiful section of the Hudson River, and

she would like to ensure that the stewardship is provided so it remains a public space for future generations to enjoy.

"You want to want to preserve that specialness but be open and ready for new challenges and things that will change," Woods said. "People will change, the demographics will change, and this is a wonderful thing."

Woods wants to make sure the village creates opportunities to live, work and raise families in Cold Spring.

"I want to continue working for the people and for this beautiful community that has opened its doors to [my family]," Woods said. "I feel privileged to serve in any capacity that I can."

## Yaslyn Daniels

Yaslyn Daniels, Global Head of Sales Solutions at Pinterest, is running on the Better Together ticket to fill a vacancy on the Board of Trustees.

Daniels did not respond to multiple attempts for an interview.





# Foley, Tamagna Contest Cold Spring Mayoral Race

By Bailey Hosfelt

*In the Village of Cold Spring, Trustee Kathleen Foley (Forge Ahead) and former Putnam County Legislator and current Transportation Advisory Council Chairman Vincent Tamagna (Better Together) are facing off for mayor.*

## Kathleen Foley

Current Trustee Kathleen Foley, running on the Forge Ahead party, loves the community character Cold Spring possesses that many places lost long ago.

"It's big enough to be interesting but small enough to really know our neighbors — some of whom are 'Springers' from multi-generational families and others who are recent arrivals starting to build their own Village legacies," Foley said. "Cold Spring is a place where neighbors still look after each other, through good and ill, regardless, and sometimes in spite of, their different origins."

Elected as a trustee in 2020, Foley is not new to Village Hall. She served on the Historic District Review Board for 13 years, contributed to the Comprehensive Plan and helped draft the ordinance for public tree management.

Foley's professional background is cross-disciplinary, with a core focus on civic engagement participatory process. She received a BA in Communication Management and Design, an MA in Historic Preservation and a PhD in City and Regional Planning.

"The work I've done in those fields ranges from strategic planning to project management, institution building, resource development and conflict mitigation," Foley said.

Foley's campaign has prioritized voter education, as there are many new residents in the village.



Kathleen Foley

"Some don't yet understand the village's relationship to Philipstown or Putnam County or know which seats are up at which levels of government," Foley said. "We've made graphic PSAs to explain these concepts in an accessible way, and we've done a great deal of voter outreach."

When asked what areas she would focus on as mayor, she said climate change, increasing non-tax revenue and balancing residential quality of life with tourism are all of a high priority.

"Every aspect of our infrastructure has to be hardened against more frequent and harsher storms," Foley said. "We must seek state and federal aid and bond prudently to catch up on deferred maintenance."

Foley wants to monetize tourism to offset its impacts, expanding residential and commercial tax bases with smart development.

"Rationalizing movement to and from hiking trails can help mitigate visitor impacts in the village, and partnership between the state, the town, the village, and the Fjord Trail team is critical to that project's success," Foley said.

If elected, Foley would like to improve upon the village's staff management and



Vincent Tamagna

resident participation.

"We need to better support the people who actually run the village — our skilled employees in highway, water and sewer, police, code enforcement and the clerk's office," Foley said. "I will make sure they have what they need to do their jobs well. I love Cold Spring, and I want to be part of stewarding it."

## Vincent Tamagna

Vincent Tamagna, running on the Better Together party line, is not a newcomer to local politics.

Tamagna, who served six terms as a Legislator from 1996 to 2012 and is the current Chairman of the Putnam County Transportation Advisory Council, enjoys being a public servant for the Cold Spring community.

"I've had a very rewarding career and this is kind of like a legacy project for me to be mayor," Tamagna said. "To use the network and the resources and the different things that I've learned along the way over 26 years and put that experience to work for a village that I really love."

Tamagna said that while his opponent only has under a year of experience as a trustee, he brings a better understanding of local, state and federal government. As a Legislator, Tamagna said he brought \$2

million in resources to the village over his tenure.

"Whether it was through trolleys or developing partnerships to get a restroom on Main Street, we did what we needed to do to take advantage [of opportunities]," he said.

At the village level, Tamagna said that partisan politics should be put aside in order to ensure residents' needs are put first.

"That's why we're running on the ticket Better Together," Tamagna said. "Everybody wants the same thing: a village government and leaders who put the interests of the residents first."

From improving sidewalks and ensuring the water supply is clean to supporting the village's Main Street and maintaining good recreation, Tamagna said that he's qualified to get improvements done.

"I have that experience with every single department in Putnam County," Tamagna said.

As Senior Warden at St. Mary's Episcopal Church-in-the-Highlands, Tamagna was directly involved in helping deliver 5,000 vaccines to Cold Spring seniors and residents.

"It's natural for me to want to help and to want to respond, and that's why I'm running for mayor," Tamagna said.

If elected, Tamagna said he would work to bring the community together to be neighborly, kind and helpful. He would first like to tackle the village's infrastructure, specifically the water supply and three dams in need of repair. Managing tourism and coming up with a parking plan that works for the village is also a key priority.

"You really don't want somebody to have a learning curve," Tamagna said. "You want somebody who has got the confidence and the experience to move us forward."

## Crowded Field Competes for Two Seats on Southeast Town Board

*continued from page 21*

and small businesses thriving here. I want to continue to keep taxes under the NYS cap so people can buy a home and start a life here," he added. "I also hope to be a voice for the voiceless and will do my best to advocate for our residents while on the board."

## Gail Levine

Rounding out the Democratic/Team Southeast team is Levine, a 27-year employee of the state where she worked in the Small Business Division of the Department of Commerce, Department of Labor and Department of Social Services. She is also an accomplished children's author with her 26th book due out next year.

"I will have my eye on protecting our clean air and water and the remaining

rural character of our town, along with promoting the sort of growth that increases our tax base without lessening our quality of life," she said.

"Our county executive has not shared sales tax revenues with the towns -- although local governments know best what our needs are and how our tax dollars should be spent for the benefit of residents. It will be easier for the opposition party to advocate for that reform than for the executive's own party to do so," she added.



Carla Lucchino

## Carla Lucchino

Running on the third-party My Vote Counts line is Lucchino, President of the Putnam County Republican Women's Club. She has 32 years' experience as a civilian in the Defense Department.

Lucchino placed third in the Republican Primary Election back in June -- receiving just shy of 19% of the total vote according to the Putnam County Board of Elections -- but

said she opted to continue on a third-party ticket to offer voters a candidate who represents their values and can overhaul "onerous town code that makes it difficult

for businesses to get established and thrive and for homeowners to improve their properties...I am a long-time public servant, not a politician."

I am also concerned about our deteriorating infrastructure including roads, vacant storefronts, and graffiti on public and private property. But I am most concerned about the financial impact of increasing taxes at every level of government. I have a Four-Point Plan for our town: 1. Streamline our town code, 2. Attract new businesses, 3. Generate non-property-tax revenue, and 4. Repair our unsafe and deteriorating infrastructure," she said.

Residents can learn more about candidates, the election and find their local polling place online at [www.putnamboe.com](http://www.putnamboe.com).



# Two Incumbents, Newcomers Vie for Three Common Council Seats

By Bailey Hosfelt

Four candidates are vying for three open seats on the White Plains Common Council. First-time candidates Allan Grafman and Rich Payne are running against incumbent councilmen Justin Brasch and John Martin.

## Allan Grafman

As a first-time candidate, Grafman, a Republican, is running for the White Plains Common Council because he believes the city's legislative body needs a fresh perspective.

"If you only have one group running a municipal government, after time, it can lead to excess," Grafman said. "I think it's important that there be a centrist moderate that has common sense and can make certain that White Plains continues to be the great place that we are."

Grafman, who has lived in White Plains for 25 years, has a varied background that, he believes, will position him well as a Council Member.

For 26 years, Grafman has run All Media Ventures, a media consulting firm. Additionally, he has sat on 12 boards of directors, served as Chief Financial Officer of a \$400 million entertainment company, an audit committee member at both for-profit and non-profit organizations and held executive roles at Hallmark, ABC, Disney and Archie Comics.

Grafman said that because he does not do any business in White Plains nor does he aspire to, his candidacy is all about helping to keep the White Plains community moving forward.

"We are better together when there's a broader dialogue," Grafman said. "I want to expand the conversations and expand the transparency."

When asked about the biggest issues facing White Plains, Grafman said one of the first things he will prioritize if elected is instituting term limits. Currently, council members serve four-year terms but are able to seek re-election without limit.

"If it was good enough for George Washington and good enough for George Latimer, it's good enough for White Plains."

Zoning, development, updating the comprehensive plan, recreation plan and transportation plan and addressing residents' concerns that parking is too aggressive are also high-priority issues for Grafman.

Grafman said that single-group ruling on the Common Council is something residents are concerned about.

"If people aren't satisfied, they should vote for Allan Grafman, and if they are satisfied, they should vote for Allan Grafman in order to have an independent perspective that is not part of the ruling group."

## Rich Payne

For Payne, a Democrat, running

for Common Council is an extension of public service that dates back to his teenage years as a member of the Volunteer Ambulance Corps. Trained as a technician, Payne got hands-on experience serving his community by responding to emergency calls.

From there, Payne joined the Town of Mamaroneck Fire Department, where he spent 15 years, and sat on the Fire Council, doing budgeting and overseeing staffing and training.

When he moved to White Plains in 2007, Payne joined the American Red Cross and became a member of the National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence's board of directors. As a District Leader for the White Plains Democratic City Committee, Payne got further steeped in local politics. Currently, Payne works in information technology at St. Vincent's Hospital and is a member of the White Plains Planning Board and Budget Management Committee.

"I feel like I have the experience and certainly the history of giving back to my community," Payne said. "I'm putting my hat in the ring, and I hope that resonates with voters."

A downtown resident and apartment dweller, Payne wants to provide representation on the Common Council for those living in White Plains' downtown area.

"I think I bring a different perspective, and I'm looking forward to the opportunity to connect with voters and to continue to give back to the community that I live in and I love."

Payne sees development as a hot-button issue, as well as the new comprehensive plan update that's currently underway.

"Development is great for White Plains, and I know that a lot of residents really do not enjoy looking at empty holes and empty storefronts."

An avid cyclist, shared mobility is an issue close to Payne's heart. If elected, Payne wants to push for increased pedestrian safety, expanded bike lanes and better modes of transportation downtown.

Additionally, resident safety is of utmost concern to Payne, noting that many people who are experiencing homelessness need to be connected with mental health and social services to help them.

"I have a resume that speaks to community service and civic involvement, and that really to me is the essence of a public servant," he said.

## John Martin

Martin, the longest-serving member of the existing White Plains Common Council, convinced himself that after closing out this past term, he would not run again. But then COVID-19 came along.

The city's finances, Martin said, took a substantial beating and are still not back



Allan Grafman



Rich Payne



John Martin



Justin Brasch

to where they were pre-pandemic. A downtown business owner since 1995, Martin has managed it through several ups and downs, including the 2008 financial crisis. As the chair of the Budget Management Committee, Martin wants his expertise to continue to be available to help White Plains recover strongly.

With my knowledge of our city finances after so many years, I thought that it was particularly important that I stay around and help out to get through this," Martin said. "That is the single reason that I have chosen to seek another term."

Martin sees the biggest issue White Plains faces right now is determining what the city will look like over the next 10 to 15 years through the comprehensive plan update, One White Plains.

With many office spaces and sprawling office parks vacant due to the pandemic, Martin said an outstanding question is what to do with those properties, and what the Common Council will permit to be built there.

"It is residential? Maybe," Martin said. "The 701 Westchester Avenue proposal I thought was premature, but we need to take a look at that and try to decide because these are massive, massive

properties."

Martin chaired the last comprehensive planning process in the late 1990s, as well as the 2006 update to the comprehensive plan. While he will not chair this comprehensive plan update process, Martin believes his expertise will play a critical role.

"I've been a 36-year resident of the city, and I've lived in many of its neighborhoods from the central part of the city downtown to the Eastview neighborhood to the south part of White Plains," Martin said. "So I have a broad feel for what the neighborhoods are looking for."

Prior to being elected to the Council, Martin served as a chair and treasurer of the White Plains Business Improvement District, an experience he said has provided him with a broad knowledge that had benefited the city.

## Justin Brasch

Brasch is running for re-election to the White Plains Common Council, eager to continue the work he has done while serving his current term.

"I've devoted my life to public service since I was 17, and I've always been involved in trying to help," Brasch

*continued on page 34*



# Two Board Seats Up for Grabs in Philipstown Election

By Rick Pezzullo

Councilman John Van Tassel will be the new supervisor in the Town of Philipstown as he runs uncontested on Nov. 2 for the seat being vacated by Richard Shea.

Two other positions on the Town Board will be decided by voters. Councilman Jason Angell and Megan Cotter are running on the Democratic and Team Philipstown lines, while Sarina Tamagna and Neal Tomann will appear on the Republican and Conservative lines.

Van Tassel is a lifelong Cold Spring resident who has been an active member of the community, a business owner and member of the North Highlands Fire Department for decades.

“I am rooted here by several generations and want to make sure Philipstown is as great a place to work and live for my two sons as it has been for me,” Van Tassel said.

Van Tassel has served 12 years on the Town Board, two as deputy supervisor. He is the current liaison to the Zoning Board and former liaison to Recreation and Highway departments. He is also on the buildings and grounds committee overseeing the restoration/upgrade of the Town Hall and the soon-to-start highway garage.

He began participating as a volunteer firefighter in the North Highlands Fire Company as a teenager. He rose through the ranks to fire chief and was elected to the fire district board. Van Tassel is a 1983 graduate of Haldane High School. His self-owned and operated business, JVT Construction, specializes in framing construction. He has coached Little League baseball and Pop-Warner football for nine years.

Cotter is also a lifetime Cold Spring resident. After receiving her Master of Public Health degree from New York Medical College, she was a Research Coordinator for Children’s & Women’s Physicians of Westchester, as well as a Healthcare Administrator at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell. She also spent eight years at the Therapeutic Equestrian Center as the director of healthcare. During that time, she implemented equine therapy in New York State through the Medicaid Care Act. To this day, people with developmental disabilities can get coverage through Medicaid for



John Van Tassel



Jason Angell



Sarina Tamagna

equine therapy.

After leaving the workforce for a few years, she’s recently returned as a compliance officer for healthcare professionals and small business owners on a national and local level.

A mother of four, Cotter has served as class parent for three of her children’s classes, Boy Scout leader, Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) basketball coach and Philipstown Little League board member, in which she is spearheading and revamping the softball program.

For the past 11 years, Cotter has also organized the annual Cold Spring Turkey Trot, which draws seniors, families, young adults and even tourists.

“Running for Town Board feels like a natural next step for me,” she said. “This position will allow me to connect with the community on a deeper level to ensure our policies, infrastructure and future planning provide the best quality of life, from seniors to our youth.”

Since moving to Garrison full-time a decade ago to start Longhaul Farm on his grandfather’s land with his wife Jocelyn, Angell has engaged in expansive community work.

“There is a great deal of work to do to create a better community for ourselves and those who come after us, and there is no better place to get to work than our own backyards,” Angell said.

He and his wife created a small nonprofit organization, which helped lead the effort to establish a Hudson Valley CCA (Community Choice Aggregation) that effectively moved the Philipstown community to a renewable electricity supply. They also worked with community volunteers to develop the nonpartisan Philipstown



Neal Tomann



Megan Cotter

Community Congress, which created a way for people to come together around shared priorities through a community-wide vote.

“All my experience has taught me the work of social change requires personally striving to live out our highest values and it is possible to hold true to your principles while listening to other perspectives,” Angell said.

Tamagna grew up in Philipstown and was educated in the Lakeland School District. After living in North White Plains and Florida, Tamagna returned to the area in 2009, first living in Cold Spring and then the North Highlands.

She is on the Board of the Putnam County Industrial Development Agency, serves as Vice President for the Board of the Friends at the Desmond Fish Library, and is a volunteer for the Cold Spring Lions Club. She works remotely for a technology company that provides software services to the Banking and Financial Services sector.

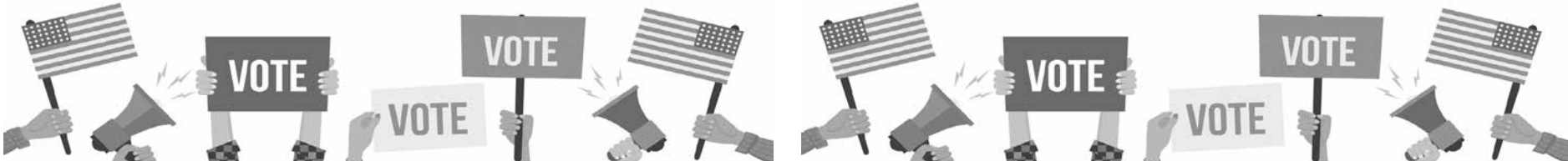
“There is a lot to do and requires someone that has the energy and ability to join communities together to achieve a common mission. I always

say, ‘Give a busy person something and it gets done!’ That’s me,” Tamagna stated.

“Post the pandemic we are faced with many challenges in our community, we are pushed to address shortfalls in budgets, we are taxed with aging infrastructure, we are constrained with addressing an aging population, all while making sure we preserve the beauty of our towns and the Hudson Valley,” she stated. “Merely doing the same old with the same values and ideas will ultimately hinder our community. Having a pair of fresh eyes to understand the challenges that face our community is what I bring to the Town Board. I have the skills to take suggestions from inception to completion with an ongoing review of what is working and what isn’t.”

Tomann is a member of the Philipstown Planning Board.

“I’m a 10th Amendment guy. I get a lot of mileage out of that,” Tomann said during the GOP kickoff. “Everything should be as local as possible.”



# Legislator Smith Faces Challenge from Torres in District 1

By Rick Pezzullo

Two former members of the Peekskill Common Council are going head-to-head for the District 1 seat on the Westchester County Board of Legislators.

Legislator Colin Smith, who represents Cortlandt, Peekskill and Yorktown, is seeking a second two-year term, while Joe Torres, who was ousted from the Common Council in 2017 by Smith and his Democratic team, is looking for some payback.

"I'm running for the Board of Legislator District One seat as the time for change is apparent," Torres said. "District 1 is a unique blend of Northern Westchester communities who are burdened by tax and spend Democrat policies in White Plains. Incumbent Colin Smith has had the seat for two years with nothing to show."

"I'm excited to run for reelection because I'm proud of my record of delivering results for the people of Westchester County," Smith said. "My mission in office has been to focus on policy and getting things done for the people that elected me - not picking partisan fights or grandstanding. The last year has been quite different than I expected when I was sworn in in January 2020, but working together we've made great progress on the big issues that matter."

## Colin Smith

Smith, an attorney, was born and raised in Peekskill and graduated from Peekskill



Colin Smith

High School in 1991. After graduating from law school, he was an Assistant District Attorney with the Bronx District Attorney's office before going into private practice. His law office is in Peekskill.

He was elected to the Peekskill Board of Education in 2012. In 2017, he was elected to the Peekskill Common Council, and in 2019, he defeated former Peekskill Mayor Frank Catalina to fill the Board of Legislators position that was held by former Peekskill Mayor John Testa before he retired. District 1 was represented by a Republican for decades prior to Smith's victory.

As a member of the Legislature, Smith said he helped pass legislation that reduced penalties for property owners impacted by COVID-19, banned exotic animal exploitation, strengthened the



Joe Torres

laws that regulate county employee's ethical conduct and adopted the Police Reform Task Force plan. Smith is chair of the board's Public Safety Committee.

"The thing that has surprised me most about being a county legislator is the degree to which I am able to impact the community not only through policy and legislation, but also in having access to resources and municipal infrastructure that can be used for the benefit of my district," Smith stated. "I believe that my record of helping people and getting results speaks for itself."

## Joe Torres

Torres, who has lived in Peekskill since 1973, was deputy mayor under Catalina from 2014-18. He is the owner and operator of Reliable Sewer and Drain Service in Peekskill.

"Serving on the City of Peekskill Common Council showed me just how effective a small group of dedicated public servants can be when working together. My time as a councilmember also taught me humility and respect for those whose opinions may be different from mine. I learned to find common ground and get things done," Torres said.

"I can say from my feedback in the community, I believe a strong showing of Republican, Independent and Democratic voters are backing me," he maintained. "Despite two years in this seat, most I meet do not even know who their county legislator is. The themes I am hearing when I am campaigning door-to-door is consistent: Keep my taxes down, keep us all safe, and grow our economy. These are basic issues we all want, regardless of political party affiliation."

Torres said "leadership, honesty and transparency" were key to addressing issues affecting District 1. He also said he would like to see more funds invested in county parks in northern Westchester.

"We believe strongly we will win this seat. When we do I will not disappear or stand idly by while White Plains makes decisions that affect our community; only to appear a few months before election time" he said. "You will know my voting record in my future newsletters. I will also work hard so that all of you will know who I am and how I represent you."

# Pierce, Arena Vie for District 2 Seat on Board of Legislators

By Abby Luby

Democrat Erika Pierce, a 21-year Katonah resident, is running for the first time for the Board of Legislator's District 2 seat. The territory includes Bedford, Lewisboro, Mount Kisco, North Salem, Pound Ridge and part of Somers.

For three years, Pierce had been a legislative aide to outgoing incumbent Kitley Covill, who decided against running for re-election.

Pierce is the current treasurer for the Westchester County Democratic Committee and is running because she believes her experience in county government and long involvement in community issues made her candidacy the next logical step.

"I have the knowledge, the skills and the ability to keep doing the important work," said Pierce, who was a White Plains teacher and has been an advocate for various education programs. "I was very much engaged with that work, particularly when it came to what resources were needed (that) communities were not getting."

Challenging Pierce is Republican Gina Arena, who has long been involved



Gina Arena

with in the community. Arena is a third-generation Westchester resident and a parent of eight children, who grew up in Bedford and lives in Lake Purdys. She ran unsuccessfully against Covill in 2019 and said there needs to be a Republican on the Board of Legislators.

"One party is never good," Arena said. "We get to a point where everyone keeps saying yes but we need checks and balances."

Arena's loss of her six-year-old son to brain cancer in 2005 was a key motivation



Erika Pierce

for her to get involved in her community. Raising an autistic son also prompted her to seek out and partner with health advocates.

"The local county systems are very difficult to understand and I see where things are lacking," she said.

## Taxes

Pierce said there is room for improvement in managing the county's \$2.09 billion budget.

"It's about delivering better services such as fixing a decaying infrastructure, better managing social services and the

court systems," Pierce said. "We always have to make certain any dollar we take from residents is invested in services that benefit them."

Arena said when the county raises taxes, officials often neglect to inform the public.

"Even when you impose a sales tax hike, other taxes will be raised and it isn't clear to people that it's happening," she said.

"People tell me it doesn't matter how the money is allotted; it's still coming from their wallet."

## Infrastructure, Sewers

Deteriorating county and state roads are not being addressed, according to Arena. Also, aging septic systems cause blue-green algae in area lakes. She started a petition to see how many residents are interested in having a new sewer line.

"We also need a water treatment plant, that and sewers aren't really happening," Arena said. "The money is there for all these programs; we just have to find it and use it."

Internet access for all is a necessity and Arena said her area is serviced by

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# Cunzio, Vinjamuri Battle for District 3 Board of Legislators Seat

By Abby Luby

Margaret Cunzio is seeking re-election for a fourth term for the Board of Legislators' District 3 seat representing North Castle, Mount Pleasant and part of Greenburgh.

Cunzio, a registered Conservative and the only non-Democrat on the board, said she was running again to continue working on volunteer emergency responder projects, safety issues and more affordable senior housing in the county.

Opposing Cunzio is Pleasantville Village Trustee David Vinjamuri, who is serving his second three-year term on the Village Board. Vinjamuri wants to see the county invest in high-quality daycare centers, provide more effective job training programs and expand senior citizen services.

## Small Businesses and Job Creation

Cunzio said the pandemic forced the county to help small businesses survive.

"We are still working on legislation to help Mom and Pop stores and restaurants and assist small businesses with loans and grants," she said. "We continue to focus in on those efforts."

Citing the county's partnership with Westchester Community College promoting college-level programs that offer STEM has been essential.

"We are being proactive in reaching out to labor unions about intern and fellowship programs," Cunzio said. "We need workers in many diverse areas."

Vinjamuri advocates for financial support for job training programs in growing industries such as advance manufacturing, health care and energy.

"These are middle-skill jobs which require several months of training at



Margaret Cunzio

one's own expense. That's unrealistic," he said.

Pre-interviewing by an employer should be part of job training to see if a prospective job candidate is a viable fit, said Vinjamuri.

## Affordable Housing

Cunzio said many people who grew up locally can't afford to live in Westchester, including police officers, firefighters, teachers and nurses.

Cunzio points to the 74-unit Mayfair Apartments affordable senior housing project in Greenburgh that opened in September.

"We want our seniors to be able to age in place, but it's also very important to take into account younger and middle-aged people with children," she said.

Vinjamuri said more affordable housing can create diversity and vibrant suburban centers.

"But it's become politicized when people who look different want to live in a community and are seen by some as



David Vinjamuri

invading the neighborhood," Vinjamuri said. "The more small businesses prosper here, the more demand there will be for affordable housing."

## Pocantico Lake Subdivision

A key issue in District 3 is a proposed 31-home cluster subdivision near Pocantico Lake adjacent to the county's 164-acre Pocantico Lake Park. The application is currently being reviewed by the Mount Pleasant Planning Board.

"The county should consider buying the land from the developers and add the property to the park," Vinjamuri said. "Owning that parcel would finish the work of creating the park."

Cunzio supports preserving the county's natural, open spaces and parklands.

"We have a winning parks system we pride ourselves on," she said.

Cunzio urged area residents to voice their concerns on the application with the Mount Pleasant Planning Board.

"They are in discussion and it's positive

rather than finger pointing," she said. "I'm an optimist and I believe they will come to a resolution."

## Police Reform and Mental Health

The state mandated police reform recommendations will result in new programs and policies, said Cunzio, who is seeking to open more crisis intervention centers. Currently, the 24-hour crisis intervention center with St. Vincent's Hospital sends specialists to deal with mental health incidents.

"My goal is to get two more intervention centers in the northern and southern part of the county," Cunzio said.

Vinjamuri's concern is how reform recommendations will be implemented, especially in response to mental health incidents.

"We need trained mental health workers to respond in an appropriate amount of time," he said.

## Discrimination, Hate Incidents

Vinjamuri recently wrote a public letter about a recent unreported anti-Asian hate incident. A son of an immigrant from India, Vinjamuri stressed the importance of feeling safe.

"As a community we need to respond effectively to racially-biased incidents and be transparent about these incidents of hate in order to protect victims," he said.

Cunzio said discrimination has no place in our community.

"My actions speak volumes as I was pleased to support bipartisan legislation that enhances the protections for Westchester County residents with the more structured anti-discrimination legislation," Cunzio said. "The county also has a partner in the Human Rights Commission and working with them in their role in protecting all residents."

# Republican Brower Looks to Unseat Gashi in District 4 Race

By Abby Luby

Democrat Vedat Gashi is seeking to hold his seat on the Westchester Board of Legislators in District 4, which covers New Castle and parts of Somers and Yorktown.

"During my first term we were able to pass a county-level tax cut and I would like to continue to work against tax increases in my district and in the county," said Gashi, a longtime Yorktown resident, where he lives with his wife and their two young children.

Challenging Gashi is Republican Robert Brower Jr. who wants to see more Republicans break the Democrats' hold on the Board of Legislators.

"With a majority of Democrats there is no opposing voice," he said. "Families in the district need a perspective of different opinions and ideas."

Brower also wants more scrutiny of

each line item in the county budget.

He has served on the Somers Town Board and the town's Affordable Housing Board. He and his wife now live in Katonah with their two-year-old son.

## Supporting Small Business

Brower, who started his own 10-person business and is a managing partner at Beverage Power Partners, Inc. in Somers, said federal funds earmarked to help Westchester's small businesses during COVID-19 were dispersed too slowly.

"There was too much red tape, too much bureaucracy," Brower said. "We have to help small businesses because that's what builds communities and strengthens our local economy."

Gashi, a local businessman and real estate attorney, said he could relate to small businesses who suffered during the pandemic and wants to help them thrive in Westchester.

"I want to work on specific initiatives to



Vedat Gashi

help small businesses and mom and pop stores remain here, to make sure their revenue grows and spending isn't going to the big-box global corporations," he



Robert Brower Jr

said.

## County Airport Noise

Noise from Westchester County Airport

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# Scuccimarra, Montgomery in Teg. 1 Tussle in Putnam

By Bailey Hosfelt

Barbara Scuccimarra is vying for her former District 1 seat of the Putnam County Legislature against Democratic incumbent Nancy Montgomery. The district includes all of Philipstown and part of Putnam Valley.

## Nancy Montgomery

Montgomery is seeking re-election, after a 2018 victory against two-term Legislator Barbara Scuccimarra. From the moment Montgomery took office, she said she has tackled challenges head-on.

"I'm running so that I can continue to define and confront the challenges facing Putnam County," Montgomery said.

In the past three years, Montgomery said, she has seen a breakdown in county government — one that is becoming less transparent and responsive to residents' needs.

"Everything I do is for the benefit of my constituents," Montgomery said. "The big issue that I see for Putnam County is reining in the expenses and spending and raising concerns about patronage, hiring and appointments."

While caucusing behind closed doors is legal for the Republican Party, Montgomery said it is bad governmental practice. Montgomery also criticized a secrecy law her colleagues passed, which prevents materials stamped as confidential from being shared with the public.

From the beginning of Montgomery's tenure, she said her Republican colleagues have shut her down, often interrupting her while speaking in meetings, and prevented her from sitting on committees, of which she said she's qualified.

"I know how to do this work, and it's unfortunate that I am not appointed to boards to make these things happen," Montgomery said. "They don't appoint me just because I'm a Democrat, and it's very clear."

Despite the challenges Montgomery has faced, she said her constituents are happy with her voice, and she hopes to continue to be a public servant people can rely on.

Montgomery said that a consistent challenge is getting her colleagues to fund programs for essential services and public safety, citing a need for increased funding for mental health services, substance abuse support and youth programming.

Speaking to her 10 years on the Philipstown Town Board, Montgomery said her past experience as a 911 dispatcher and certified EMT provides her with the skills to improve emergency services in Philipstown. While on the Town Board, Montgomery created the role of a drug prevention coordinator and got a medication take-back-dox put in the town hall.

As deputy supervisor for 11 years,



Nancy Montgomery

Montgomery said she created programs and stood at the forefront of issues that needed to be addressed by county government.

"We need better representation for all the residents of Putnam, and I think I bring that," Montgomery said. "I've built those coalitions across the county."

Montgomery said that she is qualified to continue serving her community because she never stops acquiring skills to help her work.

"I know what my district needs and that comes from my years of volunteer service," Montgomery said. "When it comes to serving my constituents, I'm empowered to make change."

## Barbara Scuccimarra

Scuccimarra, a Republican, is running to reclaim the District 1 seat of the Putnam County Legislature, which she held for two terms prior to a 2018 upset against Montgomery.



Barbara Scuccimarra

Initially content to stay out of office, Scuccimarra said two years into Montgomery's term, she changed her mind.

"I realized that the woman who took my position was not doing anything," Scuccimarra remarked. "In fact, she was hurting relationships in the county."

Scuccimarra said one of the biggest issues she sees currently is the divide between the east and the west.

"Philipstown is on the other side of the county seat, and unfortunately, it feels like another country," Scuccimarra said. "Because the divide has grown so much in the last three years, it's imperative that I mend the fences and bring services and funding to my town."

Raised in Putnam Valley, Scuccimarra has lived in Garrison for 50 years. Prior to serving on the Legislature, Scuccimarra worked on Main Street in Cold Spring,

served on the Town Board and was a small business owner.

"I've had many hats, so it set me up for helping my community and volunteering," Scuccimarra said.

The Hudson Valley, Scuccimarra said, is spectacular, and if elected, she would like to work to protect the river. Scuccimarra would like to ensure senior residents are able to stay in their homes and aren't forced to move due to rising taxes.

Scuccimarra noted that the senior center, which she helped secure the funding for while in office, really makes a difference in the community.

"I fought hard for that senior center and it's making a difference in people's lives," Scuccimarra said. "What's what being an elected official is all about — improving the quality of life for your citizens."

Scuccimarra would also prioritize resources for veterans, such as providing counseling services at the senior center and connecting individuals with organizations in the area. The drug crisis is also a major concern for Scuccimarra.

"That's why I'm really not on board with marijuana and having shops in town," Scuccimarra said. "People can do what they want with their lives, but we have to protect our youth."

Scuccimarra underscored that her past experience, connections and negotiation skills will allow her to represent District 1 well.

"I've done it in the past, and I'll do it again," Scuccimarra said. "I have a lot of ideas, and I'd like to put them to work."

## Nacerino Looks to Defend Putnam Leg. 4 Seat Against Dumont

By Bailey Hosfelt

In the race for the District 4 seat of the Putnam County Legislature, three-term incumbent Ginny Nacerino looks to keep her seat against first-time candidate Stacy Dumont. The district includes Patterson.

## Stacy Dumont

Dumont, a Democrat, was inspired to run for District 4 Legislator because she feels the current representation no longer accurately reflects the mindset of Patterson and Putnam County.

"The number of Democrats, unaffiliated and independent voters have grown exponentially, even just in the past year," Dumont said. "So, to have an 8-1 [Republican to Democrat] ratio on the Legislature right now certainly isn't representative of who or what Patterson is today."

In District 7, Scott Reing, also a Democrat, is running. If both Dumont and Reing are elected, the Legislature would have a 6-3 makeup, which Dumont said, would make more of an impact.

"If there was a 6-3 ratio rather than an 8-1, it's still a minority, but it's a voice and you can't ignore it," Dumont said.



Stacy Dumont

"That's not to say that should Nancy [Montgomery], Scott and I all be elected, that we're always going to walk in lockstep."

"That's what we're trying to avoid, but really, it's [about] getting other voices at that table so there are other points of discussion."

A 29-year resident of Patterson, Dumont has been a teacher for 20 years. She began her career at George Fischer Middle School and currently works as a

special educator at an area public high school, preparing students for post-secondary transition.

Dumont feels that her role as a teacher will allow her to succeed as a Legislator, particularly listening to residents, and fellow legislators, who have different perspectives on local issues.

"My role as a teacher is very open," Dumont said. "I listen, I hear and I respond to so many different points of view."

As a legislator, Dumont said proactive communication rather than reactive communication is a top priority.

"I would like there to be constant communication [with residents]," Dumont said. "I don't think it's okay for people to have to ask or complain first."

Dumont would also like to help bring money into Patterson, working to revitalize Putnam Lake and bringing infrastructural improvements to improve the sense of community and quality of life.

"We have a Metro-North small retail strip that is fast asleep," Dumont said. "Patterson kind of prides itself on being quiet, and I think most of us enjoy that,

*continued on page 29*



# Castellano Hopes to Maintain Putnam Leg. 7 Seat Against Reing

By Bailey Hosfelt

In the race for the District 7 seat of the Putnam County Legislature, three-term incumbent Joe Castellano looks to keep his seat against Scott Reing, who previously ran in 2018. The district includes parts of Brewster and Mahopac.

## Joe Castellano

Castellano, a three-term Republican incumbent, is seeking re-election for the District 7 seat.

With more than 25 years of experience in county government, Castellano serves as a Program Coordinator of the Legal Division at the Westchester County Clerk's Office. Prior to becoming elected to the Legislature in 2012, Castellano served eight years as a Town of Southeast Zoning Board Member.

"I think we've done some great work over the last nine years, and I'm proud of what we've done," Castellano said. "But there are a few more projects to accomplish."

In 2013, Castellano voted for term limits, so if re-elected, this would be his fourth and final term.

"I think as long as we keep Putnam County strong financially, we can continue on some projects," Castellano said. "In my district, it would be the Trouville Road Stoney Avenue intersection, which will be turned into the traffic circle."

Castellano thinks this would be a huge improvement to the area, particularly in times of power outages. Other projects include Sodom Road Bridge project, which Castellano said, should hopefully be completed in the next month or so, and the Fair Street project in Carmel.



Joe Castellano

"I'd like to see the Village of Brewster revitalization project continue," Castellano said. "And, of course, the bike path I'd like to see continue to Connecticut as well. I think we're very close to getting to that point."

Castellano said his track record over the past nine years should encourage residents to vote for his re-election.

"Putnam County is a better place nine years later since I've been on the Legislature," Castellano said.

As the Chairman of the Audit Committee for eight of the nine years, Castellano is directly involved with the county's finances and works closely with the Commissioner of Finance and auditors.

"I'm a civil servant hard at work," Castellano said. "I moved up to Putnam in 1998 and immediately got involved in



Scott Reing

what I'm doing."

When asked what the biggest issues facing Putnam County and District 7 are, Castellano said the finances are most important.

In the past nine years, Castellano said, the County has improved its credit rating at Moody's to AA1, which is outstanding, have eliminated short-term debt and cut long-term debt down.

"We're doing the right things for the people of Putnam County, protecting the taxpayers," Castellano said. "I believe that is the number one priority here."

In District 7, Castellano said the biggest priority in the next three years will be the Village of Brewster's revitalization plan.

"It's a beautiful village, and it has a tremendous amount of potential," Castellano said. "Protect the taxpayers and hopefully we can revitalize the Village of Brewster into something we will all be

proud of," Castellano said.

## Scott Reing

Reing, a Democrat and current Putnam County Democratic Chairman, is throwing his hat back into the District 7 election race, after running for the first time in 2018. The Republican-led Legislature, Reing said, is a mess.

"There are a lot of bad actors and a lot of self-dealing," Reing asserted. "They don't spend their money the right way, they don't do the morally correct thing or ethically correct thing oftentimes, and so somebody else has to step in and do that."

As a tax and real estate attorney, Reing believes his professional background would lend itself well to being a Legislator.

"Being somebody that understands real estate, tax and budgeting would be beneficial so that we can actually do work that helps people that need it the most," Reing said.

Although Putnam County is known to be more conservative, Reing noted that the Republicans only have about a 2,000-person voter registration advantage at this point. At the local level though, he said, politics should not matter.

Partially motivated to run to help diversify the nine-person Legislature, Reing said that having another Democrat in the group would help Nancy Montgomery, the only current Democrat, be heard.

"One of the main things that would change the way that the Legislature operated is if Nancy had somebody just to second her motions," Reing said.

Reing criticized the Republican Legislators' decision to raise taxes every

*continued on page 35*

# Nacerino Looks to Defend Putnam Leg. 4 Seat Against Dumont

*continued from page 28*

but there is an element of that strip that lacks community building and revenue source."

As a leader in the Patterson arts community and a leader in the school classroom, Dumont sees running for Legislator as a natural next step.

"I am a person who creates opportunity through my private life, my professional life and my community life," Dumont said. "It's all about recognizing and realizing potential, and I feel like I have the personality and the wherewithal to sit at that table at this particular time."

## Ginny Nacerino

First elected to the Putnam County Legislature in 2013, Nacerino, a Republican, is seeking a fourth term to continue serving the Patterson community.

"I'm running for re-election because, number one, I love what I do," Nacerino said. "Secondly, I think it's important to follow through with some of the projects we have."

Immersed in the community for more



Ginny Nacerino

than 25 years, Nacerino said she has the experience and knowledge to continue moving Putnam County forward in the direction the Legislature is currently moving it.

Nacerino served seven years of the Patterson Town Board and six years on the Patterson Zoning Board of Appeals.

"I have the in-depth knowledge of how government works," Nacerino said. "I have the experience that Patterson needs the most and the vision that Patterson

deserves."

When asked what some of the key issues facing District 4 are, Nacerino said that being cognizant of climate change is crucial.

"We are a climate change community, and we will pursue initiatives for climate change," Nacerino said. "We have already done so, but we will continue in that direction."

She also noted the importance of improving Patterson's infrastructure, county roads and bridges.

"In addition, I think our consolidation is important to ensure that our residents are safe and [911] calls are dispatched in the most efficient and effective manner that they can be," Nacerino said.

Nacerino said they are also working on an advanced life support proposal and basic life support calls.

"We are cognizant of putting our tax dollars to work in the most efficient, effective way possible in every way we can," Nacerino.

Nacerino noted the importance of having trained social workers respond

to police calls of individuals in distress, a finding that came out of their police policy review plan.

"We're looking at initiatives to move forward with engaging people with a social work background to de-escalate [911] calls that may not require just a police force but someone who is well-trained in de-escalation," Nacerino said. "We're looking forward to working to see how we can engage both the law enforcement and the Department of Social Services to join forces and help citizens who are distressed."

Nacerino said Patterson residents should vote for her because she's been committed to the town for over two decades.

"When I moved here in 1988, there was a proposal for a county-wide landfill to be designated in the town of Patterson," Nacerino said. "From that point on, I have never stopped. I believe I'm the qualified candidate, and I believe my record certainly demonstrates that and my investment in my community."

## Familiar Faces, Newcomer Round Out Field for Yorktown Town Board

*continued from page 10*

Commercial Real Estate executive, and life coach, my strong communication skills, compassion for others, ability to understand various perspectives, and result driven personality, I know that when elected councilwoman, I will be a voice for the entire community," she said. "As a resident of this community and future councilwoman, I embody and support core founding American principles and values that are essential to the backbone of our community and the future of our livelihood."

Haughwout said the most pressing issue currently facing Yorktown is land use and development.

"We must reinvigorate our business districts to grow our commercial tax base which only offsets the financial pressures being put on local homeowners. It is also essential to revisit each local park in our town and to bring them up to code and meet our collective expectations," she said.

"I am a proponent of mixed-use commercial and residential properties. I believe this will help facilitate business development, potential for small businesses, development of land within our community, as well as incentivize younger individuals and growing families to stay in our community," Haughwout continued. "I recognize and have compassion

for members of the community that are hesitant to the development of mixed-use commercial and residential properties, but I believe this will be a huge potential growth area for the Town of Yorktown."

### Vishnu Patel

Patel is a retired IBM scientist who earned many awards during his 36-year career, including Inventor of the Year. His best-known invention made possible the Watson supercomputer that became famous for defeating two Jeopardy champions.

"I am the only Town Board member with experience dealing with the complex science and technology issues that face most towns in this age of rapidly evolving technologies," Patel said. "I use my scientific knowledge to benefit Yorktown. I frequently go into our local schools, perform scientific experiments for students of all ages and expose them to the opportunities of choosing a career in the sciences."

"I am deeply and passionately involved in advancing the quality of life of our young people and seniors. I donated a computer center for Yorktown seniors and a laboratory for Yorktown High School. I mobilize youth and scouting groups to create plantings that enhance our town's beauty," he said. "I supported the acquisition of Granite Knolls as a park and

construction of the beautiful ballfields. To preserve our town history, I served as the Chair of the Yorktown Museum. Patch named me Citizen of the Year because of my devotion to the youth of Yorktown. I am passionate about my work to improve the quality of life of the people of Yorktown and hope to continue my mission."

During his 12 years as a councilman, Patel said he has "served as the conscience of the Town Board."

"What I mean by that is whenever the town administration, regardless of party, has proposed unnecessary, expensive and environmentally damaging projects, I have spoken out against them and mobilized residents to oppose them," Patel said. "Two examples: I discovered that the bungled and superficial cleanup of the Holland Sporting Club left toxic residues that endangered so I alerted state environmental officials to test the site. I led the successful opposition to building an unnecessary expensive new highway garage that would have left the existing site in need of toxic remediation."

Patel, whose son and daughter both graduated from West Point with honors and served in Afghanistan in high level positions, said he is dedicated to protecting the quality of the town's water supply, preserving open space,

ensuring Yorktown remains affordable for young families and seniors and controlling development.

"Controlling development before it controls us," he remarked. "In other words, ensuring that future development meets the needs of residents and not just the profits of developers."

He said he has some concerns about the proposed Overlay Zone.

"It seems to me that this creates a situation in which the Town Board can allow overdevelopment without having to take responsibility for the consequences," Patel said. "A prime example is the Yorktown Heights Overlay District law that would include the Soundview Prep School property. The overlay would allow higher density on a spectacularly beautiful historic property without the Town Board having to take responsibility by voting to rezone the property. Once in the overlay district, a developer will be able build 165 units of multi-family housing – plus 20,000 square feet of retail and office space – even though the property is presently zoned for one-acre single-family development. I anxiously await the opinion of our newly-hired consultant."

## Rogers Smalley, Sialiano Look to Fend Off Challenge in Mt. Pleasant

*continued from page 12*

which takes in areas of the downtown commercial hamlets. The goal isn't to construct large buildings but enhance the downtowns, increase foot traffic for businesses and make it economically feasible for property owners to improve their buildings.

"My goal is to keep it simple, not overburden the community with multiple dwellings," said Sialiano, 62, a PGA teaching professional at Pleasantville Country Club. "That's not the goal. We're creating a business-friendly environment, but giving you a template that's new, that's fresh and that motivates a business person."

Sialiano said he would prefer to see a three-story maximum building height, which is what is on the books now, unless four stories fits in with the neighborhood or topography or can be sufficiently set back. Changing the character of the neighborhoods is not what's sought, he said.

"We're trying to help the current business owners and give them direction and entice other people to come in and invest in the town," Sialiano said.

The possibility of having Balter build

age-restricted housing at the Legionaries property is an exciting proposal. Sialiano called it "a phenomenal piece of property" as is the likelihood of the town receiving acreage to create more fields, a recreation center and possibly building an indoor pool.

Mount Pleasant's financial success has provided the town with a AA bond rating from Moody's and a \$14 million surplus despite the challenges from COVID-19, he said.

The town pool was also able to be safely opened and operated in July 2020 to provide residents with someplace to go, Sialiano said.

During the past few years, Sialiano said Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi and the Town Board have opened up lines of communication by developing a newsletter, regularly posting town updates on the town's website and Facebook page.

Enjoyment of community service is what continues to bring Sialiano back.

"It's love of community and love for people, and again, that's the motivation," he said. "That's what my dad taught me. It's in my heart."

## Katz, McCall Square Off in New Castle Supervisor's Race

*continued from page 15*

"I would absolutely not consider rezoning additional areas of the hamlet without understanding how the initial piece performed, without extensive input from the community," McCall said.

If North Greeley rezoning would produce plans and eventual permits and construction, then the town would be able to evaluate its effectiveness, she said.

Another failing of the code, Katz said, is elimination of the Planning Board and ARB from most applications. While the revised proposal would reinstate the Planning Board and ARB on lots that have been combined into more than a half-acre, any proposals for the Rite Aid or old Bistro Maxime's sites, the corridor's largest lots, would not receive that scrutiny, she said.

Katz said she would support streamlining the Planning Board process.

"I cannot support a form-based code because there's been no planning and to take that out of the hands of our town, is, to me, a terrible, terrible idea, which could change the future of the town forever, and not necessarily for the good," Katz said. "When it's in our hands, it's in the hands of people who live here."

McCall said the Form Based Code is the most effective way to diversify the

town's housing stock, although she also hopes to explore other avenues.

"The housing crisis in Westchester is not going to solve itself, and I want to make sure that New Castle continues to do its part," McCall said. "But, again, we only have so much space, we only have certain capacity with our services. We have to be deliberate about what we do."

Both candidates would make sure that the Committee on Race and Equity, which was an outgrowth of last year's Council on Race and Equity, would be seated by next year and funded. McCall said the committee could then work through the list of recommendations it issued last year.

"We need to back up the words with the funding to support the programming and the initiatives that we want to do to be able to do this work in our community," McCall said.

Various cultural events to celebrate the different ethnic groups of town residents could be scheduled, Katz said.

She would also focus on protecting the West End from development and making sure that Millwood's sidewalks are completed.



# Elect April Daly to the Carmel Town Council

*Dear Voters,*

*It would be my honor to serve you as a member of the Town Board where I would work to improve the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Carmel. If elected, I pledge to represent the public's best interests and lead initiatives to help our community grow and flourish. I have spent my career solving problems and making informed decisions to help businesses succeed, and I will do the same for Carmel. I am ready to get to work to guide our town through tough challenges to get to a brighter future that you all deserve.*

*Thank you for your consideration, April Daly*

Meet April

April's Goals for Carmel

Science & Tech Leader

- Ph.D. Chemistry & Published Research Scientist
- Software Developer & System Architect
- Laboratory Informatics Business Analyst
- U.S.Naval Research Laboratory Researcher
- Experience in a wide range of industries

Business Owner

- Lab Objects Corp, Daly Web Inc

Community Minded

- Parent, grandparent, Mahopac home owner for 16 years, STEM and local business advocate, and Keep Putnam Beautiful sponsor

Vote Tuesday Nov. 2nd

Early Voting Oct. 23 - 31

Effective & Efficient Government

- Maximize transparency & public interest
- Ease tax burden on families & seniors

Business Growth

- Expand water, sewer, and broadband to
- Support small businesses
  - Benefit remote workers and students
  - Keep seniors safe and connected in their homes

Sustainable Infrastructure

- Strengthen Infrastructure against severe weather
- Take advantage of climate smart grants
- Form a Sustainable Infrastructure Task Force

Digital Surveillance Data Polices

- Address how collected digital surveillance data is accessed, shared, and retained





# The 2021 White Plains Democratic Team

Our team has helped White Plains come through the pandemic and keep moving in the right direction. Thanks to steady, effective leadership, our city is building and planning for a bright future. The White Plains Democratic Team has brought new jobs, added new affordable housing, and implemented groundbreaking environmental initiatives



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ELECT  
**RICH PAYNE**  
COUNCIL MEMBER

RE-ELECT  
**BEN BOYKIN**  
COUNTY LEGISLATOR  
DISTRICT 5

ELECT JEWEL  
**WILLIAMS JOHNSON**  
COUNTY LEGISLATOR  
DISTRICT 8

RE-ELECT  
**JUSTIN BRASCH**  
COUNCIL MEMBER

RE-ELECT  
**JOHN MARTIN**  
COUNCIL MEMBER

RE-ELECT  
**TOM ROACH**  
MAYOR



**Chuck Schumer**  
US Senator



**Mondaire Jones**  
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By The  
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Join us...  
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ALL THE WAY**



**George Latimer**  
County Executive



**Andrea Stewart-Cousins**  
NY State Senator



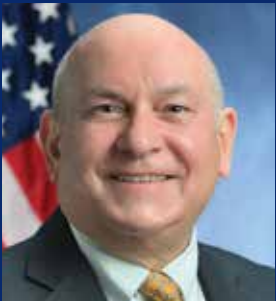
**Shelley Mayer**  
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**Ken Jenkins**  
Dep. County Executive



**Amy Paulin**  
NY State Assembly



**Chris Burdick**  
NY State Assembly

**VOTE DEMOCRATIC**

**EARLY VOTING OCT. 23-31  
ELECTION DAY – TUESDAY, NOV. 2**

PAID FOR BY THE WHITE PLAINS DEMOCRATIC CITY COMMITTEE AND THE CAMPAIGN COMMITTEES OF ALL SIX CANDIDATES





OUR TOWN IS A UNIQUE AND VERY SPECIAL PLACE.  
LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY.

UNLIKE WASHINGTON  
AND AROUND THE  
COUNTRY, ELECTED  
OFFICIALS OF BOTH  
PARTIES ARE  
COOPERATING FOR  
THE GOOD OF  
NORTH CASTLE

Too often we've seen partisan brinkmanship in Congress threaten our nation's stability and economic well-being. That isn't what the federal government should be, but extreme partisanship seems to have become routine.

Fortunately, it doesn't happen here. Over the past decade, the people of North Castle have proven that personal attacks, false accusations, and division are not welcome here. Instead, finding common ground and agreeing on sensible, cost-effective solutions—regardless of party—has been our successful model.

Here's how to  
keep bipartisan  
cooperation alive  
in North Castle

ELECTION DAY,  
TUESDAY, NOV. 2<sup>ND</sup>

Supervisor	Councilmember	
(Vote for ONE)	(Vote for up to TWO)	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 10 Democratic Michael J. Schiliro	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 11 Democratic Barry S. Reiter	
	<input type="radio"/> 11 Republican Matthew J. Milim	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 12 Republican Barbara W. DiGiacinto



RE-ELECT SUPERVISOR  
**MIKE SCHILIRO**  
DEMOCRAT



RE-ELECT TOWN BOARD  
**BARBARA DIGIACINTO**  
REPUBLICAN



RE-ELECT TOWN BOARD  
**BARRY REITER**  
DEMOCRAT

## Two Incumbents, Newcomers Vie for Three Common Council Seats

*continued from page 24*

said. "Serving on the White Plains Common Council has been an incredible opportunity, working on the development of our city."

As chair of the Youth Bureau, Brasch is involved in seeing its programming grow and thrive.

"To make sure that this agency is properly run and properly funded and the 2,000 to 3,000 kids that we get through

our doors are inspired, exposed to and taught great things so that they can lead productive lives, this is a central part of my work," Brasch said. "I want to continue that work and figure out how our Youth Bureau can grow and help more of our kids."

Increasing White Plains' affordable housing mandate and expanding it citywide — a key issue that he first ran on — Brasch noted as a key accomplishment.

Brasch cited changing parking rules to now have free on-street parking on major holidays as an additional win.

"I am an environmental advocate, and I am somebody who is very conscious of the dangers of climate change," Brasch said. "We're trying to put solar throughout our city, add bike lanes, find ways to reduce our carbon footprint and save people money, and we've had a lot of success with that."

Because White Plains is one of the faster-growing cities in the state, many developers want to build in the city. While this is a sign of the city's strength, Brasch said development needs to be done in an intentional, sensible manner.

"We have to make sure that we do it in a way that takes care of our neighborhoods and takes care of our citizens," Brasch said. "Always that balance is something that you want to work on."

## Challenger Contests No. Castle Race Against Two-Term Incumbents

*continued from page 14*

the units. Reiter said its use is appropriate, particularly for age-restricted units.

"If there is condo taxation, then let the seniors get the break," Reiter said. "They're retirees, they're living on fixed incomes. I don't see a problem with it."

The town's purchase of the Verizon

property will help ease the downtown parking crunch, especially during peak times, he said. Employees from businesses would park there, opening up more spaces for the public.

Reiter said he was comfortable with the storage of millings at Middle Patent Road and the Highway Department in

Armonk. Had there been a problem the county Department of Health and the DEC would have warned the town. North Castle has used the millings to repave some of its own surfaces and others

He is proud of the accelerated paving program the town initiated about seven or eight years ago. Next year officials

anticipate completion of the final four to six miles of road paving, Reiter said.

Reiter commended DiGiacinto for her efforts to involve North White Plains residents.

"I think the town overall is in a very good place and I think people are very satisfied," Reiter said.

# Kent Town Supervisor Maureen Fleming endorses TEAM KENT

- New leadership
- The right team for Kent's future
- Innovative and realistic plans
- Continue the progress

**Kathy Kahng**  
for Kent  
Town Supervisor

**Anne Campbell**  
for Kent  
Town Board

**Simon Carey**  
for Kent Town Board

**Andy Wells**  
for Kent  
Town Justice



Andy Wells, Maureen Fleming, Kathy Kahng, Simon Carey, Anne Campbell

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Paid for by Maureen Fleming for Supervisor



## Republican Brower Looks to Unseat Gashi in District 4 Race

*continued from page 27*

has affected surrounding communities for years, and Gashi, who chairs the Public Works and Transportation committees, wants to see an overall reduction in daily flights.

"We are in the process of putting together a master plan with robust public input and airport noise is at the top of the list," Gashi said.

Brower said noise from aircrafts

is unavoidable and would like to find a balance. "We need to address the concerns of nearby residents with keeping the airport flights and destination options more accessible," he said.

One solution would be to work with the county's congressional representatives on legislation that would restrict flights to certain times of the day.

### Affordable Housing

Having served on the Somers

## Pierce, Arena Vie for District 2 Seat on Board of Legislators

*continued from page 26*

only one cable company. "Verizon has a monopoly here," she said. "We need competition."

Getting people to accept new sewer systems is difficult, said Pierce.

"We know septic and well water don't play well together," Pierce said. "To maintain the quality of our drinking water, we have to look at a variety of solutions, such as a community septic or other alternative systems."

Pierce said upgrading roads and parks is crucial because of decaying infrastructure and climate change.

Broadband is also imperative for those who need to work at home.

"It's as important as having heat or water," Pierce said.

### Affordability

"We need to stop making it so expensive to live here," Arena said. "There are so many issues facing the elderly and I worry about my adult children being able to afford to live here."

Arena cites the rising tax burden in her

own district that is especially prohibitive. She also wants to help women and families after COVID-19.

"The county has to step in to help implement quality child care programs," Arena said. "We have to look at how child care facilities are run and make them safe and affordable."

As a mother of two children, Pierce said without child care it's hard for a mother to juggle work and parenting.

"We need to evaluate how we approach child care, especially since it's extremely expensive," Pierce said. "We need a better path to safer, quality child care for working families."

Creating affordable housing can be done by renovating already existing housing, she said. Helping seniors stay in their homes, many of whom can't afford to live locally, is critical.

Pierce also advocates for walkable communities for older residents by exchanging open space for housing clusters.

## Candidates for New Castle Unexpired Term Face Off Next Week

*continued from page 15*

the one in most need of development and revitalization and I think it's standing out," Bounds said.

Furthermore, the board has changed aspects of the proposed code, such as limiting the height of any construction to three stories on the east side of North Greeley.

Any application of the code beyond the six acres should only come after evaluating the results of North Greeley followed by robust debate, Bounds said. She said there is great potential for quality-of-life improvements for the corridor.

Success on North Greeley would see investments into spaces that have been empty for years.

"Just to see them filled with people and stores and service businesses would be a success," Bounds said. "Then the other side of that is to see how that success trickles into the rest of the hamlet in terms of traffic and noise and that sort of thing."

Tipp has also opposed the code for its potential negative impact on schools.

However, Bounds said that as recently as 2018 the district's projections for 2021-22 was just over 4,000 students, about 450 above actual enrollment even with the Conifer affordable housing and 91 Bedford Rd. sites open. Furthermore, the enrollment spike from people leaving New York City during the pandemic hasn't materialized.

Tipp said she expects district enrollment to grow.

"There will be people selling their houses to new families, so I would anticipate we will be coming out with a higher enrollment number," Tipp said.

Both candidates are strong supporters of funding the Committee on Race and Equity and have the group functioning in 2022. Bounds' two children identify as Black while Tipp is a Haitian immigrant.

Both also back helping the Millwood hamlet. Bounds want to find ways to fill existing empty commercial spaces while Tipp wants to engage the residents more. The recently reconstituted Millwood-West End Advisory Board will help toward that goal, she said.

Affordable Housing Board for three years, Brower said he worked to revamp board goals.

"Affordable housing is scary to people," Brower said. "It's not only for low-income people but also for our regular workforce and for seniors. A community has to embrace all walks of life."

Gashi said the county wants to help municipalities create more affordable housing. "We want teachers, police, firemen and our youth to be able to have options."

He commented on a complicated issue concerning Yorktown affordable housing and sewers where a local ordinance may require the town to provide affordable housing.

"Yorktown and the county are working together and we are confident the issue will be resolved," Gashi said.

### Infrastructure and Environment

Gashi said the county is becoming more proactive in protecting the environment.

"We have to invest in our green spaces, our roads and bridges while continuing to change our gas and diesel fleet to fully

## Castellano Looks to Maintain Putnam Leg. 7 Seat Against Reing

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year, give themselves salary raises and take money from the general fund.

If elected, Reing would lower the pay of the legislators, who previously voted to give themselves a 14 percent raise.

He would also work to be transparent with the public. Reing criticized the Legislature for passing a confidentiality law in 2019. In doing so, legislators can stamp something as confidential and it cannot be shared with the public.

Reing also critiqued the current Legislature for changing the county charter, citing an example of how they got rid of requirements for the county planner to have a degree in city planning. In doing so, Reing said, they hired a friend who did not have any relevant experience.

"Those are just some examples of

## Long New Castle Campaign Comes Down to the Wire Next Week

*continued from page 14*

majority on the board, Hildenbrand would be appointed.

He has served as president of the New Castle Baseball & Softball Association but this is his first foray into politics.

"I kind of got involved when I heard, like a lot of people, about the Form Based Code last summer, the summer of 2020, and really got activated," Hildenbrand said. "I didn't understand how this could actually be proceeding during COVID from a process standpoint. Even if the policy was right, it just made no sense to me."

For a town with a highly engaged citizenry, there wasn't a need to cut out

hybrid—and electric," he said.

Weather-related storms resulting in flooding and lost power was why county lawmakers passed two flood mitigation and resiliency projects.

"With more frequent storms and outages, we need to look at putting wires underground," Gashi said. "When the state or county repaves the roads, that's a great opportunity to put lines underground at no added expense."

Brower supports legislation with greater environmental impact and the purchase of more electric vehicles.

"But the county hasn't taken in the bigger picture of how to dispose of all the old vehicles. They are behind the ball," he said.

A California native who was raised near a Redwood preserve, Brower holds a degree in viticulture. He said he has always been a strong environmental advocate. "We need to reduce the use of pesticides and look at water conservation," Brower said. "Land is a precious commodity that we're not getting any more of."

waste and nepotism and self-dealing that are very problematic," Reing said. "And while I don't think that Joe Castellano takes part, he never steps up and stops them, and that's a big problem."

Reing said the biggest issues facing Putnam County and District 7 from a government standpoint are communication.

To solve issues of high taxes, Reing said the county needs to spend less money.

"We need to be creative about how we can raise revenue other than just the once-a-year tax assessment," Reing said. "We need to have the means to allow our seniors to live and die in the homes that they lived in their whole lives or not kick them out because they can't afford our increasing taxes."

the much of the public review process, he said.

Community collaboration to reach a shared vision for the downtown is what should have occurred. Too many stakeholders were cut out of the process, he said.

"You should build from the bottom up," said Hildenbrand, an attorney who now is part of a number of investment firms. "You should build consensus, you should build for real community engagement, not a five-year, six-year, a hundred-people-show-up-a-few-times session."

Croton Democrats



**SHERRY HOROWITZ**  
for Trustee



**BRIAN PUGH**  
for Mayor



**ALEJANDRO ROSALES**  
for Trustee

The Democratic Party and Working Families Party Nominees for Croton Village Board



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TOWN BOARD



**CRISTIN JACOBY**  
FOR CORTLANDT  
TOWN BOARD

**VOTE** DEMOCRAT **TUESDAY, NOV. 2**

**1** **VOTE ON ELECTION DAY**  
from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM  
Find your polling place at  
[voterlookup.elections.ny.gov](https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov)

**2** **VOTE EARLY**  
from Saturday, October 23rd  
through Sunday, October 31st.  
[bit.ly/NYEarlyVoting2021](https://bit.ly/NYEarlyVoting2021)

**3** **VOTE BY MAIL**  
with an Absentee Ballot.  
Request yours at  
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EARLY VOTING TIMES

- **Saturday, Oct. 23rd:** 12 PM – 5 PM
- **Sunday, Oct. 24th:** 12 PM – 5 PM
- **Monday, Oct. 25th:** 8 AM – 4 PM
- **Tuesday, Oct. 26th:** 12 PM – 8 PM
- **Wednesday, Oct. 27th:** 8 AM – 4 PM
- **Thursday, Oct. 28th:** 12 PM– 8 PM
- **Friday, Oct. 29th:** 8 AM – 4 PM
- **Saturday, Oct. 30th:** 12 PM – 5 PM
- **Sunday, Oct. 31st:** 12 PM – 5 PM

EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS

- Voters can go to **\*ANY\*** Early Voting poll site to cast their ballot early.
- **Peekskill Lincoln Depot Museum**  
10 South Water Street, Peekskill
  - **Yorcktown Cultural Center**  
1974 Commerce Street,  
Yorcktown Heights
  - **Joseph G. Caputo Community Center**, 95 Broadway, Ossining
  - **Jefferson Village Annex**  
3500 Hill Boulevard,  
Yorcktown Heights
- Visit [CrotonDemocrats.com](https://CrotonDemocrats.com) for a full list of Early Voting locations.

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