

Questions for the Candidates

1. Montclair's solid waste disposal costs have recently risen to approximately \$90 per ton. In contrast, recycling bottles, cans and plastic earns us \$15 per ton, and paper and cardboard recycling earns Montclair well over \$65 per ton. Hundreds of thousands of our tax dollars are wasted each year because of inadequate recycling participation. There are initiatives, such as Pay-As-You-Throw, and incentives, such as more frequent and constant education and outreach, as well as stringent enforcement of existing laws, that could enhance participation in the Montclair recycling program. What actions would you take to increase participation in the recycling program in homes, schools and businesses in Montclair and how would you raise general awareness about the benefits of recycling?

Suggested reading: www.epa.gov/payt/intro.htm and www.e-codes.generalcode.com/codebook_frameset.asp?ep=fs&t=ws&cb=0769_A

2. Disposal of electronics is a major environmental problem. Currently, electronics can be disposed of as curb-side waste, which costs the township money. And since the electronics are incinerated at the Newark incinerator, they are terrible sources of pollution. Alternately, there is a twice-yearly voluntary electronics drop-off program in which hazardous materials are removed from the electronics and the parts recycled. In the near future, the voluntary electronics program will be expanded to ad hoc drop-offs. Given that there will be expanded availability for disposal of electronics in an environmentally sound and cost effective manner for the township, would you favor a local ordinance prohibiting electronics disposal as curb-side pick-up waste?

Suggested reading: www.montclairnjusa.org/content/view/1586/474/

3. The last Master Plan Re-examination report, and the Conservation Element of the Master Plan, prepared and adopted by the Planning Board in the last 2 years, identified the scarcity of existing open space in the township, and set as a goal the preservation of the existing open space, and where possible, the expansion of that inventory. The current council is considering subdividing and selling for residential development the "Wildwood tract", the last sizable parcel of town-owned open space, i.e., the 2.3 acre piece at the east end of Wildwood Avenue. What will be your policy toward utilization of remaining open space in Montclair and specifically the Wildwood tract?

Suggested reading: The Master Plan on file with the Planning Department of Montclair Township.

4. Vehicle exhaust is a leading source of air pollution and global warming gases, and gasoline is an increasingly expensive, limited resource. Idling for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel than it would take to restart a vehicle and idling a car for 20 minutes consumes approximately 1/10 of gallon of gas. NJ State law prohibits idling for more than 3 minutes. Prohibiting vehicular idling in Montclair, as commonly occurs at school pick-up or shopping, or especially in Township vehicles, would improve local air quality, save municipal expenses, and reduce the town's contribution to global greenhouse gas

production. Would you support a No Idling Resolution to make Montclair an “Idle-Free Zone,” as such towns as Millburn, Red Bank and Madison have done, and promote public awareness and actively work to enforce the existing law? Would you support plans for an affordable, convenient, and clean jitney/shuttle to get commuters to and from train stations and bus stops in the mornings and evenings, and seniors and shoppers to our business districts throughout the day?

Suggested reading: www.cleanwateraction.org/njef/campaigns-noidling.html and http://www.state.nj.us/dep/aqm/Sub14_Rule.pdf

5. Buildings world-wide account for huge amount of fresh water, wood and energy consumption. Buildings constructed with high environmental standards, so called “green” or “high performance” buildings” have many benefits, including utilization of water, wood and energy in a more efficient manner and thereby dramatically reducing operating and maintenance costs, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System, developed by the U.S. Green Building Council, provides standards for environmentally sustainable green building construction. Many municipalities in the United States have passed ordinances mandating building construction meet LEED standards. Would you support a local ordinance requiring construction of new commercial, municipal, multifamily and school buildings meet at least minimum LEED standards?

Suggested reading: www.ciwmb.ca.gov/GreenBuilding/Basics.htm#Roodman and www.usgbc.org

6. In 2007, Governor Corzine signed into law the Global Warming Response Act, requiring reduction of NJ greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (approximately a 20% decrease) followed by a further reduction of emissions to 80% below 2006 levels by 2050. Implementation of this law will have broad impact on towns, industry and citizens across NJ. What are your plans for capping and reducing Montclair’s fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions?

Suggested reading: www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/approved/20070706.html and www.njleg.state.nj.us/2006/Bills/A3500/3301_R2.HTM

7. Towns such as Highland Park, Roseland and Hoboken have Shade Tree Protection Ordinances, and many of them have Shade Tree Commissions to implement these ordinances and protect the resource their trees represent. The Montclair Environmental Commission has prepared a draft Shade Tree ordinance for Township Council and Township Attorney review. Do you think the Council should create a separate Shade Tree Commission to implement such an ordinance and ensure that all of the town’s trees, including those managed by the township itself, are maintained and cared for in a more regulated manner?

Suggested

reading:

www.roselandnj.org/questions_forms/102406_Borough%20Ordinance%202006_RevisedAdopted.pdf and www.hobokennj.org/pdf/stc/stcordinance.pdf and

8. Montclair is fortunate to have dedicated volunteers serving on the Parks and Recreation Committee and the Environmental Commission, and these groups have researched and solicited public input on a range of issues that matter to Montclair residents. The current administration has asked these groups to gather information and advise the council, but the Town Council and Town Manager have then made decisions without consulting, and often contradicting the recommendations, of these dedicated groups (e.g., the portion of Nishuane Park given back by the USEPA). To what extent do you think the town administration has an obligation to involve these interested parties and explain their decision making process? If elected, what will you do to ensure that recommendations by these commissions are thoroughly studied, considered and implemented by the Town Manager, whenever possible?

9. The United State uses 100 billion plastic check-out bags per year - 12 million barrels of oil are used to produce this number of bags each year. Plastic bags degrade into toxic petro-polymers that contaminate soil and water. 100,000 whales, seals, turtles and marine life are killed each year by plastic bags that have ended up in the world's oceans. The countries of Ireland, China, Uganda, South Africa, Bangladesh, Australia, Italy and Taiwan have all taken significant steps to either ban or discourage the use of plastic shopping bags. In Ireland, the use of plastic bags has decreased 90% since the bag tax of \$.20 per bag was instituted in 2002. In the United States, cities such as San Francisco, Annapolis, and most recently, New York City, have followed suit. In New York City, the City Council passed a law requiring stores larger than 5,000 square feet to set up an in-store recycling program and sell reusable bags. If you are elected, would you support either a town wide ban or tax on plastic shopping bags?

Suggested reading: www.commondreams.org/headlines04/0721-04.htm and www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89135360 and www.nytimes.com/2007/07/24/us/24plastic.html?_r=1&st=cse&sq=plastic+bag+ban&sc_p=1&oref=slogin and c3.newdream.org/blog/2008/01/17/new-york-city-council-passes-plastic-bag-bill/

10. Montclair currently has a Seasonal Leaf Blower Ban that restricts the use of gas powered leaf blowers to the periods of March 1 - June 30, October 1 - December 15, as well as requiring a "properly functioning muffler". Other towns, such as Maplewood, have ordinances that prohibit use of loud leaf blowers by requiring equipment rated at only 65dB. Leaf blowers contribute significantly to noise and air pollution. According to the American Lung Association, the exhaust pollution generated by one gas-powered leaf blower during one hour of use in a suburban backyard is equal to the exhaust pollution produced by 17 cars being driven for an hour around and around that same backyard. If elected, would you work to ensure that Montclair's seasonal leaf blower ban and requirement for a properly functioning muffler is strictly enforced by homeowners, lawn

service providers and municipal employees? If so, how would you do this? Would you support an ordinance similar to Maplewood's prohibiting loud leaf blowers?

Suggested reading: [www.e-codes.generalcode.com/codebook_frameset.asp?t=tc&p=0769%2D247%2Ehtm&cn=1071&n=\[1\]\[378\]](http://www.e-codes.generalcode.com/codebook_frameset.asp?t=tc&p=0769%2D247%2Ehtm&cn=1071&n=[1][378]) and www.e-codes.generalcode.com/codebook_frameset.asp?ep=fs&t=gsr&index=1203_A&request=leaf%20blower&fuzzy=&fuzziness=4&stemming=&phonic=&natlang=&maxfiles=999 and www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/leafblow/leafblow.htm

11. Last week Maplewood unveiled this state's and perhaps the nation's first truly green Municipal Police Headquarters, and Nutley announced their plans for installing solar panels on all of their school roofs. Why are we being bypassed by our neighbors? We already wasted the opportunity to benefit from the Board of Public Utilities Office of Clean Energy solar rebates. Our new Fire Headquarters was built with a south-east facing roof begging for photovoltaics. Would you urge the Township Manager to explore every option for implementing clean, renewable power for our municipal buildings everywhere that it was possible to save money, earn a payback within a decade, and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprint.

Suggested reading: www.nj.com/starledger/stories/index.ssf?/base/news-4/1205300147279400.xml&coll=1 and www.njslom.org/magart_0208_pg20.html

12. Are you familiar with the Sustainable Montclair Planning Guide? Why is this document, which was greeted with a unanimous Resolution of Support by the Township Council in 2002, was a kick-off announcement event with Senator Lautenberg, and earned an award for Montclair from the NJ Association of Environmental Commissions, never used for decision-making or purchasing. Are you familiar with the 2005 Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Plan, a terrific planning asset paid for with a \$100,000 grant from the NJ D.O.T.? Or the 2004 Energy Audit, which lists ways for the municipal buildings to save money, increase comfort and productivity and reduce energy consumption and waste? Or the Conservation Element of the Master Plan? Or now, the Urban Forestry Management Plan? These are valuable "green" planning guides for sustainability that were apparently unused by the current Council. In an era when global warming has become a critical issue, and the League of Municipalities and their "NJ Mayors' Committee for a Green Future" agrees that the local level is precisely where the transformation of our society must take place, we must begin to take our municipal conservation policies seriously. Please comment on how you would utilize these documents if you are elected?

Suggested reading: Sustainable Montclair Planning Guide online at www.mtcenv.org/html/sustain.html and other documents on file at the Montclair Township Municipal Building