

Special Election Supplement
Examiner
Media



**VOTE
2021**

**A Guide to your
Local Primary
Elections**

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Carmel Republicans Jockey for Position in GOP Primary

By Rick Pezzullo

The GOP nomination for Carmel supervisor and two Town Board positions are up for grabs as six candidates have been jockeying for voter support in the upcoming June 22 Republican primary.

The main event features seven-term incumbent Supervisor Kenneth Schmitt looking to repel a challenge from former Carmel Police Chief Mike Cazzari, who was once Schmitt's superior in the police department.

"I've been elected seven times to this position. That speaks for itself," said Schmitt, who was born and raised in Mahopac and began his police career in New York City at age 22. "I think I have done a great job. I'm proud of my record. I have a passion for this community."

Cazzari has lived in Mahopac for 27 years and was a member of the Carmel Police Department for 34 years before retiring last July.

"People in elected office for too long become complacent," said Cazzari, who supports term limits. "When in office for an inordinately long period of time its about being re-elected. The difficult choices are not being made. I strongly believe that the leadership, communication and budgeting skills that I have acquired over my career would be well-suited for the office of town supervisor."

Schmitt has said elected officials have term limits every time they are judged at the polls and questioned Cazzari's ability to oversee a \$44 million town budget.

"He can't lead the town in the manner I have been leading it the last 14 years," Schmitt stated. "It would be a tremendous learning curve for him. The voters ultimately will decide who is more suited for the position and who has the experience to run the Town of Carmel. The voters of the Town of Carmel are very smart people."

Cazzari believes he is up to the task, saying "The position of supervisor is something I feel where I could make some changes. If people think it's time for honesty and integrity, they'll vote for me."

The candidates disagree on the need for a new Master Plan in Carmel. Schmitt said the long-awaited plan will be delivered "for public consumption" in the coming months.

"You can't have a vibrant community that doesn't have a blueprint for the future," Schmitt said. "Every resident should have stake in it."

Cazzari maintained there was no need for a Master Plan. He emphasized Carmel was in dire need of new businesses, adding he favored allowing residential units being located above commercial establishments.



Kenneth Schmitt



Mike Cazzari



Gerard Ahler



Suzi McDonough



Erin Lee Crowley



Steve Baranowski

"We should be encouraging business, not discouraging business," Cazzari said. "The Master Plan is smoke and mirrors. Have pride in where we live. Let's fix the place and let people come."

Town Board

Incumbent Councilwoman Suzi McDonough is running for a third four-year term. A graduate of Mahopac High School, she has lived in Mahopac for more than 50 years and currently serves as deputy supervisor. She formerly worked as chief of staff in the New York State Senate. She has been spearheading the Master Plan process.

"Every day, I do as much as I can, help everyone I can and truly try to make a difference," she stated. "Currently, I help run a nonprofit 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."

Running with Schmitt and McDonough is 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 manage the town's budget to remain within the tax cap and sustain the town's 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 longtime professional and academic interest in economic development, and I have served on two Putnam County economic development organizations."

"I am going to win this primary in a landslide by hard work and meeting people," he added. "I am going to win on skills, experience and ability."

Running on the same ticket with Cazzari, although they are campaigning separately, are Erin Lee Crowley and Gerard Ahler.

Crowley, a married mother of a teenage son and identical triplets, is the founder of the Hope Chest Sisters, a nonprofit organization that provides support and advocacy for domestic violence victims. During the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, her Mask Maker's Guild distributed more than 30,000 pieces of personal protective

equipment to frontline workers, and she was recognized by state Sen. Peter Harkham as a "Hometown Hero."

"People want to feel like their voice matters," Crowley said. "We need to focus on existing businesses and local residents. I will always act on behalf of the community as a whole, and never allow myself to become beholden to any private interests. I will always vote my conscience, and will never be pressured into voting along with the board, simply for the sake of not rocking the boat. I will operate openly, in a transparent manner."

Ahler, a resident for more than 30 years who has been involved in a variety of businesses, said he, Crowley and Cazzari decided not to campaign as an entity because "if you run as a team that means you will be a puppet, that you will vote the same way."

"We want people who will think differently," he said. "I'm running because the struggles are real out here. If you want it done, Gerard's the one!"

Correction: A previous version of this story reported that there would be no Democrats on the November ballot. There is no Democrat running for supervisor but Democrats April Daly and James Carmody are running for Town Board. The Examiner regrets the error.

Eight Candidates to Square Off in Hotly Contested Peekskill Dem Primary

By Rick Pezzullo

Two slates of candidates will be going head-to-head in a June 22 Democratic primary in Peekskill.

The Peekskill Democratic Committee endorsed Councilwoman Vivian McKenzie for mayor, along with incumbent councilmen Ramon Fernandez and Dwight Douglas, and political newcomer Rob Scott, for three available seats on the Common Council.

Unhappy with those choices, a foursome called Progress 4 Peekskill emerged to force a primary. That team is headed by Conor Greene for mayor and Councilwoman Vanessa Agudelo, who is seeking a second four-year term. They are joined by council hopefuls Amy Vele and Amy Perlow.

The Progress 4 Peekskill slate has created some controversy by vowing to continue its campaign through the November election if it falls short in next week's primary as it has also secured the Working Families Party line.

Mayor

McKenzie, who owns Kathleen's Tea Room in downtown Peekskill, has served on the council since 2013 and currently holds the title of deputy mayor. If elected she would be the first black female mayor in the city's history and only the second black mayor to hold the post.

"Peekskill is one of the most diverse, exciting and transformative communities in all of Westchester and I couldn't be prouder to receive the endorsement of the Peekskill Democratic City Committee," McKenzie stated.

"We need leadership that has the experience to guide the city as it grows and ensures that we grow in a way that brings everyone along for the ride. 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."

Greene is co-founder and board chair of Peekskill Walks, a resident-led nonprofit advocating for safer streets and healthier neighborhoods. Born in Dublin, Ireland, he is also a founding member of the Peekskill Equitable Housing Coalition, which is fighting for housing rights and tenant protections.

"We are at a critical moment in our city's history," said Greene, who has stressed city government needs to be more responsive to the residents it serves. "We have a clear vision on how our city can grow. I really believe that local government can make people's lives better. A lot of people really feel disconnected from City Hall and



Vivian McKenzie



Conor Greene



Vanessa Agudelo



Dwight Douglas



Ramon Fernandez



Amy Perlow

their elected officials. We need a new approach so no one is left behind."

Common Council

Agudelo made history in 2017 as the youngest person 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 colleagues don't truly understand what their jobs are. My loyalty is not to a party, it's to the people. Right now, the way City Hall is operating only a few people have the information and everyone else is in the dark."

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



Rob Scott



Amy Vele

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 re-elected, that would continue to be my main mission in office."

He introduced the affordable housing ordinance, which is currently under

discussion, and proposed residential foreclosures be sold at affordable prices as part of a lottery. Preference would be given to low-income Peekskill residents, he said.

Douglas has served on the council since 2020 after being appointed to fill a vacancy. During his career he worked

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Katz Looks to Take Leap From Council Seat to New Castle Supervisor

By Martin Wilbur

Lisa Katz had a decision to make last winter if she wanted to continue serving the town – run for a third council term on the New Castle Town Board or try to make the jump to supervisor.

After current Supervisor Ivy Pool decided in early February that she wasn't running for re-election, Katz announced she and her three running mates would appear on the independent Unite New Castle line, with her leading the ticket.

She said her run for the Democratic nomination, which came after the town's Democratic Committee announced its slate in late February, is more than opposition against the Form Based Code, a controversial zoning proposal designed to reinvigorate the downtown Chappaqua hamlet. It was to challenge the committee's stranglehold on New Castle politics and provide voters with a choice.

Next week's primary is the first in anyone's memory for a town election. It will decide which four candidates – for supervisor, two four-year terms on the Town Board and the final two years of an unexpired board seat – will appear on two lines rather than one in November.

"So it's really about giving access to other Democrats who want to run for that line, and we're the first slate to do that in New Castle history and I'm hoping we're not going to be the last," said Katz, a lifelong Democrat who ran on the Republican line in her two successful

Town Board runs in 2013 and 2017.

Opposition to the Form Based Code has played out during a series of sometimes tense public hearings from October through January, and has continued almost unabated on social media. Katz has been an outspoken dissenter on the board.

While there's consensus that the downtown needs attention, she said the proposed code would fail to accomplish the goals of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan that sought to bring vitality to the hamlet.

Instead, Katz, 51, an elder care and estate planning attorney, said there should be carefully targeted revisions to the current zoning code that would allow town officials to work with and negotiate with property owners and developers to ensure that new development in the hamlet produces restaurants, entertainment and housing diversity to keep seniors in town and attract new families to the area who are not yet ready to buy a house.

A similar process was followed with the development of Chappaqua Crossing, which produced a mixture of affordable, workforce and market-rate units that has earned praise from around the county and beyond.

"It's not really giving us a reason to stay in town, and what it is doing is basically giving a windfall to developers who will come in and build the largest, cheapest building that they can in order to reap the most profits, and taking real



Lisa Katz

input to what will be built out of the hands of the Planning Board, the Zoning Board and the Architectural Review Board, and to me, that's not okay," Katz said.

Her plan would be to provide incentives for developers; for example, allowing an extra story on a building if they exceeded the 10 percent affordable housing threshold or bringing in the types of businesses sought by the community.

Ultimately, Katz said her administration would reach out to residents and create a vision for the downtown based on public input.

She also criticized the current Town Board majority for pressing ahead with

the environmental review for the full 72-acre downtown study area despite having announced that it will concentrate implementing any zoning changes only to North Greeley Avenue. It will make rezoning other areas of downtown much too easy, Katz warned.

"A future Town Board can easily and quickly expand the application of the Form Based Code to the entire hamlet because the study would have already been done," Katz said.

She continues to be a supporter of development centered predominantly in the hamlets. For Millwood, significant development would require a resolution of the decades-long sewers debate, which the town must continually work toward. Katz said she would also work to ensure the rural West End is protected from development.

However, Katz said her push to reconstitute the Millwood-West End Advisory Board will help make sure that those areas of town do not take a back seat to Chappaqua. She suggested the town schedule more programming and events for Millwood to bring people over to that side of town to increase the sense of community.

Katz said last year's formation of the Council on Race and Equity did excellent work, and now it is up to town leaders to seek out different voices to promote diversity, equity and inclusion.

"One thing I value about my slate is that we are the most diverse in town

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McCall Hopes to Transition From School Board to Town Governance

By Martin Wilbur

For the past three years, Holly McCall has been serving on the Chappaqua Board of Education and is currently its vice president. She wasn't thinking about running for New Castle supervisor in 2021.

But when Supervisor Ivy Pool decided against running for re-election in mid-winter, McCall looked at the possibility to help the community in a new way during a challenging time.

"I started to think, especially in light of some of the tension between the school board and the Town Board during the last year, I felt it was kind of a unique opportunity to make that bridge and maybe, hopefully, repair some of the relationship that was less than ideal the past year," said McCall, whose school board term expires at the end of the month.

The biggest factor in that less-than-ideal relationship can be traced to the two entities' differences regarding the Form Based Code. One of the key issues the school board focused on were the impacts of a full-buildout scenario on future enrollment and its effect on



Holly McCall

taxes. The town was obligated to present that scenario under the mandated state environmental review process of the 72-acre study area.

McCall, 43, who formerly worked for a financial services company, said she had concerns about the volume of potential

changes to the downtown at the start of the process, but in January, when the Town Board announced it was limiting the scope of potential rezoning to the six acres along North Greeley Avenue, her concern waned.

She said that the stretch from the former Rite Aid space and its parking lot to the old Maxine's is the area of greatest need, and the Form Based Code represents the town's best opportunity to jumpstart revitalization there.

Critics who want to limit the environmental study to North Greeley would disregard too much information and input from the community, she said. McCall added that she doesn't see the risk to completing the environmental review for the full 72 acres. She would be opposed to considering further expansion without highly extensive community engagement as well as a proof of concept in the six-acre area.

"There's a proposed change to the zoning and change can be very scary, and in the middle of a pandemic, where people, I'd say, were a little bit on edge, when this was announced," McCall said. "For people who aren't the insiders or following the details, it might not have

been clear that this was coming out of the Comprehensive Plan and it is, in fact, what was envisioned for the Chappaqua hamlet."

Communicating with residents, understanding where the concerns remain, providing accurate information and clearing up misconceptions about the Form Based Code will be officials' task moving forward, McCall said.

She is confident that it is a plan that will help the town achieve a greater mix of housing for new residents, including families, who don't want to or can't initially afford a large down-payment on a house, she said.

Helping Millwood realize its potential will be difficult without connecting to public sewers. McCall said lobbying the county to consider hooking up with its lines and aggressively seeking grant money is a critical long-term goal to bring sewers to Millwood.

McCall said the Chap Line, the proposed pedestrian path that would connect the area near Chappaqua Crossing with downtown, would be a major step forward to make the town a more safely walkable community. It would also prevent some

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New Castle Dems' Slates Vie for Party's Nomination for Town Board

By Martin Wilbur

Four Democratic hopefuls are competing for their party's nomination in the upcoming primary for two seats carrying four-year terms on the New Castle Town Board.

Incumbent Lori Morton, who won a special election last November for the final year of current Supervisor Ivy Pool's council term from the 2017 election, returns to retain her seat. She is joined by running mate Michael Weinberg in his first run for public office.

They are facing two first-time candidates, Tara Kassal and Andrea Sanseverino Galan.

Morton and Weinberg are also running on the independent 4 New Castle line headed by supervisor candidate Holly McCall while Kassal and Sanseverino Galan are part of the Unite New Castle slate led by current councilwoman and supervisor candidate Lisa Katz.

While all candidates in this race are on the ballot in November, next week's winners will appear on two lines in the fall, rather than only an independent line.

Tara Kassal

Kassal had no desire to get involved in local politics until two issues emerged within the past several years – the incessant noise caused by aircraft landing at Westchester County Airport and more recently the debate over the Form Based Code.

Kassal, a member of the town's Airport Advisory Committee, had been in the real estate industry for more than 20 years and has worked on community development projects. The downtown needed help and Kassal said she had the background and expertise to assist the community.

"I think we have a tremendous opportunity right now to create a really thriving hamlet and a really great experience for our residents, one that attracts residents from surrounding communities," she said.

While Kassal, 49, said she's not generally not anti-Form Based Code – streamlining the approval process is one improvement that can be made – lack of resident input and inadequate execution fails to provide a vision. Working with developers and property owners to maximize potential without overburdening the infrastructure while using the



Andrea Sanseverino Galan

current code will lead to better outcomes, she said.

Residents also weren't advised that a Form Based Code would be the vehicle to achieve the town's goals.

"The Comprehensive Plan, I think, really did a good job in what could be," Kassal said. "The challenge was there was nothing in any of these sessions, as far as I understand, that led us to a Form Based Code. I'm not sure how the Form Based Code came into the equation."

Pressing forward with the proposed code along North Greeley Avenue but continuing the environmental review for the full 72 acres is wrong, Kassal said. There is also no guarantee that the sought-after mix of housing and retail will be achieved through the Form Based Code, she said.

Kassal is in favor of the Chap Line if the town can build it in a fiscally responsible fashion while making sure that the surrounding neighborhoods aren't negatively impacted. The town must also explore where sidewalks could increase walkability, she said.

The Council on Race and Equity (CRE) made some outstanding recommendations last year. It is up to town leaders and residents to embrace diversity and attract members of varied backgrounds.

"The CRE has really made some important strides," Kassal said. "Now what's going to be important is how do we take these steps and expand further some of the key areas that they identified."

Kassal said she wants to help the town through a tough period with the pandemic and the divisive Form Based Code debate.

"We need to make sure we're a high-functioning community,



Tara Kassal

that we can come together and manage our difference in an effective and special way," Kassal said.

Lori Morton

Morton jumped into the town's political scene last year to run for Pool's unexpired council term.

In less than six months on the board, the assortment of issues has been intriguing. Employment contracts, strategic decisions and how New Castle emerges from the pandemic are just a few of the challenges.

"My day job is turning things that might seem impossible into things that are possible, and I feel like that's what the Town Board is, too, just in a different space," said Morton, 49, vice president of cardiovascular research at Regeneron.

Discussion on how to help downtown Chappaqua and the Form Based Code has dominated the run-up to the primary. Morton said she wants to the public understand that the Form Based Code isn't a development plan but a zoning strategy that enables property owners to have more flexibility to make improvements.

Focusing on North Greeley Avenue is an appropriate step to take because that corridor has significant needs and is large enough to support the town's goals, she said.

Although there have been warnings from critics that including the entire 72 acres in the environmental review would speed development, no zoning change can get made without public input, Morton said.

"The question is what will the approach be to have public input by incoming future Town Boards," she said. "So that's the question that voters should be asking about when there are



Lori Morton

elections. What is the philosophy of an incoming Town Board or candidate around zoning and how could they go about passing or not passing it, what degree of public input could they be seeking?"

The importance of helping Millwood reach its potential rests largely on sewers. Morton said town officials will have to work closely with the county and other levels of government to obtain the funding while emphasizing the environmental risk of continuing without sewers.

Millwood residents who are already paying into the district also need assurances that they will one day have sewers, she said.

A key mission for the next Town Board is to work toward grants, funding and private donors to help fund the Chap Line, which would be "a wonderful addition to the community," Morton said. She added that the sidewalks master plan should also be prioritized to understand where pedestrian mobility can be enhanced.

Morton would like to explore other recreational opportunities, including improving the town's limited number of playing fields, which are overused.

It is crucial that New Castle is welcoming to all people and to fund key recommendations outlined by the CRE, she said.

"That's how you support diversity in the community, you create an environment where everybody feels like a valued member of the community," Morton said.

Andrea Severino Galan

Last fall, as the debate on the Form Based Code was ramping up during public hearings, Sanseverino Galan noticed the vitriolic discourse online. The



Michael Weinberg

values of civility, respect and constructive debate seemed to evaporate.

"The collapse of these values and the disdain for divergent views, the intolerance and disrespect on issues like the Form Based Code really compelled me to run for office, and for me making sure the voices of all residents are heard and respected," Sanseverino Galan said.

She said the Form Based Code is a zoning tool that is inappropriate for the town. Discussions involving the wider community are needed in order to arrive at a shared vision.

The key is collaborating with a developer and negotiating incentives so the town realizes the types of stores and uses it wants to see rather than allowing the developers to have free rein without prioritizing the needs of the community, Sanseverino Galan said.

She said the 2014 community outreach that result in the updated Comprehensive Plan didn't call for taking reviews of applications out of the hands of the planning and zoning boards.

"So looking back to something that was done seven years ago and really muzzling the input from residents now is not the answer to revitalizing our hamlets, to solve social justice issues or achieving affordable, diverse housing," Sanseverino Galan said. "To me, the Form Based Code really violates these principles."

It also makes sense for the town to take a step back and evaluate the longer-term impacts on work and commuting patterns brought on by the pandemic, she said.

For Millwood, Sanseverino Galan supports expansion of

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New Castle Dems' Slates Vie for Party's Nomination for Town Board

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sewers, although mindful that could trigger development. Engaging residents in Millwood and the West End is crucial to understanding their needs, Sanseverino Galan said. She also backs having hamlet-specific advisory boards.

Sanseverino Galan said she is eager to see the results of a recreation master plan being completed to help the town enhance its recreation facilities.

She favors expansion of sidewalks if feasible for Chappaqua and Millwood as well as the Chap Line. However, there must be grants and state and federal funding to pay for the latter.

Sanseverino Galan applauded the CRE's work to promote inclusion and diversity

in New Castle. She would like to see the town's latest permanent committee act as a liaison to new and prospective residents. Recruiting volunteers from diverse backgrounds to serve on advisory boards and civic organizations is also needed.

"Having their point of view, having my point of view as a Latina, having another point of view from another perspective is vital to all decision-making processes and a diversity of viewpoints," Sanseverino Galan said.

Michael Weinberg

This may be Weinberg's first run for public office but he is no stranger to politics.

Having been active locally as a Democratic district leader and with

the Chappaqua-Millwood Chamber of Commerce, Weinberg decided to make the jump to candidate.

Weinberg, 62, said his familiarity with county and local officials in his role as a part-time adviser to state Sen. Peter Harcham provides him with critical tools that could help New Castle.

"I've been an active Democrat, active in government and politics for as long as I can remember," Weinberg said. "I think it's important for people to use their voices."

He maintains that the Form Based Code speaks to the goals and objectives laid out in the 2017 updated Comprehensive Plan, particularly the call for a diversity of housing.

Ultimately, the town is writing a zoning code designed to help the downtown. Residents can debate what should be included in the zoning code, but town officials cannot force a property owner to build what the municipality is seeking, Weinberg said.

"Remember, especially with the North Greeley corridor, all the land that's going to be in that is private land," said Weinberg. "So you can't dictate to a private landowner exactly what to build. Zoning doesn't allow that; state law doesn't allow that."

He agrees with the current board's move to focus on North Greeley Avenue, to see how the process works over the next couple of years. However, the town can't sit idle as some surrounding communities move forward, Weinberg

said.

Greater efficiency is needed in the project review process, which would be welcome so applicants aren't taking a few years to gain routine approvals, he said.

Weinberg said if elected he would work over the next four years to get some movement on sewers for Millwood. There can be little to no commercial expansion with that service. Furthermore, there are residents who are paying for sewers but not hooked up.

"We want to see more restaurants and more commercial retail here, but you have to have sewers," Weinberg said.

He's a supporter of the Chap Line provided there is outside funding to pay for most of the work. Results from the comprehensive sidewalk plan could help determine where additional sidewalks can be included.

Weinberg supports exploring the possibility of having a community pool, which could be a multigenerational summer meeting place that brings residents together from throughout the town. A dog park has been another frequently requested amenity that could be a year-round meeting place.

He commended the CRE's extensive list of recommendations. While not every idea can be implemented right away, the town needs to figure out how to fund them.

Weinberg would also like to find some money to preserve open space, especially near the watershed.

Katz Looks to Take Leap From Council Seat to New Castle Supervisor

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history and it's clearly a priority for me to ensure that all voices are not only heard but represented and respected," she said.

Katz supports the Chap Line, a roughly mile-long pedestrian route that would connect Roaring Brook Road and downtown Chappaqua. However, much of the funding for the estimated \$10 million project would have to be obtained through grants, government funding and

donations.

After dealing with the pandemic and frayed tensions stemming from the Form Based Code debates, Katz said her mission is to unite residents and the town.

"I really want to bring that back throughout New Castle," Katz said. "I want to make sure that we're not just a town but a community. That is one of my biggest goals."

McCall Hopes to Transition From School Board to Town Governance

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people from getting into their cars for short trips within town. However, the town must find mostly outside money to complete the project, now estimated to be as high as \$10 million.

Understandably, many residents want more sidewalks and the town's comprehensive sidewalk plan will help provide direction on how to accomplish that, McCall said.

The Town Board must continue to address the needs of Millwood and the West End, and McCall suggested to have separate advisory boards for each. It is also the responsibility of each board member to be involved in and visible in those areas as well.

The town's Recreation and Parks Department and the volunteer commission are in the midst of formulating a master plan for the town to consider additional recreation opportunities. McCall said she would explore the feasibility of a town pool, where residents throughout town can congregate. It was one of the recommendations from the town's Council on Race and Equity (CRE).

"I think it's truly a benefit to a community to have a central recreational space where really everyone can be,"

McCall said.

McCall said the CRE, which will be a permanent town committee, provided outstanding recommendations and it will be up to town officials to allocate the funding for its program recommendations. Although it will take time, there are immediate steps such as having more diversity on volunteer boards.

"I think if you don't make it something that you constantly think about and address, you will risk losing the progress that you've made," McCall said.

Having served on the Chappaqua Board of Education for the past three years, McCall said that as supervisor she would be in a strong position to bridge differences between the town and school district, including promoting sharing of services.

The most apparent would be for the town to share fields and facilities, she said. Another idea could be to explore trash collection and to work with the town's Sustainability Advisory Board to help the district limit waste generation.

"I think that there's a lot of overlap in mission, too, sometimes and starting with more sharing and collaboration, I think, is a really good place to start," McCall said.

Eight Candidates to Square Off in Hotly Contested Peekskill Dem Primary

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as a professional city planner and village administrator.

He said he has the skills and experience that can be helpful to Peekskill, and with the last four years of national chaos, Douglas no longer wanted to sit on the sidelines.

"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," Douglas said.

Vele currently serves as a legislative aide for Westchester County Legislator Colin Smith and served as campaign manager for the local Democratic Party in 2019. She is a lifelong city resident.

"My main goal has always been to give back to the community," she said. "People deserve to be heard and to be seen. Leadership is having the political courage to step up when necessary. Taking the unconventional route is often necessary to make change."

Perlow has been a Peekskill resident since 2013 and has spent her career fighting for school equity, working alongside nonprofits and public schools

to increase the percentage of Black, Latinx and low-income students who graduate from New York City schools prepared for the future.

She is also a founding member of the Peekskill Equitable Housing Coalition, a group committed to halting the gentrification of Peekskill by ensuring the city's housing policies and agreements are in the best interest of current residents.

"This community is this slate," Perlow said. "Running for office is not something I thought I would do, but I was dismayed only to hear one person on the council (Agudelo) speaking out."

Scott has been a resident of Peekskill for more than 20 years and is owner of PK Blendz Juice Bar in downtown Peekskill. He is also a singer/artist who has performed at numerous local venues.

"Peekskill is a special place and I think anything is possible," he said. "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."

Levenberg, Feldman Vie for Crucial Democratic Support in Ossining

By Rick Pezzullo

The June 22 Democratic primary in the Town of Ossining will determine who will be supervisor for the next two years with no Republican competing for the slot in November and no minor party lines for the candidates to fall back on.

Incumbent Supervisor Dana Levenberg is seeking a fourth two-year term. Standing in her way is Councilwoman Elizabeth Feldman.

Feldman, whose current council four-year term doesn't expire until 2024, was unable to convince enough Democratic district leaders to back her candidacy instead of Levenberg, but is hopeful primary voters will see differently.

"I believe I am a better choice for town supervisor because I really care about this community and all of its people," Feldman said. "I believe it is time for me to dedicate myself full-time to my community service. People have been asking for a change or at least a choice for a long time and I find myself in a position to give them one."

Levenberg, who worked for

Assemblywoman Sandy Galef prior to being elected supervisor, said she is proud of the direction the town is going in.

"I am running for re-election for town supervisor because I am so proud of the good work we have been doing in the town and want to continue that good work and get even better," Levenberg said. "Being a successful town supervisor demands a holistic approach to governance. My focus every day is on managing the town budgets, directing our staff and working toward a vision of an equitable and healthy community in all senses of the word: economically, environmentally, physically and mentally."

Levenberg cited her leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and the town's role in assisting small businesses, non-profits and senior citizens.

"We have kept taxes in check, with no tax increase to speak of last year; increased our Moody's rating; reduced our carbon footprint; continued to improve our parks and open spaces; restored historic structures; fought for racial justice; made our town more bike friendly;



Dana Levenberg

initiated habitat park stewards volunteer efforts; introduced food scrap recycling; brought in unprecedented grant dollars; and put the town on the map through my leadership on various boards," Levenberg stated.

Feldman said she would "use my lifelong experiences here, combined with my people skills and creative outside-the-box approach to challenges" to help Ossining recover from the effects of the pandemic.

"I also have a stubborn determination to protect our wildlife, Hudson River, natural resources and historic spaces,"

said Feldman, who has been a dental hygienist for more than 30 years. "We need to get a handle on how high our residential tax rates are. Partnering with Briarcliff on their plan to incentivize corporations to redevelop the existing empty corporate campuses would be a good start. We should not let them become hundreds of units of residential housing to further overburden our infrastructure and overcrowd our schools and roads."

Feldman said she would like to start a marketing campaign to attract small companies who longer want to be located in New York City.

"Building our commercial tax base will lighten the load on our homeowners," she said. "One of my main priorities is protecting our watershed, Hudson River and remaining green spaces. I am proud of the environmental work our board has done over the past six years. I plan to continue this work in the years to come."

Levenberg said the town was working with the community to help Ossining develop for the future through the Comprehensive Plan process.



Elizabeth Feldman

"There are many factors to consider as we establish a new road map for the town, with a focus on sustainability, which was grant-funded," she said. "As well, we are looking at zoning to improve North State Road with the help of Pace Land Use Law Center and the Planners4Health Toolbox and our public, which is also through a state grant. We hope the work we did with the Village of Ossining and Cornell's Climate Adaptive Design Studio will also help forge critical protections and smart planning along Ossining's waterfront."

Feiner Facing Challenge for Greenburgh Supervisor in Dem Primary

By Martin Wilbur

If Paul Feiner were to win re-election this year to a 16th term as Greenburgh supervisor, he would stand alone as the longest continuously serving supervisor in Westchester County. It's a distinction he currently shares with Cortlandt Supervisor Linda Puglisi, who has announced her retirement at the end of the year.

Feiner touts his 30 years of town government experience and his continued passion for the job. He loves helping people and improving their quality of life.

"I really have a lot of accomplishments," he said. "We're putting in a lot of sidewalks all over the town and I feel like the main thing about this job is instead of just complaining, I'm able to really make a difference."

But this year Feiner, 65, will have to fend off a political newcomer to win the Democratic nomination again. Tasha Young has spent most of her career in managerial and business administrative

capacities for nonprofit organizations before serving as land use policy director and then chief of staff to the New York City Council majority leader.

Young, 49, said she is running for supervisor to focus on several matters that have not received adequate attention. She said there are residents in a swath of town, particularly in the villages, who feel ignored and want their town government to attend to their needs.

"So that's how I approach it, listening to people in a 360-degree feedback loop and it is engagement, and just letting them know what the role of the supervisor is and how the supervisor can address their concerns," Young said.

One major concern for Young is the housing issue, where there is not enough targeted or workforce housing for people earning between \$50,000 and \$100,000. That salary level includes working people, young professionals early in their career, new college graduates and single parents.

The town would look to incentivize building more

affordable and workforce units for developers, she said.

"These are just two things, putting the threads of government together to look at this and to solve this when a developer comes negotiating for the greatest public return and then expanding affordability to that demographic," Young said.

She also would want to have developers build with green energy and attract more independent shops rather than big-box retail along Route 9A.

Young said she has no major issues with Feiner but that 30 years is long enough for the same person serve in one role.

"I am not Mr. Feiner's enemy; we are opponents and we are in a very competitive race," Young said.

Feiner, who has run in two previous primaries, said he's taking nothing for granted.

"I think one of the biggest problems in the county is that most people don't have contested elections, so it really keeps you on your toes," Feiner said. "I feel like I'm better when I have an opponent."



Paul Feiner

He ticked off a long list of accomplishments during his tenure, ranging from major initiatives to dealing with small problems that some officials might not bother with. Feiner's administration initiated the Fix It Greenburgh program where people take photos of potholes on their phone and transmit them to the town. It goes directly to GPS so crews can be dispatched for repairs.

He said he was proud that nearly 30 percent of the Greenburgh Police Department are officers of color, and Greenburgh was the first police force in the county to require all



Tasha Young

officers to have body cameras.

Currently, there are 70 units of senior housing being built on Manhattan Avenue, a complex that will be more than twice the number of units then what had previously been at the same site, Feiner said. Then there's the former Westhab facility with 70 affordable units and another 45 are being built in Edgemont.

"We've taken foreclosed properties and we've turned it over to affordable housing developers," explained Feiner. "We did that a few times like the Waterwheel in Ardsley, which is workforce housing."

