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2017 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire
for Westchester Candidates

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the New York League of Conservation Voters Questionnaire.

The New York League of Conservation Voters is the only non-partisan statewide environmental organization in New York that fights for clean water, clean air, renewable energy and open space through political action. This questionnaire is designed to elicit your views regarding what environmental, public health, clean energy and transit and environmental justice groups consider to be the most important issues of the day. Responses may inform NYLCV’s educational and legislative programs and actions NYLCV takes in the election cycle.

Responses should be considered public. Although NYLCV may choose not to publicize responses to every question, verbatim responses may be reproduced and distributed publicly. If so, your responses may be shortened, if necessary, but will not be edited in substantive ways. If you choose to refer us to a position paper or website, please indicate exactly what text you would like us to cite. For candidates choosing not to respond to the questionnaire, NYLCV will note as much in its public materials.

NYLCV and its partners in the environmental policy arena believe that New York’s voters are determined to make the environment a voting issue this year. Candidate positions on issues such as protecting public health, building a clean energy future, and mitigating climate change will help voters decide how to cast their ballots this election cycle. This questionnaire is one of the primary ways the public will get this information.

After receipt of your completed questionnaire, you will be invited to participate in a formal interview with our Chapter Board. The interview will provide you with an opportunity to present your credentials, elaborate on your questionnaire responses, and respond to questions. Here are a few more guidelines:

* Questionnaires are due **Friday, June 2**
* The completed questionnaire is mandatory for endorsement consideration and must be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word file to: politics@nylcv.org
* To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV’s 2016-17 Westchester Policy Agenda](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016-17WestchesterAgendaFINAL.pdf)
* Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg (jklainberg@nylcv.org)

**Campaign Contact Information**

Candidate Name: Chris Burdick
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Facebook Page: [Town of Bedford Supervisor Chris Burdick](https://www.facebook.com/Town-of-Bedford-Supervisor-Chris-Burdick-274587416028614/)
Twitter handle: NA
Campaign Manager’s name and email: NA
Press Secretary’s name and email: NA
Scheduler’s name and email: NA

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Please share your accomplishments or experiences that indicate your commitment to advancing a pro-environment agenda. These experiences may be professional or personal.

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| *I would ask that the Board please consider my completed 2015 Questionnaire (which for your convenience I am including with this completed questionnaire) when I successfully ran for re-election as Supervisor of the Town of Bedford (many thanks for the NYLCV endorsement). The replies here cover my commitment and accomplishments since submitting the 2015 questionnaire or not otherwise discussed in it..* *I have energetically and effectively undertaken environmental initiatives in several capacities, as Bedford Town Supervisor, Chairman of Sustainable Westchester and Executive Committee of the East of Hudson Watershed Corporation.* 1. Having been re-elected as chairman of Sustainable Westchester, I have helped secure the success of Community Choice Aggregation (now in 20 Westchester municipalities). I also have been pressing ahead with Municipal Solar Buyers Group (Bedford and Mamaroneck being the co-sponsoring municipalities); Solarize; promotion of electric vehicles (Sustainable Westchester, through its electric vehicle consultant, EarthKind Energy, secured a special offer for a $10,000 discount on the 2017 all-electric Nissan Leaf for Westchester County residents). SW also has been instrumental in supporting and promoting the work of local sustainability committees, conservation boards and other community advocates of environmental protection.
2. Among 2016 and 2017 Town of Bedford Environmental Legislation and Actions: (a) after 100 years of talking about sewers in Bedford Hills and Katonah, I have been successful in putting us on track for making them a reality (I secured over $19 million in DEP and County WQIP funding for the project and a $1.2 million bond issue) and the engineering design now is in underway with the construction to be commenced Summer/Fall 2018 – this initiative is a vitally important Bedford environmental initiative as it will eliminate the contamination of our aquifer from effluent (80% of Bedford’s land area is in the NYC watershed); (b) I proposed and secured unanimous Town Board approval for a phased increase in Bedford’s Open Space tax levy from 1% to 2%; (c) I am very optimistic that Bedford is about to become either the first or one of the first Westchester County municipalities to enter into a power purchasing agreement to provide for solar installations in several Town facilities which will produce a significant portion of the municipality’s electricity needs; (d) the Town of Bedford is one of 11 CCA communities which chose the “Green Option” for 100% renewable energy; (e) Bedford was only one of two municipalities in the State to receive a $250,000 NYSERDA Clean Energy grant – ours for conversion of 570 street lamps to LED; (f) I am very optimistic that the Town Board will approve a $100,000 investment in municipal electric vehicle charging stations for a number of our commuter parking lots and two of our Town parks; (g) I authored and received unanimous approval of the Town’s commitment to climate action following President Trump’s withdrawal from the Paris Accords; (h) our Single Stream recycling is achieving greater penetration into the community and now our Recycling Center is Single Stream and new to Center is a community composting
3. Plastic Bags Given the inaction at the County level, I am working with Bedford 2020 and our Conservation Board (which has been in existence for decades and has many of the attributes of the Town Board’s sustainability committee) to develop a municipal plastic bag law either to ban single use plastic bags or charge a fee for them.

Additional initiatives are mentioned below in reply to a number of questions.  |

 **ISSUES**

Please indicate your level of commitment to, and if applicable your recent personal and professional activity with respect to, the following issues:

(To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV’s 2016-17 Westchester Policy Agenda](http://nylcv.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016-17WestchesterAgendaFINAL.pdf))

1. Sustainable Development: Advancing modernized zoning to encourage mixed land use and compact development

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| The Town’s Zoning Code provides for “cluster” development of housing to encourage the clustering of housing (such as with town houses). This allows for open space to be preserved and protected in the other areas of the tract. Our Light Industrial Zoning districts promote mixed land use, as they permit multifamily housing.  |

1. Invasive Species: Educating the public on this problem and implementing better management practices

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| The Town’s Conservation Board has carried out several volunteer-led programs to eradicate invasive species both on Town property and private property. A local community group, Katonah Village Improvement Society (KVIS) partnered with the Town for the planting of native species following Park Department removal of overgrowth, which included some invasive species, on a strip of Town right of way in the hamlet of Katonah. We also advise residents about “best practices” through our Wetlands Control Commission and Conservation Board. For at least the last 10 years, the Commission encourages residents who submit mitigation plans to remove invasive plant species and replace them with native species. The Planning Board also encourages “best practices” in site plan review.  |

1. Cleaner Air: Speeding up conversions and retrofits of home heating oil No. 6 and No. 4 to more efficient heating systems

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| As part of our commitment to achieve a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 here in Bedford, we have encouraged residents to “Energize” their homes which at times includes recommendations for new, more efficient heating systems. While natural gas is only available in certain areas of the municipality, our municipal government has taken advantage of this cleaner burning fuel in areas served by natural gas (we have converted several of our municipal buildings to natural gas).  |

1. Expanding Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure: Facilitating the development of a larger network of charging stations that will encourage more municipalities, businesses and individuals to switch to EVs in the coming years

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| Last year the Town Board unanimously adopted a renewal of our $50 credit for annual residential parking permits in our commuter lots for electric vehicles and hybrids. The Town also has plans to increase the number of EV/hybrids in our fleet. Also see reply to the first question above – 2f.  |

1. Sustainable Public Access Management: Making significant impacts on energy use and the environment simply by deciding to spend money and deploy resources wisely

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| Under my watch, I have delivered Town budgets which comply with the NYS Property Tax Cap, while improving programs as described in the replies to this questionnaire. We have maintained a triple AAA credit rating (fewer than 3% of municipalities have such a rating), increased Fund Balances (reserves) and adopted a fiscally prudent 10 year Capital Plan.  |

1. Transportation: Maximizing environmentally friendly mobility options in and around residential and commercial centers

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| We encourage the use of public transportation and our planning process reflects that commitment. A twelve unit affordable housing project which we are developing in partnership with Antioch Baptist Church is within a short walking distance of Metro North’s station in Bedford Hills. Our Planning Board consistently requires subdivision applicants to submit plans for environmentally friend mobility options and use of public transportation.  |

1. Sustainable & Transit-Oriented Development: Creating livable and sustainable communities that permit increased density and diversity in our downtowns and neighborhoods

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| See reply to question 7. In addition, our sewer plan for the business districts of Bedford Hills and Katonah now will permit more diverse downtowns. Under current watershed protection and County Health Department regulations, it is nearly impossible to provide for new residences within the hamlet business areas. Conversion of “dry uses” to a “wet use”, such as a restaurant, also is nearly impossible. The advent of sewers will provide more sustainable, livable and diverse business districts.  |

1. Open Space Preservation: Planning strategies such as clustering, creating pocket parks in developed areas, and encouraging biotic corridors in less densely populated areas

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| Under my leadership I proposed and obtained unanimous Town Board support for a phased 100% increase in the Open Tax levy (the Local Law was expiring). We will increase the levy to 2% resulting in a substantial increase in the funds available for Open Space acquisition. The phase in begins in 2019 at 1 ¼%, 2020 at 1 ½%, 2021 at 1 ¾% and 2022 at 2%. This phased increase enables us to stay within the tax cap, while also enhancing our ability to pursue open spaces opportunities as they arise. Also see above the discussion of cluster provision in our Zoning Code.  |

1. Natural Resource Protection: Comprehensively managing and protecting regional natural resources (i.e., air, water and land)

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| We vigorously manage and protect our natural resources with our wetlands protection law, with a Wetlands Control Commission whose sole function is to administer the law; a strong Zoning Code which ensures that development is measured, minimizing adverse environmental impacts. We also encourage use of “Green” landscape management with our participation in the Healthy Yard program, launched by a member of our Planning Board, Diane Lewis, asking residents to take a pledge not to use herbicides or pesticides or other chemical applications.  |

1. Energy: Achieving energy efficiency in residential and commercial settings, in existing and new buildings, and with cutting-edge technology and the smarter use of older technology

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| We have a “Green” energy code which was adopted to ensure that new residential development meets high HERS ratings. We encourage energy efficiency with our membership in Energy Improvement Corporation, of which I serve as a director, and our sponsorship of Solarize and Energize campaigns. We are one of only two Westchester municipalities (the other being New Rochelle) which has included in our annual operating budget funds to enable the residential Energize to continue for Bedford.  |

1. Farms and Local Food: Managing development and providing access to healthy, fresh foods

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| I am delighted that the Town of Bedford has partnered with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority for the Town’s lease of the Bedford Hills train station for $1 a year with one of the principal activities a Saturday Farmers Market to provide healthy, locally grown fresh foods. We also help support and publicize the Northern Westchester Local Food Project in “its mission to build an economically viable, high-quality, locally-sourced food system for institutional buyers" |