



30 Broad Street – 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10004  
212-361-6350  
politics@nylcv.org  
www.nylcv.org

## 2017 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire for Capital Region 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 9**
- ☒ The completed questionnaire is mandatory for endorsement consideration and must be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word file to: [politics@nylcv.org](mailto:politics@nylcv.org)
- ☒ To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV's 2016-17 Capital Region Policy Agenda](#)
- ☒ Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg ([jklainberg@nylcv.org](mailto:jklainberg@nylcv.org))

## CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION

Candidate Name: Peter G. Barber

Office Sought (district if applicable): Town of Guilderland Supervisor

E-mail: barber2055@gmail.com

Mailing Address: 205 Greenwood Drive, Schenectady (Town of Guilderland), NY 12303

Phone: 518 356 0424

Website: : [www.peterbarberforsupervisor.com](http://www.peterbarberforsupervisor.com) (to be reactivated in June)

Facebook Page: Peter Barber for Town Supervisor (to be reactivated in June)

Twitter handle: @pgbarber205

Campaign Manager's name and email: N/A

Press Secretary's name and email: N/A

Scheduler's name and email: N/A

## 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.

Two years ago, I ran for Town of Guilderland Supervisor with the support of the NYLCV. As Town Supervisor for the past 18 months, the Town has advanced a pro-environmental agenda by adopting or taking the following actions:

(1). New Zoning Code. I helped draft and the Town Board recently adopted a new zoning code which has been well-received by residents, businesses, and environmental advocates and is responsive to climate change including: (a) encouraging compact developments to preserve green space by increasing allowed densities; (b) requiring sidewalks on designated streets; (c) preserving trees, native vegetation, and existing topography for any land use disturbance activity; (d) acquiring open space for passive parklands and hiking trails; (e) enhancing angle of repose and other setback requirements that bar construction activity near streams and bodies of water; (f) reducing light pollution by reducing heights of light poles and requiring full-cutoffs; (g) encouraging



green roofs, rain gardens, pervious pavement, and on-site stormwater management; and (h) eliminating parking minimums for many uses and imposing maximum allowed parking, and providing incentives for electric charging stations.

(2) Open Space. In the past year, the Town has continued its aggressive acquisition of open space by adding over 100 acres that protect watercourses, stream beds, wildlife corridors, steep slopes, and historical and native Indian sites. In the past year, the Town also received a grant from the Hudson River Valley Greenway to plan hiking and biking trails that link neighborhoods, local businesses, and points of interest.

(3) Cooperation agreement with the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission. The Town has entered into agreements with the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission which allows for its management of Town-owned open space adjacent to the Preserve. This cooperative arrangement has allowed for the continued expansion of the Preserve's hiking and biking trails and the placement of trail heads and access points near residential neighborhoods.

(4) Pedestrian Accommodations. NYS DOT, with the partial financial assistance provided by the Town, recently completed the construction of sidewalks on both sides of Western Avenue (US Route 20) from the City of Albany to the intersection with State Route 155. New sidewalks were also installed on State Route 146 in Guilderland Center, on Route 155 past the Middle School, and on Johnston Road, a well-traveled County road, past the Westmere Elementary School. At present, the Town maintains over 30 miles of sidewalk.

During my term in office, the Town has also successfully advocated for and devoted Town reserves to fund sidewalks that link neighborhoods to schools, the Town library, and local businesses including: (a) a \$680,000 grant that will extend the Route 20 sidewalk west to the Guilderland Library and YMCA; (b) a \$300,000 grant that will add a sidewalk to the Lynnwood Elementary School; (c) a developer provided sidewalk on Route 20 that links the new Town senior center to Town Hall; and (d) a \$1.1 million grant that will provide safety improvements at the intersection of Carman and Lydius Street, with new sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals.

(5) Improved Water Infrastructure. Earlier this year, the Town awarded a contract to extend an existing water line to the boundary with the Town of Rotterdam and also signed an intermunicipal agreement with the Town of Rotterdam on sharing water resources. In late April, the State enacted the Clear Water Infrastructure Act of 2017 which provided 40% funding of intermunicipal water projects. By the Act's June 23<sup>rd</sup> deadline, the towns will submit a joint application for the State's funding of estimated

costs (currently \$3.95 million) to replace a Town storage tank, extend water lines to needed areas, and build a pump station. This joint application is coupled with a similar application under the Act by the City of Albany and Town of Colonie to create interconnections. The Town of Guilderland currently has interconnections with the City of Albany and Town of Bethlehem, and obtains water from the Watervliet Reservoir and Town-owned wells. These pending applications will allow water to flow between at least six municipalities in two counties providing resilient permanent water resources and redundancy in the event emergencies.

(6) Lead Testing. Late last year, the State required schools to test their water sources for lead content in response to crises in Hudson Falls and Flint. The Town voluntarily undertook this task and arranged for independent testing of all drinking water sources in its parks and buildings. These tests confirmed that all drinking sources are well below EPA standards for lead content. Every year, the Town also mails to residents a detailed report of water testing for EPA listed contaminants from the output at its water filtration plant. The Town also annually tests water drawn from sinks at thirty residences using Town water. These tests confirm that the Town's water system satisfies all requirements and standards.

(7) Hazardous Materials Collection. The Town's efforts have recently increased resident participation in the Town's free collection days at which residents can safely dispose of household toxic chemicals and electronics. This past year, the Town used social media and Nixle, a free text and email service, to notify residents of community events, including the household hazardous waste collection days. As a result, both the number of participants and amount of collected materials nearly doubled and has caused DEC to double its funding for this year's events. The Town also participates with the local library for the responsible disposition of prescription medications.

(8) Stormwater Management. Earlier this year, the Town approved contracts for the construction of a \$3.5 million stormwater management system that will replace an antiquated system in the Hamlet of McKownville which has caused widespread flooding of homes. This work is scheduled to start in the Fall.

The new zoning code requires consideration of swales and rain gardens, pervious pavement, and use of concrete end aisle as stormwater management facilities. The Town is also a charter member of the Albany County Stormwater Management Coalition and is in the midst of mapping its outflows and drainage system. The Town has an experienced Stormwater Enforcement Officer who aggressively enforces all legal requirements.

(9) Environmental Conservation Advisory Council. The Town has an Environmental

Conservation Advisory Council which provides a detailed report regarding soil conditions, existing foliage, topography and other environmental concerns on all subdivision applications. The ECAC provides an annual summary of its activities to the Town Board for submission to the NYS DEC Commissioner.

(10) Expanded Parks. In addition to adding open space, the Town has plans to expand its list of seven Town-owned parks by adding parklands in a planned residential subdivision. The Town will also soon add a second dog park and is working with the Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District to place dog refuse disposal units in all Town parks.

## 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 Capital Region Policy Agenda](#))*

2. Regional Transit Analysis: Working with the Capital Region Regional Economic Development Council to develop rapid transit options (i.e., bus and light rail) between central business districts

The Town is a partner with the Capital District Transit Authority on the proposed transit center at Crossgates Mall, the largest shopping center in the Capital Region. This federally financed project involves the construction of a covered transit center within the Mall and a dedicated bus route that utilizes rights of way through UAlbany and the State Office Campus, and reserved bus lanes that will enable patrons to travel from Guilderland to downtown Albany in 20 minutes. To allow for this construction, the Town is working with CDTA on relocating a Town roadway and replacing the existing stormwater management system that should alleviate current flooding on Route 20 during heavy rain events. I also have regular meetings with CTDA's Director about extending the transit system to the west, and adding more covered bus stops.

3. Renewable Energy: Streamlining and modernizing the process for obtaining government approval to install renewable energy facilities

The newly enacted Zoning Code provides renewable energy facilities with an expedited review process with many installations only requiring a building permit and remainder only requiring site plan review. Town staff regularly attends seminars on this topic and implements best practices.

4. Clean and Safe Water: Working to ensure counties and localities regularly test their drinking water using EPA's Contaminant Candidate List and Unregulated Drinking Water Contaminants

As noted above, earlier this year, the Town voluntarily tested drinking water sources at Town facilities, including parks, for lead content. The independent testing confirmed that all sources met EPA standards. The Town also annually tests the treated water leaving its filtration facility and also the water at 30 residences that are use Town water. These favorable results are mailed to residents and posted on the website.

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

The Town's new zoning code encourages increased density and diversity of housing in its hamlet zoning districts and throughout the Town with planned unit development districts. This latter tool allowed for the Town Board's recent approval of an assisted living facility on 10 acres and the transfer of another 40 acres to the Town as open space for management by the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission.

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

Over the past several years, the Town, with the assistance of NYSDOT, has installed sidewalks, handicap access, bus transit pads and shelters, and dedicated biking lanes on the north and south sides of Western Avenue (Route 20) from the City of Albany to the intersection of Routes 20 and 155. The Town made similar improvements on Route 146 in the hamlet of Guilderland Center.

As detailed above, in the past year, the Town has been awarded grants for the construction of sidewalks that will link apartments with the Town library, YMCA, and elementary school. At present, the Town has over 30 miles of sidewalk that connect neighborhoods with each other, public places, and local business. The Town will soon open hiking trails on Town's open space and Town-owned land that is managed by the Albany Pine Bush Preserve.

With the construction of sidewalks, the Town is working with NYS DOT on reducing speed or other traffic calming measures on Route 20. This request is pending with NYS DOT. The Town is also collaborating with the Pine Bush Commission to install descriptive banners on National Grid poles which describe the Town's natural resources and recreational opportunities.

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

The Town's new enacted zoning code continues the Town's rapid acquisition of open space through its land approval processes. In the past year, the Town has acquired title to over 100 acres of open space and with a recent approval, anticipates taking title to an additional 40 acres in the near future. The Town partners with the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission which manages Town-owned open space adjacent to the Preserve.

Nearly a decade ago, the Town financed the purchase of the 27-hole Western Turnpike Golf Course to protect it from residential development. This land provides miles of cross-country skiing and snowshoe trails, and access to winter activities at the adjacent Tawasentha Park. The Town is also seeking a grant to construct a pavilion near the clubhouse which will serve as a covered ice skate rink.

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

The Town Board recently approved a rezone of property for the installation of a large solar array on vacant land in its Industrial District. In the past year, the Town also received funding to convert its lights at Town Hall to LED. The Town's new pool house was also designed to use natural lighting and pass through shaded open space for air cooling. The new zoning code requires developers to consider renewable energy generation in all construction activity.

In the past year, the Town also partnered with a solar company on the construction of a large solar farm in the Town of Schaghticoke. This arrangement will allow the Town to obtain its electrical needs from renewable sources.

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

In the past year, the Town enacted a new zoning code which imposes strict setbacks for an angle of repose which prohibits construction that would negatively impact water resources or wildlife corridors. This aggressive setback has resulted in the dedication of forever protected land to the Town. The Town owns hundreds of acres in its parks and open spaces with DEC-rated streams and water courses. These natural resources are responsibly managed and provide for passive recreational opportunities.

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





The Town has a community organic garden where residents can maintain nearly 100 lots for vegetable gardens with onsite ponds for water. The gardens include an apiary, bluebird house, an historic barn, a stocked pond, a hoop house, and gardeners' pavilion and picnic.

The Town has numerous active farms, dairies, and wineries, many of which are designated as State Agricultural Districts. The Town is a member of the Albany County Farm Committee, and actively promotes farmers' market at various locations in Town.

11. 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

The Town's new zoning code provides incentives for roofing and treated surfaces that promote energy conservation. The Town also recently received a grant to convert Town Hall lighting to LED.