



2017 Environmental Survey of East Hampton Town Board and Supervisor Candidates

2017 Green Guide Participating Members

CONTRIBUTORS

Accabonac Protection Committee

Amagansett Springs Aquifer
Protection

Concerned Citizens of Montauk

International Dark Sky Association
– New York Chapter

Long Island, Businesses for
Responsible Energy (LIBFRE)

NYLCV Education Fund

Northwest Alliance

Renewable Energy Long Island

Quiet Skies Coalition

SUPPORTERS

Defend H₂O

Ditch Plains Association

Friends of Georgica Pond
Foundation

Group for the East End

Peconic Baykeeper

Perfect Earth Project

Surfrider Foundation: Eastern Long
Island Chapter

Third House Nature Center

OVERVIEW

As non-profit, nonpartisan environmental organizations concerned about the future of the East End, we have decided to once again become active in the upcoming election by raising awareness of the importance of these issues and will be collectively engaging the public in various ways.

The purpose of this activity is not to implicitly or explicitly support or oppose any candidate or political party, but to educate voters on local environmental issues and encourage them to be civically-active environmental advocates.

GUIDELINES

This questionnaire is designed to elicit your commitment to and ideas on addressing the important sustainability issues facing East Hampton.

Responses should be considered public. Complete, unedited responses will be reproduced and distributed publicly.

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, we will note as much in our public materials.

TIMELINE

☒ Questionnaires are due by October 11, 2017

☒ Completed questionnaires must be submitted via e-mail as Microsoft Word file or PDF to: Joshua Klainberg, NYLCVEF - jklainberg@nylcv.org

☒ Questions or extension requests may be directed to: Laura Tooman, CCOM - LTooman@PreserveMontauk.org

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide us with the following information:

Candidate Name: Jerry Larsen

Position Sought: East Hampton Town Councilman

EXPERIENCE, PHILOSOPHY AND RELATIONSHIPS

- 1) Please share with us accomplishments or experiences that would indicate your commitment to advancing an environmental agenda for East Hampton. These may be professional or personal.

Professionally as the retired (after 33 years of service to the community) Chief of Police for the East Hampton Village Police Department I did not have many circumstances to enforce NYS Environmental Law or Local Environmental Law. However, my record on enforcing NYS Penal Law and Local Laws was incredibly strong. In my personal life my family and I are very aware of recycling, preserving water and using environmentally friendly products. My wife and I also worked with and encouraged our children during their school years to collect plastic bottles, recycle them and donate the money to Smiletrain a charity to help children. In our private property management business, we also encourage our clients to use environmentally friendly products. I understand the seriousness of preserving our ground water, surface water and our coastline and will work very diligently to create and enforce mandates/laws to protect our resources-assets in the Town of East Hampton.

- 2) What do you believe is the role of town government regulation and enforcement in maintaining a natural, sustainable environment? What, if any, changes are the most important?

I believe that the Towns responsibility is to create and enforce laws, provide education and work with our partners at the federal and state level that will protect

natural and sustainable environment. This would include reducing greenhouse gasses, protecting the coastline, groundwater, surface water shell fishing and commercial fishing industries.

- 3) What resources, experts or opinions will you consult when making decisions that affect East Hampton Town's environmental resources?

I would consult the following experts and informed residents and organizations within our town, county, state and federal government. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, tall of the contributors and supporters that are listed on the 2017 East Hampton Green Guide. Working together with knowledgeable people and agencies will assist me in making the best decisions.

ISSUE QUESTIONS

The 2017 East Hampton Green Guide details opportunities and approaches to persistent environmental sustainability challenges facing the town. The following subjects come straight from the agenda where action items of critical importance to the environmental community can be found.

- 4) On Long Island, our economic prosperity, public health and safety, and quality of life rely upon a clean and sustainable supply of drinking water. Similarly, as an island blessed with bays, harbors, and beaches on every shore, the quality of our surface waters defines our outdoor experience. The consequences of over-development on a small ecosystem have been devastating to not only our groundwater but also our surface waters.

What actions will you take to protect groundwater and surface water?

Our Groundwater and surface water are some of our most important resources in East Hampton and we need to move quickly to protect these resources. The town board needs to implement a more aggressive program to replace the aging septic systems that have been identified in our town, some 12,500 of them.

The current town board has had a plan in place since 2014 to construct a municipal septic system in Montauk and has not made a move until the CCOM (March 2017) demanded action. In July 2017 (an Election Year!) the town board authorized \$46,000 for a more focused plan. This is a serious issue and needs to be acted on NOW.

We need action not just talk during election years.

- 5) Beaches, water-based tourism and the most productive fishing port in New York State anchor East Hampton's economy. Erosion, sea level rise, and more frequent catastrophic storms are reshaping East Hampton. A sustainable, thriving community requires protecting natural buffers such as beaches, bluffs and wetlands and upgrading and adapting our infrastructure.

What actions will you take to achieve coastal adaptation and resiliency planning?

I will be aggressive, using grants, to fully develop a Coastal Adaptation and Resiliency Plan, update the Local Waterfront Resiliency Plan, pressure the Army Corps of Engineers to fully implement the Fire Island Inlet to Montauk Point Project in Montauk. I will also contact the Long Island Sound Study to inquire if funding is available for the north shore of Montauk. We need to work with all of our partners to accomplish our goals.

- 6) Wetlands, woodlands, grasslands, dunes, fresh water ponds, kettle holes, creeks, bays, and beaches abound in East Hampton, but are becoming increasingly rare nationwide. These

ecosystems are not only a major draw for tourism and the area's economy, but are also valuable and vulnerable habitats that provide food, shelter, and breeding grounds for a wide array of creatures. Because of new development, the incursion of invasive species, the use of chemicals for fertilizers, pest and weed control, and increasing stresses of extreme weather and rising water levels, our native flora and fauna are stressed and in decline.

What actions will you take to address habitat stewardship?

Our bays and ponds are extremely crucial for the survival of our community as we know it. We need to be aggressively attempting to reduce greenhouse gasses by reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. Solar, wind, electric vehicles better insulating buildings can all help to this end. Septic system replacements, watershed containment and requiring low nitrogen septic systems for new construction will save our bays and ponds. By taking action we will revive our bays and ponds and all of the plants, fish and shellfish that inhabit those bodies of water.

- 7) The State of New York has recognized the urgent need for action to mitigate climate change by dramatically reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 and 80% by 2050. Additionally, the state has directed electric utilities in the state to provide at least 50% of its electricity supply from renewable energy sources. In recognition of these mandates, the Town of East Hampton, in 2014, adopted a goal to meet 100% of community-wide electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2020 and further set a goal to meet the equivalent energy consumption in all sectors (electric, heat, transportation) 100% from renewable sources by the year 2030. At the same time, our grid is vulnerable to the effects of climate change and from time to time the siting decisions for the generation of power and its distribution have been incompatible with the government's mission to protect public health and safety.

What actions will you take to create a 21st century sustainable energy policy and grid?

The Town Board in 2015 (Election year) created the "Town of East Hampton Climate Action Plan" within that plan there are many "potential future action and initiatives" listed, but not many have been implemented. The town of East Hampton has not reduced or replaced its fleet of vehicles to electric vehicles or even hybrid vehicles. The town has not upgraded all (30 of its buildings identified in this plan) to solar. There are many, many items identified in this plan that have not been done.

The Town Board also adopted "The Comprehensive Energy Vision" and not a thing has been done in over 3 years to move forward with this vision. The town was to convene experts and consultants to develop energy and policies to attain goals. **NOTHING HAS BEEN DONE!!**

These Plans have been developed by people in the field who know what they are doing, why are we not following these plans?

If elected, I will aggressively follow these plans/visions/goals and implement these ideas.

- 8) The Town enacted an outdoor lighting ordinance in 1984 in order to preserve the nocturnal environment, community character, and quality of life from the effects of misdirected, excessive, unnecessary and inefficient outdoor lighting. There have been updates to the code but more are needed. Also the code needs to be fully enforced for new and existing installations and the municipality itself needs to conform to the standards set by the code.

What actions will you take to improve outdoor lighting policies to make our skies darker?

I support the idea of improving lighting policies/laws that require reasonable restrictions on lighting if public safety is kept in mind when these rules are created. Once that is completed requiring these restrictions on new construction and when a fixture is replaced makes sense.

- 9) In order to ensure the peaceful enjoyment of East End residents' homes and properties; and the reduction or elimination of harmful noise and avgas emissions on protected wildlife and their habitat, further action is needed.

What actions will you take to reduce aircraft noise which will result in quieter skies?

The current town board has wasted millions (possibly tax payer money) of dollars and years of valuable time by not working with the FAA and attempting to go around their rules and regulations. This is clear when the court ruled the legislation the town created and declared it was not enforceable.

Now the town board has voted to follow the FAA rules and regulations (part 161) and spend millions of more dollars and years of time before a decision will be made. This vote comes after their own consultants made it very clear at a town board work session on 9/19/17 that the odds are very low that the town would be successful.

To add insult to injury, the town board refuses to work with the aviation community to implement voluntary curfews with civil penalties. Staying with the current town boards plan relief is years away, and that's a maybe!

If elected, I will work with the aviation community and forge a reasonable agreement with them with enforceable civil penalties that will give noise relief to those affected. I will keep the airport open, safe and I will not force air traffic to Montauk or other landing locations in East Hampton.