

September 26, 2019

To: THE SARATOGIAN
READER'S VIEW
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From: Patty Morrison
Democratic Candidate
for Saratoga Springs
Commissioner of Finance

Title: Development & Ethics that works for all Saratoga Citizens

In the recent Democratic Primary for Commissioner of Finance, we won an important election. Challenging and unseating an 8-year incumbent in any local election isn't easy, but we did it. Saratoga Springs residents have spoken and they are ready for change on the City Council. After walking our City's neighborhoods over the past four months and talking to hundreds of city residents, one common theme emerges.

City residents are truly concerned that the pace of development is outstripping our ability to responsibly keep up. Many believe that the influences of big development and big money have taken over in City Hall. Most feel their voices are not being heard.

If you live in the north western corner of our City, the Morgan Street/Birch Run neighborhood, few subjects are more important than the current major change in land-use and rezoning being considered by the City Council. The planned rezoning of 17 acres of undeveloped and wooded property within this quiet residential neighborhood will make way for massive construction of Saratoga Hospital's 75,000 Sq Ft office building and 300 car parking lot.

This neighborhood states support of the Hospital and its expansion within their neighborhood, they are not NIMBY's. However, they also believe the Hospital has multiple viable options to build their expansion within their current footprint. When elected, I will work with the neighbors and the Hospital to create an outcome everyone will be happy with.

The tensions surrounding the Hospital expansion have been made worse by the conflict-of-interest issues directly related to what I believe is a failure of the city's ethics policies. Since this project was first initiated in City Hall, the current Commissioner of Finance has not only received several thousands of campaign contribution dollars from Hospital Board of Trustees and their spouses, but also the Hospital's attorney. This same attorney has actively fundraised on her behalf, at his home, resulting with her campaign cutting him a check for almost \$5,000 for his expenses. Some citizens are calling this pay-to-play; I call it wrong!

Very simply, if under the law, it's not illegal for the Commissioner of Finance to receive money payments and campaign donations from individuals currently doing business with the City Council, it should be. As your new Commissioner of Finance, I will work to end what has essentially become a corrupt and normalized way of doing the City's business.

For City voters, the upcoming General Election represents a chance for positive change in City Government. Development is a good problem to have, but boundaries must be drawn and neighborhood fairness must be protected.

As Commissioner of Finance, I will advocate to preserve our city's history and character, make development about what is best for the city and properly budget and plan for our infrastructure needs. I have not taken any money from developers and my votes will unquestionably belong to the taxpayers and residents of Saratoga Springs. On November 5th, I ask for your support and vote. Together we can make the changes needed to strengthen our City.

Patty Morrison