

# 2018 Amherst Election Guides

Election Guides for the State and Town Elections, November 6, 2018



CANDIDATES FOR DISTRICT 3	What should Town Council do to develop a diverse and representative pool of qualified candidates for the Planning Committee, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and other committees that it will appoint?	How would you prioritize and fund Amherst's capital project needs? In particular, would you support an override?	Specify one or more initiatives that you will support to increase affordable housing in Amherst.	How would you address the effects of declining school-age populations and charter schools on the Amherst school systems?	How can Amherst become a municipal leader for local efforts to mitigate climate change?
<b>Stephen Braun</b> 180 Lincoln Ave Medical editor stevebraunforcouncil.org	Actively reach out with emails, social media, flyers, networking, and personal connections to under-represented groups to encourage people to apply to these critical boards.	First: renovate or replace 2 elementary schools (with override). Second: DPW facility (with bond). Third (after DPW has moved) Fire Station on former DPW site (with bond). Fourth: Jones Library renovation	Hire person to evaluate sites for 40R district. Seek RFP for former East St. school conversion to affordable housing. Work closely with developers and state to find creative funding solutions for below-market units.	Pursue policies to increase housing affordable for young families, support School Committee efforts to retain students with high-quality curricula and language immersion programs.	Push for 100% sustainable energy sources for municipal buildings, implement net-zero construction, encourage municipal electric vehicle use, continue robust recycling efforts and use of recycled materials.
<b>John R. Page</b> 96 N Prospect St Student/Dining hall supervisor johnpageforamherst.com	Knocking on doors does not stop in November. We must reach out, meet people where they are at, and bring them into to be a part of the democratic process. One person, one conversation at a time.	1 Elementary Schools 2 DPW Building 3 Fire Station 4 Senior/Community Center 5 Library renovation. I would support an override for rebuilding the elementary schools. Council would approve the funding plan but the will voters would decide the override.	The East Street project is well under way. Any way the Town Council can expedite the process I would support. Additionally, we must encourage building housing for moderate and low income families and individuals.	Young families are attracted to Amherst because of our schools, our commitment to social justice, the environment, and the arts. I will continue to invest in those. High cost-of-living pushes families of a moderate and low income out.	Creating a Community Choice Aggregation with Northampton and Pelham which including sustainable energy goals in the RFP. Encouraging infill development downtown and in the village centers. Local food production: protecting our farmland and addressing food insecurity.
<b>Dorothy S. Pam</b> 229 Amity St Adjunct instructor, Holyoke Community College dorothypam.com	Seek mix of experience and new talent. Advertise information and visit local civic, religious, and academic organizations. Consider timing meetings to recognize family needs and offering childcare. Ensure that recommendations are given serious consideration on policy.	Renovate/rebuild Fort River and Wildwood Schools in cost effective manner, meeting 21st century standards using state funding and local bonding. Relocate/update DPW, Fire, and Library within capital budget. An override vote for controversial projects allows full public input.	Change zoning resolution to require some affordable, moderate income units in all new large apartment buildings. Support East Street proposal for service-supported low-income housing. Research ways zoning and grant funds can be used to expand opportunities.	Quality faculty and language/art/tech enriched curriculum key to keeping/attracting families. Reduce rancor on policy and personnel disputes which drive families away. Population decline cyclical, so keep capacity. Fight charter school funding formula inequities. Amherst schools rock!!	Amherst already leader through net zero bylaw, bagging restrictions. Open large solar arrays, rooftop opportunities. Join Massachusetts multi-town power purchase agreement to augment municipal and private efforts and incentives. Encourage local self-sufficiency and sustainability through local sourcing.
<b>George Ryan</b> 18 Dana St College teacher, Holyoke Community College georgeryanforamherst.org	Guidance of Town Manager and professional staff will be critical. Above all we need qualified people who have the appropriate background and experience and who can make the serious time commitment such key town service demands.	The "Big 4" (DPW building, Fire Station, Elementary Schools and Jones Library upgrade) must be done; the order will be determined largely by economic realities. They can be funded by prudent borrowing. At least one will require an override.	East Street School property should be made available for affordable housing and the Council should consider creating a 40R District where allowing increased density in appropriate areas can help create housing for both lower and middle income residents.	Urge State Board of Education to review how charter schools are funded, encourage creation of academic programs (e.g. dual language) to attract charter school population, build 21st Century schools to give us the flexibility to respond to changing demographics.	By adopting Zero Energy Bylaw Town Meeting has taken a giant first step in this direction; we must make "living green" a town policy and priority for all Departments; we should explore where appropriate alternate energy sources such as solar.
<b>CANDIDATES FOR DISTRICT 4</b>					
<b>Jacqueline Lucette Maidana</b> 22 Lessey St; Teacher/Artist; electmaidana.org	The Town Council will be re-appointing and appointing new members and will be in a position to invite people with a fresh vision. Amherst has no shortage of concerned citizens with expertise to fill these committees.	The renovation of the Fort River School would be my first priority. I believe it could be done without an override .renovation of Wildwood may require an override. The DPW and main fire station clearly need total renovations.	Town Council will be in a position to revise zoning bylaws to reflect the intent of Special Permits. Working closely with the Amherst Municipal Housing Authority to develop ways to generate affordable housing by selling the East Street School.	In some cases student enrollment is going up, we need affordable housing so that we can attract young families. One issue, charter schools offer classes that we no longer provide. The financial formula needs to be changed state wide.	Amherst has been a leader in addressing climate change and energy efficiency with its Climate Action Plan in 2005. Town Meeting took three actions in 2017, the Resolution to Implement Carbon Free and Dividend Program and Net Zero Energy bylaw.
<b>David G Reffsin</b> 117 North Whitney St Sales manager	To insure diversity, the Council should contact, through the schools, all parents of school age children. Candidates should submit a resume and letter of intent. In-person interviews for important boards such as the Planning Board should occur.	All capital projects should be based on need not want. Since many capital projects will come before Town Council, incremental increases in taxes must be considered. This should be done cautiously.	One initiative would be to turn the East Street School into affordable housing. The Planning Board should require all future housing construction to contain affordable housing. The Board should pursue developers who would build small affordable housing clusters.	An effort must be made to be more creative in course offerings. Dual Language programs would be a positive step toward this goal. Also, efforts to offer more creative arts programs and technology programs should be considered.	Retrofit all town buildings with alternative energy sources. Require all new construction to have a ZERO energy policy and have LEED certification. A longer term goal would be to have all new town vehicles be electric or hybrid.
<b>Evan Robert Ross</b> 40 Spaulding St Lecturer, UMass evan4amherst.com	The new Community Participation Officer (CPO) has the potential to play an important role in increasing diversity in Amherst government. Town Council should make the CPO a standalone position with sufficient resources and clear objectives to reach underrepresented communities.	Amherst's schools, DPW, and fire station are priorities. State support for these projects is important to minimize the financial burden on the Town. A debt exclusion override will be necessary to supply the Town's financial commitment for some projects.	Affordable housing production will require a multi-pronged approach, including continuing to implement our inclusionary zoning bylaw and affordable housing property tax credit, creating a 40R district to allow greater density, and supporting the Amherst Affordable Housing Trust's initiatives.	This is a complicated problem. One cause is the decline in young families due to lack of housing. Amherst must generate new rental housing to relieve the pressure of rental conversion on single-family homes to increase our starter home availability.	Addressing climate change will require rapidly moving towards 100% renewable energy, including locally-generated clean energy. We also need to expand electric vehicle infrastructure and pursue complete streets for multi-modal transportation options (including maintaining sidewalks and building bike lanes).
<b>Steve Schreiber</b> 100 High St Architect/Founding chair of UMass Dept of Architecture steve4amherst.com	Direct outreach to potential candidates is essential. I would first reach out to those who have paid attention to the activities of the Planning Board and ZBA, by attending meetings, writing letters, speaking out. Diverse viewpoints are essential.	The Town Council will have appointees to its Finance Committee and the Joint Capital Planning Committee. I will trust and support the work done by those committees. I would likely support an override if that is the recommendation.	Amherst needs to increase and diversify its housing for all income levels. I am particularly interested in modifying the zoning by-law to encourage owner occupied mixed-use buildings in the heart of downtown that will be occupied by actual families.	Families are often bidding against LLC's for the limited existing housing stock. More campus-focussed housing complexes will relieve the conversion of single family houses to college rentals, and make it more feasible for families to live in town.	Encouraging a greater density and mix of housing and retail in existing village centers (including downtown) is the single most important thing Amherst can do to reduce its per capita carbon footprint. We have an amazing bus and bike system.
<b>CANDIDATES FOR DISTRICT 5</b>					
<b>Shalini Bahl-Milne</b> 78 Linden Ridge Rd Owner of Downtown Mindfulness, Mindfulness educator/research shalinfordistrict5.org	We need to first understand the challenges for diverse populations to participate by speaking with them where they are. We also need to strategize about inclusion and equity to empower people to contribute at their highest levels.	My priority: schools, DPW, fire services, and library. However, funding for the library may be available first. I will work with the School Committee to make healthy learning environments available for our kids ASAP and support an override.	I support development of 40R districts that create mixed-income developments, along with affordable housing tax incentives and an expedited review process to encourage building affordable housing. I also support public-private partnerships that free up off-campus housing for residents.	Two reasons for declining school age-population are unaffordable housing and unhealthy learning environments; 40R districts will attract families and 40S state funding for schools. I will advocate for state's direct funding to charter schools instead of spending local tax dollars.	We need to minimize energy wasted due to poor insulation, leaky windows, inefficient lighting, heating cooling systems. I will advocate to eliminate market barriers for zero-energy buildings and develop a road map including education, exemplary buildings, and data gathering.
<b>Paul Bobrowski</b> 55 Hulst Rd Attorney/Consultant paulforamherst.org	The Council and Town Manager should increase its outreach beyond the usual sign-up form and reach out to recognized leaders in our diverse communities to help with recruitment of qualified individual. A local government mentoring program would also breakdown barriers.	The schools, fire station, and DPW all have health and safety concerns, so I'd prioritize those first, in that order. I would support a replacement override for the schools. We are financially prepared to do some of these projects simultaneously.	I support inclusionary zoning changes, other specific rezoning to accommodate particular projects that are ready to go, a 40R district, and I would continue my consistent support of CPA investments in affordable housing.	I would continue my work on enhancing town revenues from non-residential sources to slow tax increases on young homeowners. High taxes in town are a factor but the trends are statewide and some of this is out of our control.	Amherst is a leader already, with our own paid Sustainability Coordinator. I would urge the Council to meet with her regularly to coordinate new initiatives. I've supported every climate change mitigation proposal in town and will continue to do so.
<b>Darcy DuMont</b> 142 Pondview Dr Retired lawyer, teacher, grant writer, current energy&climate advocate darcyfordistrict5.org	Better decisions are made with diverse decision makers. Adopt a policy that appointments to committees and boards must reflect diversity of backgrounds and viewpoints of town. Send postcard to every resident listing opportunities to volunteer and to nominate others.	Top 3 priorities: Fort River, Wildwood, Fire Station. Seek community's priorities, recommend fiscally sustainable budgets, identify other revenue sources to limit tax increases. Bond where possible for major capital projects; debt exclusion override required if more than one pursued.	Inclusionary zoning, AAHT's efforts to increase the number of affordable rental units, proposed UMass public/private partnership, housing UMass students on campus, increasing affordable, moderately sized and sustainable houses/condos for purchase, and increasing supported housing units for homeless residents.	Innovative, strong curriculum is crucial to growing schools. I support an aggressive ad campaign to promote the dual language program and other innovative curricula/identities at our schools and will work with legislators to correct the charter school funding formula.	Provide more time/visibility to climate/sustainability. Establish 100% renewable energy resolution benchmarks. Authorize Community Choice Energy "Plus", including Accelerating renewables - on town buildings, parking lots, brownfields And fun, town-wide energy efficiency initiatives. Partner with higher ed institutions for funding.
<b>Samuel A. MacLeod</b> 1114 South East St; Publishing manager sammacleodforamherst.com	Town Council should genuinely commit to doing so! Empower the new Community Participation Officer; Have an extended outreach period; Collaborate with local community leaders early on; Provide flexibility in scheduling, meeting locations, while providing transportation and other services as needed.	1) Fort River and Wildwood Schools, robust public review of plans generated by a diverse school committee. I support a bond, school debt exclusion override resolving open classrooms with Quality PreK-6. 2) South Amherst Fire Station; 3) Senior Spacing, DPW	Enforcing our inclusionary zoning rules. Require new downtown buildings to include affordable housing or make in lieu of contributions to the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust. Reviewing options for the development of a 40R District within Amherst, East Street School Project.	Fully fund for quality schools and structures; Advance dual language programs for Spanish and Chinese; Petition the state to change the imbalanced charter choice funding formula; More affordable housing, consider lowering unrelated household members to 3 in designated town areas.	Advance Community Choice Energy Plus enabling residents to choose renewable energy sources for electricity; Prioritize public transportation and complete streets; Targets/ incentives for zero energy buildings/services, Preserve open spaces. MacLeod Family donated significant acreage for conservation (Lawrence swamp watershed).

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