

2013 Sustainable Saratoga Candidate Survey

CANDIDATE NAME: Matthew E. Veitch

CANDIDATE FOR (OFFICE): Supervisor

QUESTION #1: Please briefly define “sustainability” and what it means to you.

Sustainability means two things to me: environmental sustainability, and economic sustainability. Environmentally, we need to do things that lessen our impact on the environment and preserve our world for future generations. Economic sustainability is that which is good for business, as well as lessens the burden on taxpayers. These two concepts are not mutually exclusive; what is good for the environment is also good for business in the long term.

QUESTION #2: Many businesses, institutions and municipal governments have designated sustainability coordinators. Do you support the creation of a sustainability coordinator or office in city hall or in the county government?

I would support the idea of a sustainability coordinator in County government, as long as the position was cost-neutral. Our Planning Department at the County level already advocates for sustainable practices in our development.

QUESTION #3: What can we do locally to confront climate change?

We should continue to do things that are eco-friendly, such as promote tree-planting, find more environmentally friendly materials when we do construction projects, potentially build solar in areas where we can, and do our best to promote less driving and more fuel efficiencies with our fleet of vehicles in government.

QUESTION #4: What are some of your ideas for sustainable economic development for our community? Do they include casino gambling?

I believe the City’s current diversity of businesses is good. I do not see any specific type of business as something to attract as sustainable. My hope is that we keep our Eating and Drinking establishments, continue smart apartment and condominium development, and continue to develop land in the downtown core for retail and entertainment uses. Casino gambling, which could have potential positive economic impacts to our County and City, is not by itself a part of a sustainable economic development plan for Saratoga Springs, in my view.

QUESTION #5: How do you envision the future development of land within the city's core and within the "greenbelt?"

We should continue many of the practices and policies that the City already has in place. Continuing to promote more intensive development in the downtown area, and keeping the greenbelt, will help to continue to attract businesses to our downtown core. We must also look at underutilized areas that are ripe for development, such as South Broadway, and develop those already existing commercial areas as opposed to developing new areas of the City for development. Trails and preservation of open spaces are vital to keeping the character of our community in the Greenbelt. We must also look to find small parcels within our core area that could also be reserved for less-intensive uses, such as pocket parks, small treed areas, as well as community gardens, etc. The City has already done several things such as pass the Complete Streets initiative, which now looks at the pedestrian aspect of all new land development projects within the City. I am supportive of such measures.

QUESTION #6: If elected, what kinds of sustainable activities or projects would you likely retain? How could they be improved? Which ones would you initiate?

If elected, I would continue to support all of the sustainable initiatives that have been undertaken within the City to date. I see them being improved by collaborating and coordinating with our surrounding communities, and possibly partnering on a project that would have larger benefits than for just the City of Saratoga Springs. At the County level, I would look to initiate development of solar energy on County lands, as well as look to purchase more fuel-efficient vehicles for the County fleet. In addition, I would continue to advocate for trail development on County forest lands, as part of a responsible forestry program for the County.