

## 2013 Sustainable Saratoga Candidate Survey

**CANDIDATE NAME: SHAUNA M. SUTTON**

**CANDIDATE FOR (OFFICE): MAYOR**

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

**According to Wikipedia, sustainability is the capacity to endure.**

**From a practical perspective, sustainability is about our environment, human practices and economic factors.**

**To me, sustainability means maintaining our quality of life and protecting our natural resources while supporting our economic development and community well-being here in Saratoga Springs.**

**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 support the creation of a part-time sustainability coordinator within the Office of Planning and Economic Development. I envision this coordinator would work closely with City departments and community organizations such as Sustainable Saratoga and also with local, state and regional partners, such as Skidmore College and NYSERDA, to identify sustainable efforts that are affordable to taxpayers. I see this coordinator investigating potential grant opportunities to implement projects.**

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

**I believe that implementing the City’s adopted Urban Forestry Plan and Complete Streets Policy will help to address climate change at our local level. Complete streets can help to reduce dependence on fossil fuels by creating opportunities for walking, biking and transit use while the Urban Forestry Plan encourages planting trees that provide shade, enhance the quality of life and also help to clean the air and reduce stormwater runoff. Additionally, the City’s effort to create more energy efficient public buildings is a great example of a local effort to confront climate change.**

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

**I believe that the City's overall approach to concentrate development in the downtown area provides for sustainable economic development. I also believe that infill development in areas that are currently underutilized represents an opportunity for future sustainable development. Sustainable development should also include creating a diverse, year-round economic base. It must be a careful balance.**

**Casino gambling is an issue that will be taken up by the voters and I, like many, am awaiting the State's decision. However, if casino gambling were to be located in the City, or VLT's expanded, I would work with community leaders to make sure the City's interests are being heard and incorporated into the process.**

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

**We must maintain a vibrant downtown that provides a strong tax base for our City, while remaining within the confines of our Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Laws.**

**Any future development within the greenbelt needs to be done with great care, citizen input and a clear understanding of any ramifications that may come with proposed development.**

**Any changes to our current policies or laws should be considered only if it is in the best interest of our community and should be done with the opportunity for our citizens to have input and to ensure that any proposed changes are beneficial to the whole community, not just some of the community.**

**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?

**I would retain both the Urban Forestry Plan and Complete Streets Policy. As Deputy Mayor, I have been involved directly with both of these efforts and the committees that have worked to create and implement them. I personally worked to retain the grant that funded the Urban Forestry Plan and will work to support its implementation. I would try to advance the components of these plans as funding becomes available through potential grants and budget allocation and continue to maintain the partnerships that have been strengthened by the efforts.**

**I would also retain the recycling efforts at City facilities, such as City Hall and the Recreation Center. The Recreation Center recycling bins, for example, are a direct result of my involvement in the facility development as Deputy Mayor.**

**In addition, in my role as Deputy Mayor I have been actively engaged in the possible solar project at the City's Weibel Avenue site. I would continue to support this and related projects as the opportunities arise.**

**Lastly, I would work with my fellow City Council members to identify and explore additional ways to help the City become more sustainable. One example could include integrating more fuel efficient or electric vehicles into the City vehicle fleet. Approaches such as this are not only beneficial for our environment but are also more cost efficient for City taxpayers over the long term.**