



# Candidate Responses: 2019 Elections

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY TOPICS

Love Where You Live

### Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

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These are contested races

## CANDIDATE RESPONSES: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY TOPICS

### Questions For All

1. Briefly describe any environmental accomplishments or projects with which you have been involved, either professionally or personally.
2. Is there a top environmental issue in town that you think can be addressed with your help or leadership if elected? If so, what do you think should be done and how/with whom?
3. Stormwater management is a serious community issue as well as an educational opportunity. If elected, do you envision promoting green infrastructure practices and educational opportunities that aim at reducing flooding? If so, how?

### Questions for D64 Only

D64-1. What expectations could the board set for staff and administration to incorporate sustainability into its operations in order to make the schools more sustainable, save the district money, and demonstrate the importance of sustainability to students?

D64-2. Would you specifically suggest adding environmental sustainability into the next strategic plan for D64? If so, provide ideas that would help teachers and staff increase their expertise and comfort level teaching about and demonstrating environmental efforts.

### Questions for City Council Only

CC-1. Would you support the implementation of a city-wide green infrastructure initiative that aims to educate residents and business owners about responsible stormwater management? If so, please describe how you would roll out this type of program, or parts of it, in Park Ridge.

CC-2. Do you support the upcoming Sustainability Task Force efforts transitioning into a Sustainability Commission at the end of the one year commitment?

CC-3. We are in our 3rd year of an 8 year hauling and recycling contract with Groot. Would you be in favor of adding an organics collection for composting into the contract as well as educating residents about its benefits?

CC-4. Would you support a Complete Streets policy? Why or why not? If so, do you see stormwater management fitting in with Complete Streets?

CC-5. The City of Park Ridge adopted the Greenest Region Compact (GRC2) in 2018. What actions should the city be taking in the next 4 years to fulfill our commitment under the GRC2?

### Questions for D207 Only

D207-1. Would you support a robust recycling program at D207 schools that also includes a food waste reduction component (donating surplus food, finding a vendor to take food waste to be composted, etc.)? Why or Why not?

D207-2. Would you support looking into solar project potential at D207 properties that could save the district money over time, contribute to climate change solutions, model these solutions for students, and enhance the curriculum?

D207-3. It is our understanding that the new HVAC systems as well as windows in the D207 renovation plans will cut down energy usage quite significantly. Would you support integrating additional sustainable building techniques into the D207 renovations (sustainable/recycled building materials, low VOC paint, advanced lighting and energy controls, etc.)? If so, which ones?

### Questions for Park Board Only

PB-1. Currently Park Ridge's ratio of acres of parks per 1000 residents is barely half of what is recommended by the National Recreation & Parks Association. Do you support using taxpayer money to add/preserve green space in Park Ridge? Please explain why or why not.

PB-2. If elected, are you planning to introduce any new projects or programs that would address environmental or nature-based needs? If so, what are they?

PB-3. How can the Park Board best support the Park District's Green Commitment?

## Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

1. Briefly describe any environmental accomplishments or projects with which you have been involved, either professionally or personally.

**STEVE BLINDAUER:** I'm a teacher in the Westchester School District 92.5. Westchester has some of the same flooding issues as Park Ridge. I did a project with my 7th grade students on flooding and storm water management that combined a learning experience for students with a current community environmental issue and an opportunity for parents to take action. We covered topics including biosolids, stream maintenance, disaster preparation as per FEMA, having a quick reference guide to flooding for families, and what the Westchester community was working on for this issue – a reservoir expansion project. We also looked at where all the water goes when it leaves our homes and students took home a form for their parents to consider the optional purchase of a rain barrel from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District. About a third of all families participated in the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District rain barrel program as a result of the students' efforts.

In addition, I have led and participated in forest and stream clean-up projects with students as part of the Westchester schools' environmental community service efforts.

**SAL GALATI:** We need to conserve and care for our environment as if it was our home because it is. All of these changes need to start at home and I try to do that for my family. The most impactful way we can make change is to demonstrate it to friends, neighbors, and families. I utilize rain barrels and reclaim my sump water to water our vegetable garden, fruit trees, and landscaping. My landscaping is filled with native species that are drought tolerant, I pick flowers to attract natural pollinators while discouraging mosquitoes and other pests. I use wood ash from my fire pit to keep down slugs, etc and add potash to the soil. I use corn gluten on my own lawn as a weed suppressant and weed my dandelions by hand, I also only use an organic fertilizer.

In our home we cook 95% of our own meals leaving take out containers and transit out of the picture. Living near downtown Park Ridge, I have the ability to walk to so many places and we are able to do our grocery shopping without getting in the car. We avoid harsh cleaners in our home and putting them into the sewer, opting for white vinegar and baking soda for our cleaning needs. While we built our home, I always was looking for Zero VOC products, the health of my family and removing carcinogens whenever possible is very important to me. We maintain our heat at 68 in the winter and 78 in the summer. I think if we all focus on our own lives and the things we can do in and around our homes individually, we can make much more impact than trying to enact change in other people's lives.

**LISA PAGE:** Both at home and at work, my family and I are avid recyclers, including batteries, light bulbs, electronics and proper disposal of medication. We subscribe to "green" energy practices. We use organic products in our home, including lawn care. We compost our leftover food. The only grocery bags I use are reusable. I have replaced using dryer sheets with reusable dryer balls that are scent free and reduce static electricity.

In my office, we shred and recycle documents. I also started a recycling program to bring home recyclables every week.

My family has stopped using straws in most all cases, and we use biodegradable bags for walking our dog.

One of my favorite repurposing projects is using clothes that have been outgrown to sew together to make a quilt. I have also 'upcycled' some old money and objects around the house to make into artwork. I have reused some old holiday decorations to turn into new holiday decorations so nothing from our arts and crafts bins goes unused or into the garbage.

I use wine corks to make into decorations such as pin boards, trivets, artwork, and other useful tools around the house.

## Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

1. Briefly describe any environmental accomplishments or projects with which you have been involved, either professionally or personally.

**DENISE PEARL:** In regard to environmental efforts in the Pearl household, I need to acknowledge the crucial role that my 11-year old, Jenna, plays in promoting sustainable practices. Most importantly, she assisted me in changing my outdated paradigm on the importance of recycling. After Jenna cited the current problems with recycling contamination and other concerns, we have adopted efforts to reduce our household waste in the Pearl family. My children continue to teach me on a regular basis and, as a School Board member, I would translate this to hearing to student voice as one of the constituents to consider about when the board is pondering policy issues.

Specific to reducing waste in our home, we have adopted more mainstream practices of carrying re-usable bags and water bottles. Other examples of practices for reducing waste in our home include using metal re-usable straws and not taking straws at restaurants, using re-usable cloth napkins/baggies/food wrap, and purchasing from Imperfect Produce on a bi-weekly basis. These are just a few examples to shed light that my family and I think about sustainability.

Although this is not specific to reducing waste, we do recycle our plastic bags and plastic packing film. This practice was initiated through the Benches for Kate Campaign started a few years ago; Emerson was the recipient of two benches at the school to honor Kate and her brother, Alex, a current student at Emerson. In addition to this practice, Amy Bartucci provided the idea of recycling our daily contact pods. We have several individuals in our family who wear daily contacts. I still am not a fan of the waste that this causes; however, I am glad that a recycling option is available now, thanks to Go Green's communication of this idea on social media.

Going back to my daughter Jenna, when she was at Field last year, she continued to be upset with the amount of waste in the lunchroom, contending that her classmates would not use the liquid, recycling, and compost bins appropriately. Her frustration level coupled with completing several research projects for school assignments about sustainability, one of which included an interview with Amy Bartucci, encouraged her to act! I assisted Jenna in connecting with SCARCE, School & Community Assistance with Recycling and Composting Education, to come to Field and complete a waste audit. Two of the teachers at Field, one of whom was Dina Pappas, now the Science/Health/Social Studies Curriculum Specialist in District 64, collaborated on orchestrating this audit with their students as participants. Also, we collaborated with the Field PTO for the funding of the audit. This was my first experience in participating in a waste audit and I now realize the benefits of completing this sort of experience with a student group, or any group of individuals. Jenna and her colleagues presented on the audit experience at Field and then specifically with the PTO. On a broader scale, she and a few members of Go Green spoke at a School Board meeting about this event and the need for more sustainability in the lunch room. Although change did not occur on a district level, I wonder how Dina Pappas might be interested in promoting lunch sustainability on a district level. Right here provides an example of how I function as a leader, looking at who might be involved in a collaborative effort on a certain cause.

**CAROLINA Y. SALES:** I'm a member of Go Green Park Ridge and helped plan the One Earth Film Festival's local screening last March. In addition, I took a Master of Laws (LL.M.) class on Environmental Law, where I learned about federal and state environmental issues. In connection with my work as a bankruptcy attorney, when people are liquidating their assets, I've encouraged clients to recycle their scrap metal and salvage materials, which conserves resources and reduces greenhouse gases. On a daily basis, I communicate and store records electronically instead of with paper as much as possible. In addition, our office is fortunate to have an electronic waste drop-off location in the building, which we make sure to use. Before Park Ridge started its recycling program, I regularly volunteered for newspaper drives, where we would load trucks full of newspapers for recycling.

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## Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

1. Briefly describe any environmental accomplishments or projects with which you have been involved, either professionally or personally.

**CAROLINA Y. SALES** (Continued from previous page):

I'm continually increasing my environmental awareness and have experienced a series of awakenings related to this topic. When I moved from Park Ridge to Milwaukee to attend college, I had to grow accustomed to the lack of nature in the surroundings and realized that I previously took all of our easy access to nature for granted. Growing up in Park Ridge, I spent most of the summers outdoors (riding bikes, going to the park, playing tennis, and playing in backyards). I also picked apples from our apple tree and ate tomatoes from our garden. After college I experienced more of nature firsthand when I went on a camping trip in New Mexico. That was my first experience with filtering water from streams, "bear bagging" food, reading a trail map, and learning from people who participated in a search and rescue team and received advanced survival training. During the past few years, as I have associated with more people in Park Ridge who care about the environment, they have taught me to be more mindful of environmental issues (both at home and in the community at large).

**TOM SOTOS:** A project that my family has been involved with is the replacement of an HVAC system in a 78,000 square foot property. We replaced a very old low efficiency HVAC system and upgraded it to a new system that uses less energy and emits fewer pollutants into the atmosphere. We are also in the processes of converting all our properties to LED lighting and adding all new motion censored switches to save energy. These and many other upgrades have a large upfront cost, however they will save our business money in the long run and will greatly reduce the negative impact to our environment.

We are also working with our waste management company to implement a recycling policy in our commercial rentals. We have witnessed a large amount of paper goods being thrown in the trash and are working on educating our tenants in the proper procedures of disposing of different types of waste.

On a more personal level at home, my family does its part in conservation of energy and water. We also try to adhere strictly to the proper procedures of recycling.

**GARETH KENNEDY:** I am most proud of a project that started off with a small glimmer of hope, but turned into a terrific educational opportunity. My family watched the movie "Flight of the Butterfly" at a children's museum. The kids were captivated by the monarch butterfly story, and quite honestly, I was too. We have always had an organic vegetable garden, rain barrel, and compost pile as part of our yard. However, I thought to expand this by taking on a milkweed area too. Since we recently increased our yard's green space to improve drainage and increase native Illinois plantings, I thought this would be a perfect opportunity to add milkweed.

The kids and I planted milkweed seeds in seedling cups and watched. The kids learned to grow a plant from seed, how to water the seeds just enough and even move them when the temperatures were scorching. In the fall, we planted the tiny milkweed plants in the ground. The kids now proudly know the difference between an annual and perennial plant. They also have a good idea of plants that are native to Illinois. Most importantly, they learned that all things in nature follow a natural life cycle.

Next summer we waited. They were overjoyed when they saw the first sprouts. We had done it.

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## Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

1. Briefly describe any environmental accomplishments or projects with which you have been involved, either professionally or personally.

**GARETH KENNEDY** (Continued from previous page):

It took another year before we spotted eggs on the milkweed. They were all over the plants. The kids were excited to see, first hand, the stages of the Monarch butterfly. We had a natural classroom in our own backyard. They were excited to show the eggs, larvae and chrysalis to neighbors and friends. In fact, they started to name the caterpillars. They learned to water the plants and how to protect the caterpillars from nighttime prey. At one point, we knew we had “very hungry caterpillars” as they almost ate through all the milkweed. At that point, members of Go Green graciously rescued some of our little friends. An important lesson was learned about help from neighbors who care about sustainability too.

I share this story not because it was big, but because it was a small project that hopefully had a big impact on my children and neighbors about caring for the environment. Small beginnings lead to big changes.

**REBECCA LITTLE:** We strive to be a pretty green family. It’s a priority for us, and it’s just a part of our regular routine and family dialogue. My older two boys (aged 8 and 6) are in charge of the recycling, and they are great at policing the plastic “numbers” and making sure everything is thoroughly rinsed so it won’t contaminate the batch. They also compile the plastic bags (particularly from our newspapers) that we drop off at Jewel for repurposing. We compost in the backyard, and the kids are responsible for running the kitchen pile out to the yard at the end of the day. We use that compost to enrich my husband’s vegetable garden and plants. (The garden is his domain—my life may be green, but my thumb is decidedly not.) We are also on the route for the Collective Resources commercial composting service, which I love. I hope we have composting pickup provided by the city someday. My children eat an astonishing amount of food, and we are able to compost all of our food waste—including meat, bones, and oil—in these bins. (We tend to do fruit and coffee grounds in the outdoor compost, and the rest in the bins.) Because of this service, I was able to host a “Green Thanksgiving” for 40 guests this past November. I set up three containers—one for compost, one for recycling, and one for waste. It took a bit of coaching because people are so unaccustomed to composting meat, but at the end of the holiday, we had two full compost bins, a full recycling bin and very little garbage. It inspired my extended family to look into composting options of their own. I am also notorious among my friends for the stainless steel straws I carry around in my purse, and my husband and I gave them out as favors for our birthday party last year. Lastly, we are slowly renovating a 1913 home, and we try to increase energy efficiency with every project we undertake. We have a rain barrel. We compost. We’ve replaced some windows, the furnace, and many appliances. We eventually will add rooftop solar, but our budget isn’t there yet.

On a community level, I am the communications coordinator for Go Green Park Ridge. I have helped with many of the group’s projects, but my personal passion is natural lawn care because my dad’s leukemia was likely caused by environmental pesticides. I want to give credit where credit is due—Amy Bartucci, Shannon Donley, and Elizabeth Ryles did most of the heavy lifting with the park district and District 64 in the natural lawn care effort, and I am so grateful that our community will reap the benefits. I was part of the efforts for D64 and those ongoing at D207, and I think there has finally been a shift in our community. People are starting to see that wide-scale pesticide spraying to eliminate dandelions is not worth the many ill health and environmental effects that result. The park district has become a role model for the rest of the community in regards to natural lawn care, and D64 is well on its way. I am thrilled that Ron DeGeorge, the director of facility management at D64, has been undertaking the processes to maintain more natural lawn care in the district and that the current board approved the necessary equipment.

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1. Briefly describe any environmental accomplishments or projects with which you have been involved, either professionally or personally.

Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

**REBECCA LITTLE** (Continued from previous page):

Ultimately our children should be able to play on a school playground without being exposed to dangerous chemicals. I'm so pleased that we're moving in a healthful direction and that our residents, children, and pets will all benefit.

Lastly, I generally try to show up at park, village and school board meetings when anything environmental is on the agenda in order to show my support. I have lugged my kids (my youngest when he was just two months old) to various meetings to give public comment or watch the board discussion because it's important to me, and I want the kids to become active citizens. (In fairness, the two-month-old didn't quite get the message because he didn't even know his name at that point. But he's 18-months-old now and super seasoned in environmental activism. He also likes to chew his socks.)

City Council 5th Ward

**CHARLIE MELIDOSIAN:** As Alderman, I have voted consistently in support of protecting Park Ridge's trees and the continued investments to expand our forestry. Additionally, I have voted in favor of stormwater management efforts to reduce flooding and encourage environmentally friendly behaviors such as non-permeable spaces.

On a personal level, I promote sustainable practices. I built a composting tumbler, am an avid recycler and enjoy upcycling (repurposing discarded materials in new ways). For example, all the metal stakes for my campaign yard signs are recycled from previous elections. One of my favorite pastimes is watching YouTube videos on homesteading best practices – most of which focus on sustainability and being environmentally friendly.

**SAL RASPANTI:** During my time as Park Board Commissioner (2005-09) we formed an Environmental Impact Task Force that helped establish the first electronic recycling event for the city of Park Ridge in 2008, which continues to be an annual event to this day. I also supported the Task Force's efforts to establish no idle zones around Park District facilities. I was proud to be part of the leadership team of an organization (FM Global) that received a Gold Level LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification for New Construction of our Corporate Headquarters in Johnston, RI from the USGBC (United States Green Building Council) in 2010.

DISTRICT 207 CANDIDATES UNCONTESTED

**TERI COLLINS:** I try to practice as many environmentally friendly practices in my home life as possible. We are big recyclers and pay attention to our waste stream. We also have a garden where we use all organic techniques, but I have to admit weeding or lack thereof, has sometimes (ok, often) gotten the better of me.

**SHEILA YOUSUF-ABRAMSON:** In my role at Dominican University in River Forest, I actively participate in the campus-wide environmental program. This program encourages energy efficiency through effective energy saving measures including lighting controls, recycling and composting initiatives.

My husband is a former finance director for an energy consulting firm. We have done energy audits of our own home to improve efficiency and overall healthiness through low VOC paints, permeable pavers, energy efficient windows and doors and safer chemicals using essential oils as bases for cleaning products. We have also toured areas of buildings, including Chicagoland museums, where larger-scale greening initiatives were achieved.

1. Briefly describe any environmental accomplishments or projects with which you have been involved, either professionally or personally.

### CITY COUNCIL UNCONTESTED

**MARTY JOYCE:** a. In my professional life, I am a civil engineer with a private firm and have been involved with several projects with potential environmental effects. In working with the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Illinois Tollway, I am certified as an Environmental Lead for Environmental Impact Statements – the highest level of environmental documentation for projects. A couple of examples:

i. I-355 from I-80 to I-55. I was the Project Manager and Environmental Lead for this EIS. There was a lot of sensitive environment to be traversed by the project especially in the Des Plaines River Valley. We were able to work cooperatively with both the Cook County and Will County Forest Preserve Districts. Found a previously thought to be extinct insect, worked on salt tolerance research and lots more.

ii. I-294 and I-55 Interchange. I was the project manager and engineering lead for this new interchange. The main environmental feature that we worked around was a nature preserve just south of the interchange. It is noteworthy of being an ancient shoreline of Lake Michigan with unique plant communities and geology. It has global significance

b. In my personal life I am a typical dad – constantly turning off lights, turning down the thermostat in winter and up in summer. Replaced the old windows and doors – who knew that it would be environmentally correct? I even walk to work when I can!

### PARK DISTRICT CANDIDATES

**MATTHEW T. COYNE:** Instituted a paper, plastic, and aluminum recycling program at my place of business in Park Ridge.

- Installed higher efficiency lighting at my place of business and am investigating the viability of installing even higher efficiency lighting units than are currently installed.
- Installed programmable thermostats at my place of business.
- Have volunteered for and utilized the Park Ridge Chamber of Commerce Electronics Recycling Days.
- Availed ourselves of ComEd's energy audit/assessment at our home and as a result installed LED lighting throughout our home, added "green" power strips for our electronics, added a programmable thermostat, and disposed of two inefficient refrigerator/freezers.
- Have been composting yard and food waste at home for about 20 years.
- Installed rain barrels on downspouts.
- Installing a rain garden in place of about 1/3 of our back lawn later this year.

**CYNTHIA GRAU:** My most recent environmental accomplishment is establishing Waste Free Dinners at Sunday Night Suppers at St. Luke's Church with the help of the St. Luke's Green Team. Each Sunday from Sept. through May from 60-80 people are fed a dinner at the church. The waste from the event has been decreased by 90% because we have a composting process set up to divert the food, plates, bowls, soy-based utensils, napkins, etc. to a compost facility. Volunteers staff the station to help sort and stack the compostables so that they can fit into a 32-gallon tote that is picked up by Collective Resources every two weeks to be turned into a soil amendment. Many of the guests have commented how it makes them feel better not to be throwing everything away.

PARK DISTRICT CANDIDATES

1. Briefly describe any environmental accomplishments or projects with which you have been involved, either professionally or personally.

**JENNIFER LADUKE:** I have cared about environmental issues, since I was a kid. In my high school I actually founded an environmental club called Student Environmental Awareness (S.E.A.). I am proud to say that 25 years later it is still in existence. S.E.A.’s signature achievement was the establishment of a paper recycling program in my school.

Fast forward to my adult years and my time as the Board Counsel for the Illinois Racing Board. During my time there the Governor issued an executive order commanding state agencies to be more environmentally conscious. I worked with the Agency Purchasing Officer on our annually required sustainability report and helped ensure our agency encouraged recycling and purchased more eco-friendly office products whenever possible.

In my personal life I have always tried to recycle whenever possible. My family doesn’t use herbicides, we have a backyard compost bin, and I planted a “pollinator friendly” garden with many native plants. One local accomplishment I am particularly proud of was helping coordinate a campaign sign collection the night of the November 2018 election. I spent a couple hours that night driving around town collecting political signs from yards and polling places. In the morning my friend Helen Pasley and I took all the signs to the Public Works building for recycling. I also kept many of the metal stakes for re-use in my own campaign.

**JOHN TUNNELL:** As a small business owner, I have worked since 2011 to convert all of our paper files into electronic records, and eliminated the excessive use of paper in the office environment. I believe it is important to recycle. I also had the opportunity to work with Bateman Elementary school to secure a grant to help plant a learning garden as one of my agency’s community causes. We were able to plant native plants in an outdoor space so that students could have class outside. It was great to see the difference the plants made to the space.

2. Is there a top environmental issue in town that you think can be addressed with your help or leadership if elected? If so, what do you think should be done and how/with whom?

**STEVE BLINDAUER:** Informing the community on how important recycling, composting and water conservation is and connecting the schools to contribute on these topics in the community are top issues that I would like to see D64 address. The world recycles at 34%. The U.S. at 25 %. I would like to help the D64 community understand what our baseline recycling rate is here in Park Ridge and work to set goals to increase our recycling success rate.

Composting is getting more attention in school districts and can be both a learning experience for students and an environmental support to the community. There are resources here in Illinois that are available for consideration by D64, such as the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition and Seven Generations Ahead <http://illinoiscomposts.org/resources/schools-institutions>.

<https://sevengenerationsahead.org/about-us>

Water conservation is the final environmental issue that I would like to see addressed among the D64 community. Groundwater is a precious resource and small steps such as rain barrels, reduced watering of lawns, more drought friendly plants and learning how to reduce usage and limit evaporation can make a difference in a child’s education on environmental issues and in a family and community’s local water demand.

## Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

2. Is there a top environmental issue in town that you think can be addressed with your help or leadership if elected? If so, what do you think should be done and how/with whom?

**SAL GALATI:** A large thing that bothers me is the amount of fertilizers used in our public parks. I would so much rather let the park naturally grow clover or dandelion than try to maintain a perfectly green lawn at the cost of adding so much fertilizer to our water table, also encouraging our neighbors to do the same. I would like the peace of mind of knowing that my children can play on it with no worries, as I maintain on our own lawn. Willing to work with your group to promote those changes.

**LISA PAGE:** In general, I believe that Park Ridge needs more green infrastructure. There are many cost-effective approaches to managing flooding that could have positive impacts on the community, providing many community benefits. I would like to see greener infrastructure and water management at our school facilities and around town to create healthier environments. This is an effort that would need to be coordinated with.

**DENISE PEARL:** A top environmental issue in the Niles/Park Ridge area is education and awareness. Although this may not be considered an “issue” in some respects, this focus is the root of all sustainability efforts. From simple things like knowing that only the top part of the pizza box without grease is the one to recycle to broader issues like the amount of resources it takes to recycle plastic water bottles to stormwater management. This educational component includes collaboration among the local community, school districts, Go Green, etc. Since I see education as a top issue for our community, it is only natural that District 64 is involved in this awareness effort since it is educating future community members and leaders. Lastly, I do think sustainability efforts can best happen when they are employed systematically through a collaborative effort in the SYSTEM of SCHOOLS within District 64. I emphasize SYSTEM since the schools seem to operate more independently currently and this is the case with sustainability efforts.

**CAROLINA Y. SALES:** If I were elected to the D64 school board, I would help make environmental education a priority. My daughter attended Brickton Montessori School for the past four years, which has environmental awareness built into the foundation of the students’ education; it is not treated as an “extra.” She’s joining my son in D64 for first grade in the fall, and I think that D64 could model a lot of its policies on Brickton. For example, students at certain D64 schools are not allowed to play with snow, the snack policy encourages students to bring single-serve prepackaged food, and students use a lot of worksheets instead of reusable materials. At Brickton, for example, the preschoolers and kindergarteners are encouraged to learn about nature and have durable materials to study physics, botany, and zoology. Sustainability is part of the curriculum and the culture, which should also be the case in D64. I also think we should look into creating school gardens where kids can learn to grow food (the results could be donated to local food pantries) and explore the possibility of solar panels on our schools.

**TOM SOTOS:** I believe the top environmental issues in our community cross over between all governing bodies. Lawn care and proper disposal of waste are two areas our community should be focusing on. With the numerous acres of land managed by our City, Park Districts and School Board, proper lawn care can have a great positive impact on our environment. Similarly, the vast amount of waste produced by our City, Park District and Schools must be disposed of properly. These two items alone can help our community make the largest positive impact to our environment.

2. Is there a top environmental issue in town that you think can be addressed with your help or leadership if elected? If so, what do you think should be done and how/with whom?

### Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

**GARETH KENNEDY:** I think one of the top environmental issues that will continue to impact our school district is the expanding energy usage and associated costs. As a school board member, I would explore alternative energy such as geothermal energy or solar energy to decrease carbon emissions and lower operating costs. Many surrounding school districts are finding installation costs to be minimized with the use of grants and partnerships. For instance, Huntley School District 158 is partnering with ForeFront Power to install solar arrays across the district. According to reports, the project is projected to save the district \$4.2 million over the 20 years of the contract and 12.3 million pounds of carbon emissions in the first year. However, our district needs to research and find environmental sustainability initiatives that are a good fit for us.

**REBECCA LITTLE:** I want to make our lunchrooms models of sustainability. We have seven schools. Think of the impact we could make if each one had a consistent composting, recycling, and food recovery program. Up to 40 percent of food in the average American lunchroom goes to waste, and a northwest suburban organization Mindful Waste has helped schools set up the infrastructure to collect uneaten food to donate to local food pantries. My dream would be for all kids to compost (not just those who buy hot lunch and seem more aware of the program), bring waste-free, reusable packaging from home, and donate their uneaten food. This would hit many things I hope our children will learn – sustainability, personal responsibility, and charity towards others. It's a triumvirate of values.

Another one that I've become obsessed with fixing in all of our schools is getting rid of disposable graduation gowns—and I'm coming for D207 as well as D64. 8th grade (and high school) graduates in our town are required to buy disposable graduation gowns that are petroleum-based garbage. They can't be recycled or repurposed—they go straight to a landfill. (I even called around about this. They can't even be used as blow-in insulation like many other textiles because of their chemical composition and off-gassing.) Graduates wear them for an hour or two, and then these gowns sit in a landfill forever. What is the point? When I graduated high school, we arrived early to the gym, picked up our rented gowns, graduated, returned back to the gym to pick up our diploma (a trick all schools use to extort good behavior during the ceremony), then returned the rented gowns. There's no reason that our schools can't adopt this solution, even if graduations are held off-site. Students can still keep the tassel and hat as mementos, but is anyone clamoring to keep a gown? I was required to buy my college gown, and I couldn't bear to throw it out so now it's in the playroom costume box. I wore it a few times as part of a Hermione Halloween costume to try to find a suitable reuse, but you can't dress as Hermione every day because then people contact social services. Many large companies offer gown rental services. This is a simple change that can have a big impact. (I am committed to this regardless of the April 2nd outcome. If you want to join me in this project, please PM me or ask Go Green for my email. Let's fix this!)

I'd also love to explore solar energy for our schools. To create school gardens where our kids can learn to love tending to plants and vegetables. I want sustainability integrated into our science curriculum. I have such a long list of goals.

City Council 5th Ward

2. Is there a top environmental issue in town that you think can be addressed with your help or leadership if elected? If so, what do you think should be done and how/with whom?

**CHARLIE MELIDOSIAN:** Park Ridge faces many environmental issues – many of which are within our reach to practically address. The City’s recently created Sustainability Task Force will flush out new ways we can tangibly improve our environment and promote positive behaviors in our community. City Council can then work toward implementing their recommendations.

Flooding is perhaps the top environmental issue in the forefront of many of our residents’ minds. I have been a supporter of implementing a stormwater utility program to fund major flood relief projects and change flood prone behaviors.

**SAL RASPANTI:** Yes, stormwater management is at the top of my list when it comes to environmental issues facing our town. To that end, we need to continue to improve awareness and promote best practices throughout the community on how to address the issue. If elected, I will support improvements to city infrastructure and the creation of a Park Ridge version of “Green Best Practices Guide” to be published on the City’s website for residents and businesses to reference how they can pursue green solutions to everyday environmental challenges like stormwater management.

DISTRICT 207 CANDIDATES UNCONTESTED

**TERI COLLINS:** Trees! I love trees and plants! We need to replace our trees that have been damaged by pests because they are so important to our atmosphere.

**SHEILA YOUSUF-ABRAMSON:** I believe the top environmental issue the D207 community faces is returning to a place where “Green” is no longer a loaded phrase. Our school district should strive to ensure that responsible stewardship of our schools’ and community’s limited resources is a priority of key decision makers and essential to our students.

CITY COUNCIL UNCONTESTED

**MARTY JOYCE:** a. There are a few. First, I think we can reduce the carbon footprint of the community. I believe there is an opportunity to introduce electric cars to the City’s fleet. I think there is a very good opportunity for the City to show leadership.

b. Continuing on the electric vehicle theme, I believe the percentage of electric cars is slowly going to increase. The City can support this by providing charging stations in City lots in preferred spots. Sequentially, this would happen after the City owns a few electric vehicles.

c. Air quality is affected by the airport. Not sure what we can do, but encourage technology for cleaner burning jet engines.

d. Noise from the airport is a concern. The Fly Quiet approach Chicago is taking appears to be an oxymoron for us. We need to stay involved with the O’Hare Commission and advocate for Park Ridge. Unfortunately, this is a zero sum game as that plane we are trying to divert is going to bother someone.

e. The urban heat island effect is one we could work on. Perhaps we can encourage residences and businesses with flat roofs to “white top” their roofs. We can also look at lightening up the asphalt we use to resurface our streets. And of course we need to maintain/enhance our tree canopy.

f. The City joined Sol Smart. I think we’ll be improving our citizen’s ability to install solar panels, which will further reduce our carbon footprint.

PARK DISTRICT CANDIDATES

2. Is there a top environmental issue in town that you think can be addressed with your help or leadership if elected? If so, what do you think should be done and how/with whom?

**MATTHEW T. COYNE:** I think there are several environmental issues around Park Ridge that can be addressed. Mayor Maloney is currently organizing a task force to identify those specific items and I would defer to that group to prioritize how and when those issues should be addressed. I have suggested to the mayor that the task force be asked to look for areas of improvement that may not be of direct interest to City government, but which may be of interest to other government bodies; specifically, the Park District and both school districts. Sharing this information across all government bodies will be more efficient than having each one figure out their own plans and, I hope, will allow for a more consistent citywide implementation of the recommendations of the task force.

**CYNTHIA GRAU:** I discuss stormwater management in my response below. I believe the Park District can be a leader in this area. We need to work cooperatively with our City Council to make green infrastructure an accepted, economical and practical way to divert storm water from our overloaded sewer systems. I have had private discussions with City Council members and made public comments at City Council meetings to this effect. I also hope that the Park District can provide areas to hold rainwater in flood prone areas – as long as it is done in a way that does not degrade our parks. This type of cooperation has been demonstrated on past projects and I believe we can do it again.

**JENNIFER LADUKE:** I think a top issue is stormwater management, but as that is covered in the next question I will discuss another key issue: the need for more environmentally innovative construction. If elected, I would be interested in exploring more sustainable building and renovation options. I would be in favor of many of the measures I have referred to in other questions such as rain gardens, permeable pavements, bioswales, and solar power. I think it is important to work with the city where possible and to increase greenspaces when given the opportunity.

**JOHN TUNNELL:** I believe that the stormwater issue is a major concern. If elected, I will work with the board to see if there are opportunities to help with rain gardens, or other options that could help the neighborhoods surrounding the parks.

3. Storm water management is a serious community issue as well as an educational opportunity. If elected, do you envision promoting green infrastructure practices and educational opportunities that aim at reducing flooding? If so, how?

Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

**STEVE BLINDAUER:** Schools have a unique opportunity to contribute to storm water management – both from an educational perspective and in development of green infrastructure. The student learning experience that I mentioned as an example of my environmental accomplishments was a flooding and storm water management environmental education project. Having environmental education as part of district wide curriculum should be considered and could be supported with efforts of a district wide Green committee.

In terms of green infrastructure, schools here in D64 have both open lands and large areas of paved surfaces that need to be considered in the broader community’s storm water management practices. A rain barrel program for harvesting rainwater is one example of a small place to start, and the EPA provides school resources for considering green infrastructure efforts from rain gardens to green roofs and landscapes that slow and filter storm water.

[https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-10/documents/storm\\_smart\\_schools\\_print\\_final\\_071317.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-10/documents/storm_smart_schools_print_final_071317.pdf)

## Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

3. Storm water management is a serious community issue as well as an educational opportunity. If elected, do you envision promoting green infrastructure practices and educational opportunities that aim at reducing flooding? If so, how?

**SAL GALATI:** I trust you have done more research in this than I have. I would like to hear the proposal you have, and we can evaluate them. What is done is done as far as development unfortunately, we obviously have paved over way too much of the land not allowing water to naturally drain and reach their proper destinations. I point to the things I am doing in my own life to help by repurposing my rainwater and sump pump water.

**LISA PAGE:** Green infrastructure practices are very important. I envision working with the schools to coordinate teams that could help develop infrastructure for gardens, flood control, and other programs that could be part of science projects. There could be the development of ecology clubs to support these efforts. And these services could potentially be further supported by community organizations such as Girl/boy scouts.

**DENISE PEARL:** It is paramount that board members ponder issues holistically, consider them from a “balcony-level” view. The role of a board member may overstep her boundaries if she thinks about issues from the ground level or “in the weeds”. To provide a visual, consider Centennial Fitness Center. A board member should be viewing what is happening on the gym from the track above the gym. This angle will be different than if the board member was on the court shooting hoops! The notion of board members knowing their responsibilities was conveyed in the recent survey data regarding the superintendent search. With this paradigm in mind, it seems that the board would be involved in district policies connecting to the issue of stormwater management, which should include proper waste disposal in order to prevent contamination of drinking water since this water often remains untreated.

Although I am not expert in flooding nor will I pretend to be, as I community member, I see the problems with flooding in our community and the problems it has caused within our community. The district seems to have made some progress with flooding issues at several of the schools like Emerson and Jefferson due to the recent parking lot/sidewalk improvements made in the Summer of 2018.

**CAROLINA Y. SALES:** Yes, I would promote green infrastructure practices and educational opportunities that address flooding. In connection with paving and construction projects, I would explore the installation of permeable pavement and rain gardens. Our buildings are old, so we are continually improving and updating them. Every time a construction project is considered, we should also be looking for ways to enhance green infrastructure and energy efficiencies.

**TOM SOTOS:** I never really considered storm water management an issue of D64. That is until I realized that D64 owns many acres of permeable land.

With the cooperation of the City, the Park District and D64, we can consider the use of very large parcels of land to be used as storm water retention. Most have been opposed to this sort of retention in fear of the loss of use after a heavy rain. The district should explore the vast many new methods of retention that will still allow the use of the land soon after a storm.

**GARETH KENNEDY:** As noted by the Park Ridge City Council, storm water management will be a task that requires a long-term planning solution. Yes, I would promote green infrastructure practices that are cost neutral or a cost savings to the school district.

As the question points out, storm water management provides an educational opportunity. My son’s Cub Scout Den explored the effects of storm water. The second-grade boys were provided a rain gauge to measure water precipitation for a week. Following, my son explored the community to understand run-off effects at different areas. He discovered where the water flows and what could block it, such as a polluted storm drain or blocked rain gutter. This simple activity taught him how flooding occurs and simple tactics that could prevent it.

3. Storm water management is a serious community issue as well as an educational opportunity. If elected, do you envision promoting green infrastructure practices and educational opportunities that aim at reducing flooding? If so, how?

Park Ridge-Niles School District 64 Candidates

**REBECCA LITTLE:** This could be an opportunity for our science classrooms. We live in a city with flooding problems, so we can use the local issue to connect it to larger engineering and science applications. What happens when you pave over your environment? What are the gray infrastructure features in place? What are the green infrastructure options available? How much water can a large old tree soak up? What happens when that tree is cut down? These are all measurable and bring in elements of science, engineering, and sustainability. In October of 2017, Go Green and the ecology club from Maine East High School co-sponsored Oaktober Blitz, where citizens and students fanned out to measure the circumference of oaks in the area. For example, a group of volunteers that were assigned a particular location on that day first added up the circumference of their 18 trees (480.1 inches). They then used that information to calculate that those trees absorb 73,284 gallons of stormwater runoff per year which also results in an annual 22,270 lbs. of carbon reduction. A simple citizen science effort showed how valuable those old oaks are to our local environment. This is an excellent example of how to help get kids thinking about the benefits of green infrastructure because we're going to be hearing more about it in the next 10 years.

City Council 5th Ward

**CHARLES MELIDOSIAN:** I agree that green infrastructure is an important component to our stormwater management. Through upholding existing and adopting more environmentally responsible ordinances, open spaces, permeable surfaces, trees and other detention efforts are ways we can manage rainwater within our town without combining it with sewer waters or forcing it downstream into our river systems.

**SAL RASPANTI:** Yes. If elected, I will support enhancements to our building codes and RFP process to help further promote the desired green infrastructure practices by including a green component requirement. Additionally, the best practices guide mentioned in the answer to the previous question would also help in this regard.

DISTRICT 207 CANDIDATES UNCONTESTED

**TERI COLLINS:** Whenever possible, I will always look for greener solutions and take advantage of promoting any associated educational opportunities. Being a scientist, I am a problem-solver and always try to factor in all variables that contribute to the best possible solution.

**SHEILA YOUSUF-ABRAMSON:** I envision an infrastructure program incorporating fiscal responsibility with appropriate awareness of how our educational community's actions impact our precious resources. Our proximity to the Des Plaines River presents mostly great opportunity for exploration, commerce and leisure, but we've all experienced the downside during momentous storms. We have the opportunity to attract competitive bids to have our storm water reclamation practices examined for potential efficiency solutions ranging from gray water reuse for restrooms to irrigation. There are other options I will examine based on my analysis of our District's local municipal ordinances and other governing bodies like MWRD. Our schools, people and metropolitan area are currently building additional housing to attract new residents, therefore we need to plan appropriately for how we manage and use our water and other resources.

CITY COUNCIL UNCONTESTED

**MARTY JOYCE:** a. The city has a study on how to approach flooding. It focuses on large scale projects, some that I am not in favor of. I am in favor of conveyance projects, not storage/pump project. In any case, however, storms have been more frequent and intense. Whatever we build will not be enough. b. I would like to encourage homeowners to install flood control systems. I think this would provide the best protection for our basements. c. Regarding green infrastructure, it is a good thing but not a complete solution. It can work for low intensity storms but not for the 1 inch per hour storms. The clay layer in our region does not lend itself to quick absorption. Better grass choices would be good. Permeable pavements can also work, but they have limited benefit due to the underlying clay. Happy to discuss ideas.

## PARK DISTRICT CANDIDATES

3. Storm water management is a serious community issue as well as an educational opportunity. If elected, do you envision promoting green infrastructure practices and educational opportunities that aim at reducing flooding? If so, how?

**MATTHEW T. COYNE:** From the Park Ridge Park District's mission statement: "... to enhance Park Ridge's quality of life by providing park and recreational opportunities for all residents while being environmentally and fiscally responsible". In keeping with that mission, the Park District has been employing green infrastructure practices that have reduced flooding and have provided educational opportunities to the community on this very subject. I view it as the responsibility of any park commissioner to promote activities that adhere to the district's mission. I believe that promoting green practices and encouraging infrastructure improvements that would reduce flooding are major components of living up to that responsibility.

**CYNTHIA GRAU:** I am concerned about flooding in town and have asked, as a Park District Commissioner, that we use permeable pavement or pavers when redoing Park District parking lots. Because Park Ridge code does not consider these surfaces permeable, using them does not decrease our required detention acreage or fees in lieu assessed by the City of Park Ridge during the project. Permeable paver projects therefore do not make economic sense even with grant money available from Metropolitan Water Retention District. I have talked with city officials about this hurdle and have advocated recently at City Council for a permeable parking lot at our Library. During the discussion at the Committee of the Whole, the City Council admitted that these fees probably should be looked at as they are inhibiting the use of Green Infrastructure. The pickleball court project design for Woodland Park does have swales and raingardens to help mitigate flooding.

**JENNIFER LADUKE:** Less than six months after my family moved into Park Ridge, our crawlspace flooded after heavy rains. I know many of my fellow community members have similar stories. I think it would be wonderful if our town invested more in green infrastructure, and I think the Park District could be a leader in this area. Already our Park District has some retention collection areas, such as those at Centennial Park. Meanwhile, Oak Park installed a cistern to re-use water from a splash pad at one of their parks for field irrigation use. Not only was the cistern a positive step in stormwater management, but it resulted in an annual savings of close to \$30,000.

I was also pleased to see our Park District plant more pollinator-friendly native plants at Centennial, and I would encourage increased planting of native plants. In addition, I would like to see an increase in the use of permeable pavements and bioswales for future parking lot projects. I would also like to see more rain gardens integrated into our parks, such as the one planned for the Woodland Park project. Also, I think there should be more trees planted, especially in areas where trees have had to be removed due to insects or disease. The Park District has a huge opportunity with the upcoming Oakton Renovation. I think the Park District should work with both the City Council and local groups like Go Green to move forward and be leaders in the field.

**JOHN TUNNELL:** I think there are many ways that we can work to create awareness to reduce the flooding. I believe that rain gardens could be a solution, and would be happy to work with the board, if elected, to help with long-term stormwater planning.

## DISTRICT 64 QUESTIONS

D64-1. What expectations could the board set for staff and administration to incorporate sustainability into its operations in order to make the schools more sustainable, save the district money, and demonstrate the importance of sustainability to students?

**STEVE BLINDAUER:** As part of the school board I would work to help set expectations that D64 makes sustainable operations a part of efficient resource management and student environmental education. A district wide committee could work to audit current practices and set priorities and goals. There are many areas that could be part of both saving money and improving natural resource sustainability. For example, the one on one computer program greatly reduces paper consumption in the schools, thus reducing cost in paper and toner supplies. There are companies like Midwest Paper Retriever that provide additional paper recycling and fund raising for schools. A real achievement that D64 could set as a goal would be to put a program together for recycling lunch consumables with a long term target of a waste free lunchroom. This is an effort that could bring together students, administration and the broader community to reduce food and packaging waste.

**SAL GALATI:** When we are talking about the public's money we need to make sure there is cost benefit analysis done and be respectful of that. That is why I always push that individuals make the changes in their own lives and then pursue the changes with the public's money. Teaching our little ones to be much more conservatively minded when it comes to their environment is the best thing we can do for the future when it comes to this item. If common sense proposals come up that can demonstrate a cost feasibility, that would be a no brainer I would get behind, but other changes would need to be weighted with other pressing demands on the district. I do not know enough about what can be done with the school buildings themselves at this time, but given how I live my own life you can imagine the types of changes I would be behind.

**LISA PAGE:** I would love to see solar panels go on roofs and windmills in the fields both for sustainability purposes and for learning and science opportunities.

**DENISE PEARL:** Over the past few months, I have been attending other school board meetings in the local area, to gather information on best practices for a school board, similar to what I believe Go Green does in relation to sustainability perspective. Many of the other school boards, for example, use digital agendas and materials presented through a projector, eliminating the need for paper waste. Although this seems like a minor practice, this communicates that the board is thinking about reducing or eliminating waste in some capacity. I did just notice at the special board meeting for D64 about the superintendent search, a QR code was available for scanning instead of providing paper copies of materials. On the flipside, I also noticed that plastic waste bottles are offered for board members during the meeting. It seems that this waste is not necessary and board members can simply be encouraged to bring a re-useable water bottle. Related, as with many sustainable efforts, these can save money for the district, which as a board member candidate, is a perspective I value. Campaign materials, although needed, can be considered wasteful from a sustainability perspective. With the recent District 207 Referendum yard signs, I voiced the need to recycle these in partnership with the city of Park Ridge and helped facilitate this process. Several of these examples might be regarded as small steps, but these exemplify that I think with a sustainability lens. Leading by example and setting an environmental tone for the district would then permeate throughout the organization. Many candidates give out palm cards or brochures about their qualifications. I wanted to do something different by producing an item that might be re-purposed; therefore, I am giving out bookmarks, with one side dedicated to motivational quotes, with an inspirational one by Susan B. Anthony encouraging people to vote. Hopefully, some of the community members might re-purpose this piece and read a book!

## DISTRICT 64 QUESTIONS

D64-1. What expectations could the board set for staff and administration to incorporate sustainability into its operations in order to make the schools more sustainable, save the district money, and demonstrate the importance of sustainability to students?

**CAROLINA Y. SALES:** The board could create an environmental sustainability policy that encourages staff and administration to reduce waste and otherwise save money. For example, the district and schools print a lot of documents (worksheets, reports, etc.) and don't recycle all of the paper. They also have paper towels in the bathrooms and classrooms. The district could determine whether things such as the installation of hand dryers and use of reusable materials in the classroom would save money. We could model our policy on another district's, such as the Austin Independent School District ("ISD") in Texas, which "embraces sustainability as a driving force behind its mission to provide a comprehensive educational experience that is high quality, challenging, and inspires students to make a positive contribution to society." A lot of districts around the country are doing this right. We don't need to reinvent the wheel; we can look to those who are advanced in this area and model our policies on what has been working for them. We also need to take a closer look at our hauling contracts and introduce sustainability on a broader scale in our lunchrooms. We can implement a lot of changes that will make a huge impact on our bottom line.

**TOM SOTOS:** In my opinion, waste management is the best way our schools, staff and students can work towards a sustainable district. Educating our staff is the greatest asset we can offer our students. An educator who is well versed in sustainability will educate our students from K-8 to be good stewards of our environment.

Our schools and children are practicing waste management today. However, with two children in the district, I know first hand that we can do better in educating them on the proper methods.

**GARETH KENNEDY:** I like how this question incorporates the important aspects of a sustainability initiative for schools. Within District 64, sustainability initiatives must be easy to implement, cost effective, feasible and have an educational incentive. Frequently, people think of sustainability efforts as being costly. However, often they can be implemented with a savings to a school district.

The school board should set expectations to approve sustainability efforts that incorporate these aspects. One such initiative was undertaken by a neighboring school district. A wind turbine was installed at Thomas Middle School in Arlington Heights. It has the potential to generate enough electricity to power two and a half classrooms daily. A grant from Illinois Clean Energy helped to fund the turbine. As a school board member, I would welcome community organizations, such as Go Green, to assist in researching and writing such grant applications. In addition, the wind turbine is an educational tool. The energy saving capacity of the turbine is incorporated into the science curriculum. Students use software to view data collection and measurements. It is important to collaborate with teachers in order to brainstorm how sustainability initiatives might be incorporated into the curriculum to support STEM learning.

DISTRICT 64 QUESTIONS

D64-1. What expectations could the board set for staff and administration to incorporate sustainability into its operations in order to make the schools more sustainable, save the district money, and demonstrate the importance of sustainability to students?

**REBECCA LITTLE:** The board could issue a directive to the new superintendent that sustainability is a top down priority. If it is supported at a board and admin level, teachers who have ideas and passion will feel encouraged to enact new programs at their schools. Over the last few years, we've relied on passionate parents to get something going at their home schools. It takes off, gets into a groove, and then dissolves when their kids graduate and they aren't there to sustain it. If we tell the teachers their green ideas are supported, those notions will start to percolate to the surface. If we train the lunch supervisors to help kids learn how to compost and recycle, it will become second nature to the kids. This in turn produces less waste, which reduces hauling costs.

Sustainability should also be a consistent part of our science classrooms. And not just a brief unit every April during Earth Month. (There are a lot of ideas for experiments and topics available through the Next Gen Science standards.) It's worth exploring solar on the building roofs to save on energy bills. I'd like to see gardens at the schools for kids to tend to – even to grow vegetables for local food pantries. We can't control much on a state or federal level beyond voting, but we can make a difference locally by instilling sustainability as an important value to our children because, frankly, it's something they're going to have to confront on a large scale as adults.

D64-2. Would you specifically suggest adding environmental sustainability into the next strategic plan for D64? If so, provide ideas that would help teachers and staff increase their expertise and comfort level teaching about and demonstrating environmental efforts.

**STEVE BLINDAUER:** Environmental sustainability is a topic with excellent cross curriculum application. The flooding and storm water management effort that I discussed as my environmental accomplishment example was a cross curriculum project embedded in the science, social studies, language arts and math curriculum. It was also embraced by the community. In this case, our district leadership brought in guest speakers for a learning day for the teachers and staff, and the mayor came in to talk about the flooding that the community had experienced. Teachers researched their own educational projects, and in the process gained awareness of many excellent resources from local government, federal agencies such as FEMA and EPA and non-government resources such as the American Red Cross.

**SAL GALATI:** I think awareness and modeling for children is going to make the biggest change. I think showing our kids how to conserve and making them aware is most impactful thing we can do.

Appreciation for the resources we have and to not wasting them is key. The wasting of water, food, heat, fuel, eating over processed foods, all contribute to this. We need to make the sacrifice of some convenience and comfort in our lives, for better health of our environment. I actually wrote an article that will be in the next Park Ridge Living magazine talking about getting closer to nature, and it is instruction on making my own wine that I have done the last two years.

An idea would be to encourage the students to start gardens in their school, understand how the food chain works and where their food ultimately comes from. The closer we get our children to nature and the beauty of it, the more they will appreciate and care for it, I know I do. If we surround them with nothing but media and technology, they will never learn to appreciate the environment we all need to care for.

## DISTRICT 64 QUESTIONS

D64-2. Would you specifically suggest adding environmental sustainability into the next strategic plan for D64? If so, provide ideas that would help teachers and staff increase their expertise and comfort level teaching about and demonstrating environmental efforts.

**LISA PAGE:** I would absolutely add environmental sustainability into the next D64 strategic plan.

The first part of the plan would be to include sustainable practices in the school system, including incorporating them into science class initially. Ideally we could establish like-minded teams of volunteers at each school to develop and support sustainable projects including: creating sustainable gardens, composting, and possibly implementing a rain barrel program.

The second part of the sustainability that I would include in the strategic plan would be focusing on green products and services for updating facilities and modernizing the schools as necessary. For example, this would include searching specifically for 'green' companies to purchase equipment from. This would also include looking into innovative tools such as windmills and solar lighting which would (a) reduce energy costs, (b) could easily be incorporated into current curricula to be extremely educational for students, and (c) this would build cleaner environments for the future!

**DENISE PEARL:** For the strategic plan and the involvement of sustainability in it, this is challenging to speak about since I am only one member of the community and, hopefully after the April election, only one member of the board. From my experience with strategic planning in another district and at several universities, the process in collaborating and hearing a variety of voices in the strategic planning process is an important one. Therefore, as the district begins a strategic planning process, I assume at the start of the 2019 academic year, if I was a board member, I would advocate with a strong voice for representation from a variety of constituents in this process. Specifically, representatives from Go Green should be involved in these collaborative conversations along with sciences educators who might envision the weaving of sustainability into the science curriculum.

**CAROLINA Y. SALES:** Yes, I would suggest adding environmental sustainability into the next strategic plan. The current plan includes "environmental health" as a construction goal, but it should also be connected to educational objectives. The district could create an environmental stewardship advisory committee (similar to Austin ISD) to help teachers and staff and otherwise make recommendations for board approval. More than anything, we just need to integrate sustainability into the culture. It hasn't worked without a written policy, so we will have to make that a more formal part of our district's vision.

**TOM SOTOS:** Yes, as stated above, educating our educators is the first and most important step to sustainability.

I strongly believe the D64 board, along with the other governing bodies, should have a plan in place and work with a partner who can guide and mentor the district towards a proper long term plan. I would also like to see two meetings a year dedicated to discussing the progress of the plan as well as any needed modifications to the plan. Sustainability is a moving target; any plan created by the district must be re-evaluated annually.

I look at our environment as the human body. If you want to give the body the best chance to live a long and healthy prosperous life, we need to treat the body with respect. Earth is the same. If we keep feeding it poorly, and treating it with disrespect, it will eventually die. We are all tasked with the job to care for our shared body (Earth).

We must educate our new stewards of earth (our children) to treat it with respect. We can no longer leave the protection of our planet to the next generation. We must strive to leave it in better shape than we received it and teach our children to do the same.

DISTRICT 64 QUESTIONS

D64-2. Would you specifically suggest adding environmental sustainability into the next strategic plan for D64? If so, provide ideas that would help teachers and staff increase their expertise and comfort level teaching about and demonstrating environmental efforts.

**GARETH KENNEDY:** As many of you know, District 64’s current goals are outlined in the 2020 Vision Strategic Plan which will be coming to a close shortly. Vision 2020 was adopted by the school board. It was created through a community informed planning process by a steering committee. The strategic planning steering committee was comprised of a wide-range of community stakeholders. In order for a strategic plan to be truly owned by the citizens of Park Ridge, I would advocate for a similar process. I value the input of all stakeholders of Park Ridge, including Go Green.

**REBECCA LITTLE:** That’s an unequivocal yes. It’s so important to have this be part of the educational backdrop of the district. Again, I think if it’s a priority of the district, then there are a lot of teacher ideas that will percolate forth that hadn’t been cultivated in the past. And I think there could be partnerships and classes that encourage these ideas – for instance, is there a class/program at any D207 schools that could be replicated at the middle school level? Is there a new STEM program that incorporates sustainability? What are other schools doing along these lines? I always resist reinventing the wheel. I think there are a lot of ideas out there that the district could use as models and then empower teachers to make their own.

CITY COUNCIL QUESTIONS

C-1. Would you support the implementation of a city-wide green infrastructure initiative that aims to educate residents and business owners about responsible stormwater management? If so, please describe how you would roll out this type of program, or parts of it, in Park Ridge.

**CHARLES MELIDOSIAN (5th WARD):** The City of Park Ridge has a number of ways that it currently promotes education on stormwater management. Examples include rain barrel water management, flood prevention tips and stormwater control. These topics primarily address the aspect of stormwater management to avoid damage from flooding.

Another important aspect of stormwater management beyond avoiding flood damage is about being environmentally friendly. Retaining stormwater by the use of landscaping, trees and permeable surfaces should be encouraged.

This spring, I plan to propose green alleys (e.g., paved, yet permeable) as part of our focus for alley improvements. I have also voted in favor of \$100 million in flood relief projects and to implement a stormwater utility program which encourages residents to increase permeable surfaces on their property. I believe the City can set an example in support of this type of commitment. I recently voted in favor of a permeable parking lot adjacent to the Park Ridge Library.

**SAL RASPANTI (5th WARD):** Yes. In addition to the best practices guide, our commitment to this effort should be incorporated into the City’s Comprehensive Plan with specific short and long term objectives. Rollout should be a phased approach and could be handled thru a combination of the City’s Website, Spokesman, with updates during regular COW and City Council meetings. Events like the Farmer’s Market, Concerts in Hodges Park and Taste of Park Ridge may also present opportunities to help promote the initiative and answer questions from residents leading up to and during the rollout.

CITY COUNCIL QUESTIONS

C-1. Would you support the implementation of a city-wide green infrastructure initiative that aims to educate residents and business owners about responsible stormwater management? If so, please describe how you would roll out this type of program, or parts of it, in Park Ridge.

**MARTY JOYCE (7th WARD Uncontested):** a. Education is always good. Happy to support. Sounds like a partnership opportunity. b. Storm water management is also a regional issue. We need to be coordinating with MWRDGC, who has the regional responsibility. The good thing is, we already are. They are also working green strategies and education. c. I'd love to have more wetlands in the City that we could enhance. d. In terms of rolling out a green storm water program, I would want to work with local groups, such as yourselves, local communities that have a program, and the regional authority MWRDGC. No need to reinvent the wheel. e. The City already has a program that deals with major storm events.

C-2. Do you support the upcoming Sustainability Task Force efforts transitioning into a Sustainability Commission at the end of the one year commitment?

**CHARLES MELIDOSIAN (5th WARD):** I do support both the creation of the Sustainability Task Force in the short term as well as a longer term Commission. Whether we form a separate ongoing Sustainability Commission or expand the scope of an existing commission, Park Ridge should increase their efforts and investments to promote sustainability.

The scope of the Task Force should go beyond what the residents and City can do to promote sustainability. Reaching out and collaborating with other bodies such as our school districts and the park district with recommendations can significantly increase our overall effectiveness.

**SAL RASPANTI (5th WARD):** Yes. This needs to be an ongoing effort, not something with a beginning and end. Transitioning the Task Force into a Commission is a critical first step toward accomplishing that.

**MARTY JOYCE (7th WARD Uncontested):** a. I have been the Community Health Commission liaison for the past couple of years. The green initiatives have been emerging from this group. However the volume of work for this commission is too great and I support creating a new commission to spread the load. b. Additionally, a separate commission allows the selection of members that are more focused on the environment.

C-3. We are in our 3rd year of an 8 year hauling and recycling contract with Groot. Would you be in favor of adding an organics collection for composting into the contract as well as educating residents about its benefits?

**CHARLES MELIDOSIAN (5th WARD):** Yes – Our current waste hauler, Groot, already offers such an organics collection program that Park Ridge could amend to its existing contract. I support offering this service to our residents on an opt-in basis. This would be a natural extension of our seasonal yard waste program. While initial adoption of an organics collection may be slower than desired, I believe it would gain similar adoption just like general recycling programs have successfully grown over the years in the US. Promotions through groups like Go Green, the Farmers Market and a city commission will aid in this program's adoption.

**SAL RASPANTI (5th WARD):** Yes, if elected I would support offering it on a subscription basis for interested residents.

**MARTY JOYCE (7th WARD Uncontested):** a. Not sure. I am hearing that we're not doing a great job in putting appropriate materials in the recycling bin. I'd like to get some education going on that first.

b. It would need to be easy for the individual homeowner to implement. My kitchen is set up for two waste streams. Not sure how I would add a third.

CITY COUNCIL QUESTIONS

C-4. Would you support a Complete Streets policy? Why or why not? If so, do you see stormwater management fitting in with Complete Streets?

**CHARLES MELIDOSIAN (5th WARD):** I do support Complete Streets – as our streets should serve all residents regardless of mode of transportation or individual needs. This applies to those traveling on the streets as well as those needing to simply cross the street. The Complete Streets program improves safety, encourages walking for exercise or shopping and promotes more environmentally friendly and healthier methods of transportation such as bicycling. The concept of implementing Complete Streets has a number of intersections with stormwater management. For example, Complete Streets that are flooded do not promote the principals of Complete Streets due to restricting modes of transportation. Most importantly, as Complete Streets are being designed and constructed, opportunities for implementing stormwater detention or routing to safer areas can be more economically feasible by combining efforts. Recently, I voted in favor of pursuing the road diet for Busse Highway, which promotes a bike friendly path through Park Ridge. I am also in support of constructing sidewalks on the south side of Oakton Street, west of Prospect to promote safer passageways.

**SAL RASPANTI (5th WARD):** Yes. I support a Complete Streets Policy that ensures safe access for all users, (pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities), so long as it doesn't adversely impact traffic flow within our city or potentially put residents at greater risk. I am not sure I understand how Stormwater Management could fit with Complete Streets, so defer my response to the second part of this question until I have a better understanding.

**MARTY JOYCE (7th WARD Uncontested):** a. Prior to Complete Streets there was Context Sensitive Design. There has been a few legal actions that have driven the change to Complete Streets, but some of the CSD elements remain. b. IDOT has a Complete Streets policy. Devon was just resurfaced under that policy. The biggest difference that I notice, is the upgrading of the sidewalk ramps. Several of the main streets in town are under the jurisdiction of other agencies, so the policy would be primarily applied to our residential streets. c. The question in my mind is how we would want to apply the policy. The typical section of our streets allows for parking on both sides and barely enough room for one car to pass. Do we want to upgrade the sidewalk ramps? How do we make the streets more bike friendly? Do we bundle in green drainage concepts? I guess I'm not ready to jump into Complete Streets until I understand better what the impacts would be. d. What in our street system do we want to change? We've adopted and funded improvements to our bicycle network. What is missing that adopting this policy would change? This would be a good topic of discussion.

C-5. The City of Park Ridge adopted the Greenest Region Compact (GRC2) in 2018. What actions should the city be taking in the next 4 years to fulfill our commitment under the GRC2?

**CHARLES MELIDOSIAN (5th WARD):** GRC2 is relatively new to Park Ridge and incorporates a broad array of ways a community can improve sustainability. While several areas such as economic development, waste and recycling, and water management have a number of efforts underway and allocated staff resources, there are significant opportunities for improvement. I support the Mayor's recent announcement to create a Sustainability Task Force. I voted in favor of the City adopting GRC2. I serve on the Mayor's Advisory Board and look forward to interviewing and recommending candidates to serve on this Sustainability Task Force. As Alderman, I will review their recommendations and allocate City resources to promote sound sustainability efforts. Additionally, I pledge my commitment to promote this focused effort beyond the initial one year task force efforts.

**SAL RASPANTI (5th WARD):** Transition the Sustainability Task Force into a Commission and seek their input on steps we should be taking in the next 4 years in cooperation with City Staff and have it incorporated into the City's Comprehensive Plan and Annual Budgeting Process. Projects like the "Green Infrastructure Grant for the Library Lot" recently brought to the city council by an engaged resident is a great example of how we can demonstrate our commitment to the Greenest Region Compact 2 (GRC2), but only as part of any repair/replacement of infrastructure tied to the useful life of such infrastructure.

**MARTY JOYCE (7th WARD Uncontested):** a. The City doesn't have a high level of knowledge regarding GRC2. We are looking for leadership to come from the environmental community. I would turn this question around to the proposer: What actions should we take and why? I look forward to the discussions. I have learned that at the Council level, well thought out proposals are well received.

DISTRICT 207 QUESTIONS

D207-1. Would you specifically suggest adding environmental sustainability into the next strategic plan for D64? If so, provide ideas that would help teachers and staff increase their expertise and comfort level teaching about and demonstrating environmental efforts.

**TERI COLLINS:** We have a recycling program in D207 for paper and plastics. As far as food recycling, I would want to examine that further. Since we lease our kitchen and cafeteria operations to a third party, there is already a business control on the amount of food wasted. A recycling program for food would have to be negotiated with the third party and if it made sense financially, then I would be in favor of investigating the possibility.

**SHEILA YOUSUF-ABRAMSON:** My understanding of the recycling programs is that they're cost neutral if not cheaper than solid waste disposal and hauling. If that's the case based on what our District is paying, then why not. As to food waste practice issues, it appears that there's a two-fold opportunity here. Awareness and community engagement are increasingly sought after by institutions of higher education. Not only can food waste reduction practices help gauge misuse of federal and state funds dedicated to food programs, but it can also inspire and engage our children towards practices regarding their resources as well as allowing them to engage with external community organizations to support others through donations. Additionally, an academic component can be added to the curriculum to inform and educate on how each school's recycling activities impact out communities air, water and landfills.

D207-2. Would you support looking into solar project potential at D207 properties that could save the district money over time, contribute to climate change solutions, model these solutions for students, and enhance the curriculum? Why or Why not?

**TERI COLLINS:** Yes, absolutely if it makes sense for our district. However, I feel the technology is not quite advanced enough to make financial sense yet for our district.

For example, in one proposal that we looked at for solar panel installation, the vendor wanted a 20 year lease of our rooftops with the installer selling us the electricity at a price higher than what we are currently paying for electricity. Additionally, the lease assumed our roofs would not need to be replaced during that 20 years and if they did we would have to pay for the solar system to be removed and reinstalled as well as a penalty for the lack of production during the time of the roof work. More robust systems will avoid these types of problems. I feel strongly that as photovoltaic production technology advances proliferate, the costs associated with a large scale installation will be reflected in kWh costs dropping to a break even to regular generation costs. At that point, organizations like ours will jump in and then end-user costs will drop precipitously.

**SHEILA YOUSUF-ABRAMSON:** I intend to consult with our District's design and building professionals to determine the viability of all energy efficiency options, including solar energy. I would seek to understand if installing panels versus purchasing solar energy externally would be viable options. If solar panels can contribute to the attractiveness and competitiveness of our district while saving money, I will do everything I can to communicate this to our District's residents, especially those who might be skeptical. Again, incorporating analysis of solar energy into the curriculum could give our students insight into how individual decisions impact society as a whole.

DISTRICT 207 QUESTIONS

D207-3. It is our understanding that the new HVAC systems as well as windows in the D207 renovation plans will cut down energy usage quite significantly. Would you support integrating additional sustainable building techniques into the D207 renovations (sustainable/recycled building materials, low VOC paint, advanced lighting and energy controls, etc.)? If so, which ones?

**TERI COLLINS:** Our architects are already designing the renovation plans to incorporate making our buildings as energy efficient as possible. We are installing new Building Automation Systems to control physical operations. State law for schools mandates low VOC finishes, energy efficient lighting, motion sensors ( already installed at Maine South), high “R” values for insulation, etc. for any and all renovations, so we already making that happen.

I am extremely interested in considering environmentally friendly measures in all of our construction plans as long as they meet State guidelines without exceeding costs for comparable materials/ finishes.

I think the biggest thing the schools and the community can do is to educate our children so they think that sustainability and eco-friendly practices are important to their future and the future of our world. Education efforts made by groups like GoGreen ( eg. such as the film you’re promoting ) are extremely important and should be shared with the students of D207.

**SHEILA YOUSUF-ABRAMSON:** I will consider all sustainable building techniques. If green/ renewable materials are comparably priced, we should use them. If lighting and ventilation controls are a feasible option, we should incorporate them. A relationship may exist between design companies and the District where we can extract competitive pricing for sustainable systems and materials resulting in their achievement for the well-being of the school district in their own communities.

PARK BOARD QUESTIONS

PB-1. Currently Park Ridge’s ratio of acres of parks per 1000 residents is barely half of what is recommended by the National Recreation & Parks Association. Do you support using taxpayer money to add/preserve green space in Park Ridge? Please explain why or why not.

**MATTHEW T. COYNE:** I believe that in the right circumstances, the Park District should be willing to use taxpayer money to acquire more land. Prospect Park, for example, was a smart acquisition in my opinion. We may argue about the cost of developing that property as a park but acquiring a parcel of land that was not on the property tax rolls and securing this as green space for the City was a very good decision. This is a sizable amount of land to acquire when our City is land-locked and green space is a rare luxury, always at a premium.

In my opinion, land acquisition should be viewed very much on a case-by-case basis, balancing the desire for open space against the utility of the particular property to our residents and the burden (if any) upon their tax bill. The Park District maintains a list of properties adjacent to existing District properties in which they would be interested should they become available for acquisition. These parcels would mainly expand an existing park or provide parking for the current District property. There are very few parcels of land large enough to be worthy of consideration for a new park. We should keep an eye on these properties and look for opportunities that make sense for the community. I feel that any such acquisition of property should be approved by the voters through a referendum, not only because the purchase price may require a referendum in order to overcome legal restrictions on tax levy increases, but (and importantly) because I would want to know if residents support the purchase at the proposed price.

Because there are so few suitable properties available and because the acquisition of them can take time and money, I think a better goal would be to preserve the open space the District already controls and to commit to making reasonable environmental improvements to those spaces.

PARK BOARD QUESTIONS

PB-1. Currently Park Ridge’s ratio of acres of parks per 1000 residents is barely half of what is recommended by the National Recreation & Parks Association. Do you support using taxpayer money to add/preserve green space in Park Ridge? Please explain why or why not.

**CYNTHIA GRAU:** I am concerned with preserving and acquiring, if possible, green space in town. We are landlocked community and most of our land has been developed. Our park district is not serving all citizens with a park in walkable distance of their home. At the same time we are looking at the possibility of paving over quite a bit of the Oakton Complex for parking if we build additional buildings there. I have asked the Executive Director to contact the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to look at acquiring the land adjacent to the complex as the Forest Preserve land is in a degraded condition compared to the oak grove on the Oakton Complex. I am open to looking at acquiring other vacant or undeveloped properties in town before they are developed and cost more money to acquire. Green space has proven to raise property values and improve mental health. I believe the citizens of Park Ridge should be given the chance to approve purchase of additional properties by referendum.

**JENNIFER LADUKE:** I do support using taxpayer money in a responsible fashion to add and/or preserve green space. I think the Park District Commissioners and Staff should both live up to the Park District’s stated mission to be “good stewards of the land.” Many Park Ridge residents want more green spaces and would like more trees, especially in areas where trees have been removed due to insect damage or disease. I would love to see both the Park District and Park Ridge in general really live up to the status of being a “Tree City.” Not only do trees provide environmental and community health benefits, but they can help reduce stormwater issues.

**JOHN TUNNELL (Newly Appointed):** I believe that if green space becomes available, it is important to discuss the options that would best benefit the Park District, environment, and tax payer. The parks will be here a lot longer than me, so it is important to preserve the green space we have, and if opportunities come up, consider the options available.

PB-2. Are you planning to introduce any new projects or programs that would address environmental or nature-based needs? If so, what are they?

**MATTHEW T. COYNE:** I have no pet projects, programs, or an agenda of any type that I am using to gather support for my candidacy. Rather, I am relying on voters believing me to be a person of integrity, with the ability to think critically, and who will act for the greater good of the community.

I do have one idea that I would like to be investigated: Planting more trees, specifically hardwood trees like oak, in appropriate places in our parks. For example, there are playfields in several parks that could be bordered with trees. Staff could share their professional research about soil erosion, shade from the sun, storm water management and other benefits to having ongoing hardwood tree plantings and the Board could consider these benefits when reviewing our tree-planting policies and plans.

Ideally, this “tree initiative” would involve a joint task force of some sort to come up with a citywide action plan and to suggest to each body the role they would play in the implementation. I admit to not having an extensive knowledge of arboriculture, so I would like to have input from experts before creating any sort of action plan.

## PARK BOARD QUESTIONS

PB-2. Are you planning to introduce any new projects or programs that would address environmental or nature-based needs? If so, what are they?

**CYNTHIA GRAU:** Recently I initiated discussions between our Executive Director Gayle Mountcastle, our Superintendents DeAngelos and Wolf and two Park Ridge residents who are in the solar energy field. The current solar situation is getting ready to take off due to Illinois' Future Energy Jobs Act and its' incentives. The staff will be looking further at locations and financials to find what will be the best fit. I believe a solar project will make financial as well as environmental sense for the Park District.

**JENNIFER LADUKE:** I would like to the Park District research and solicit grants for projects such as solar roof panels and possibly even green roofs. I would also like to investigate the use of bioswales near paved paths and parking lots. I would also encourage the planting of more pollinator-friendly landscaping, particularly if the Park District could seek donations from a landscaping company to keep project costs low.

**JOHN TUNNELL (Newly Appointed):** I have no plans for new projects or programs at this time.

PB-3. How can the Park Board best support the Park District's Green Commitment?

**MATTHEW T. COYNE:** The Park District already has a strong Environmental Policy Statement (<https://www.prparks.org/about/our-green-commitment#policy>) and they have a workplan for implementation of various green projects for 2019. (<https://www.prparks.org/about/our-green-commitment#2019workplan>). The Park Board can support that commitment by making sure that similar green workplans are created and included in budget proposals each year. The Board (and District staff for that matter) must resist the temptation to dismiss green projects as "non-essential" and, rather, should advocate for projects that fulfill our green commitment while, of course, meeting our obligations to fiscal responsibility and the programming desires of our residents. Yes, I believe that we can meet all of these obligations concurrently.

**CYNTHIA GRAU:** The Green Commitment covers many aspects of the Park District and I will list some areas I am involved. • I was an avid proponent of Natural Lawn Care when I ran 4 years ago, which will be implemented at all our parks this year thanks to wonderful staff at the Park District who acted on requests from Go Green Park Ridge to become a community leader in this area • I attend Earth Day festivities at the Park District every year to promote a healthy environment • As a member of the Friends of the Parks board I volunteer at the Pedals for the Parks bicycle sale which is a great reuse opportunity • The Friends of the Parks is currently raising money for an Outdoor Nature Classroom adjacent to the Nature Preschool. Love of the earth is learned at a very young age and I am actively participating in fundraising for this fabulous project ([www.prfriendsoftheparks.org/](http://www.prfriendsoftheparks.org/)) • I have asked that the Park District be involved in the Morton Arboretum's Oaktober Awareness month by planning an activity next October to celebrate and learn about oaks in our community • As the liaison to the Buildings and Grounds Superintendent I often have discussions about green ways of improving our parks and buildings with our superintendent.

**JENNIFER LADUKE:** The Park Board can support the staff in both small projects and larger capital projects. For instance, I think it is wonderful that our Park District is utilizing integrative pest management and environmentally friendly lawn maintenance techniques. Staff efforts to research green efforts in neighboring communities should be encouraged. The Park Board should also encourage efforts that combine both fiscal responsibility and environmental efforts. For instance, solar panels will have an initial cost, but grants can be sought to reduce the costs and energy savings can help with further offsets. The Park Board members set the tone for what types of projects Staff researches. A forward-thinking Board can emphasize "green" goals.

**JOHN TUNNELL (Newly Appointed):** It is important that the board understands the environmental policy of the Park District, and works to protect the policies that have been developed.