

November Voting Information and Election Endorsements

From City Councilor Marc Laredo

Dear Friends,

Our municipal elections are on Tuesday, November 2. There are three ways to vote:

- *By mail* (and you must apply for a ballot at www.MailMyBallotMA.com or by calling City Hall at [617-796-1000](tel:617-796-1000));
- *Early in-person at City Hall* from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Monday, October 25 – Friday, October 29 and 8:30 a.m. – noon on Saturday, October 30; or
- *In-person on Election Day* from 7 a.m. – 8 p.m. at your usual polling place.

Participation in our political process is vital - please vote!

One of the main issues that is before the City Council is the ongoing effort to completely rewrite our entire zoning code.

During much of 2020, the Zoning and Planning Committee focused on rewriting the residential portion of our zoning code. In the summer of 2020, the city's Planning Department put forward a new draft of the code, including a proposal to eliminate single family-only zoning throughout much, if not all, of the city. Although the residential aspect of the work was "temporarily" suspended at the end of 2020, I fully expect that after the upcoming elections the City Council will continue its efforts to rewrite the entire zoning code, and that proposals to make major changes to the residential portion of the code will again be before the City Council.

That is why this election is so important! It matters who will be considering, drafting, and then voting on these proposed changes to our zoning code. I urge you to vote for the following candidates who will try to solve specific

problems and bring a common-sense, non-ideological approach to our City Council work.

At-Large City Council Races

These are my endorsements for the **At-Large City Council races**--all voters can vote for these candidates:

- **John Oliver, Ward 1--Incumbent.** John was elected to the City Council in March and has proven to be a valuable member of the Council. A staunch supporter of improving our infrastructure, including our athletic fields and other recreational facilities, he brings a calm, thoughtful approach to our work. www.johnoliver4newton.org.
- **Pam Wright, Ward 3--Incumbent.** An engineer, Pam has spent her first term on the City Council focusing on zoning. She asks tough questions, delves into the details (critical for zoning which is all about the details), and provides clear level-headed analyses. We need to keep her voice on the City Council. www.wrightfornewton.org.
- **Rena Getz, Ward 5.** Rena Louisa Getz Escudero de Geltman is a long-time resident and an active member of our community. She currently serves as the vice-chair of the Waban Area Council and a board member of The Friends of Hemlock Gorge. She will be a strong advocate for our schools, village centers, and open spaces. www.renagetz.org.
- **Lisa Gordon, Ward 6.** Lisa grew up in Newton and returned to raise her family. Lisa served as the Executive Director of Youth against Racism in Europe, an organization dedicated to combatting racial violence by neo-Nazi groups against Black and brown people. She has a long and impressive history of working in our community and is thoughtful, an excellent listener, and committed to representing the residents of our city. www.lisagordonfornewton.com.

Ward Councilor Races

The following are my endorsements in the **Ward Councilor races** (you can only vote for these candidates if you live in their wards):

- **Kevin Riffe, Ward 1.** Born and raised in Ward 1, Kevin has been actively involved in the community, including serving on the board of directors of the John M Barry Boys and Girls Club. A recently retired senior director at Comcast, Kevin will bring valuable management experience to the City Council as well as the perspective of someone who worked his way up from the ground floor to a leadership role. Kevin is hard-working, direct, attentive, and focused on the local issues. He will do an excellent job representing the residents of Ward 1.

www.riffeforward1.com.

- **Julia Malakie, Ward 3 - Incumbent.** Julia is completing her first term on the City Council where she has been a strong advocate for the residents of Ward 3. Julia has consistently demonstrated her independence and willingness to ask the tough questions on the City Council with a singular focus on what is in the best interests of her constituents and the city as a whole. Julia also has been a leader on environmental issues, especially preserving and enhancing our tree canopy. We need Julia to continue her work on the City Council. www.juliamalakie.org.

- **Barry Bergman, Ward 6.** Barry is a certified public accountant with both an MBA and a master's degree in taxation. He will bring strong and much-needed financial and analytical skills to the City Council. As someone with multiple sclerosis, he knows first-hand the challenges we face in making our community more welcoming to those with disabilities. Barry currently serves on the board of directors for Temple Emanuel and his family are active members of the Jewish community. He will be a strong advocate for the residents of Ward 6.

www.barrybergman.org.

School Committee Races

This is my endorsement in the **School Committee races** (all Newton voters can vote in these races):

• **Paul Levy, Ward 6.** Paul will bring a long history of leadership and public service to the School Committee. He has served as the chief executive officer of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, executive director of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, and the board of directors of MIT. He will be willing to ask tough questions while working collaboratively with his colleagues to continuously try to improve our schools. We will be well-served with Paul on the School Committee. www.paulevy.org.

As always, I welcome your thoughts, questions, comments, and criticisms!

Thanks,

Marc

Committee to Elect Marc Laredo

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