

John Safford

1) General Sustainability: A. What does sustainability mean to you in the context of county governance? B. What are your top 2 sustainability-related priorities for Saratoga County, and what concrete actions will you take to address them?

*As a county official I see my response to Climate Change and sustainability in three ways and in this order 1. Economics 2. Response 3. Prevention. Economics - As we have learned from the Covid crises, lack of necessary income stops everything from progressing and the economics of the city over the past year and a half has taken a toll on the best of our intentions. If we are to successfully address Climate Change, we need to maintain economic viability. Response - Emergency services and preparedness for disasters are a primary responsibility of county governance. As a result of Climate Change we are seeing an increase in the need for county level funding and training to provide the highest level of security we can for our citizens. Third, we should all be willing to participate in any way we can to reduce actions that impact Climate Change and supporting educational organizations such as Sustainable Saratoga are key to that initiative.*

2) Development: Saratoga County is growing rapidly. This creates both opportunities and challenges for incorporating sustainability and environmental protections into the planning process. A. Given the intense and persistent development pressure in the county, what should be the county's role in protecting our water resources, including our wetlands, streams and lakes? B. Should the county do more to facilitate intermunicipal cooperation and coordination when it comes to development standards?

*The following quote is from the County Planning Board outlining it's vision: I support this vision as it aligns itself with the goals of each individual community. This being said, I would be willing to make sure that the environmental goals of Sustainable were well represented at appropriate committee meetings.*

“The primary duty of the Saratoga County Planning Department is assisting the county's 19 towns, 2 cities, and 9 villages in the administration of their land-use ordinances as effectively as possible. The Planning Department and Planning Board always strive to strike a balance between the interests of the public and the rights of private property owners. One of its primary roles is to provide technical assistance in the area of planning and zoning to local legislative boards, planning and zoning boards of appeals and building inspectors, attorneys and planners involved in the land development process.”

3) Climate Crisis: A. What role do you think the county government should play in preparing for and addressing the effects of climate change, including extreme temperatures and precipitation events? B. Given the urgency of the climate crisis, what policies and programs will you support to curb greenhouse gas emissions? C. Many other counties across the state have received state and federal funding for climate initiatives. Do you think Saratoga County should be applying to these state and federal funding sources to address climate change? Why or why not?

*I would do whatever I could in the role of Supervisor to appropriate state and federal funding for climate initiatives. I have watched and will continue to support Supervisor Veitch's initiative for trails throughout the county and am aware of movements for the county to participate in the provision of EV charging stations in areas of the county.*

4) Sustainable Saratoga's Role: A. Would you be willing to work with local organizations like Sustainable Saratoga to help the county achieve greater sustainability and environmental protections?

*Yes, I would. I like many of Sustainable's initiatives and programs, in particular the tree program and the recycling program.*