

2022 Candidates for Teaneck Council Questionnaire

To provide voters with additional information, we are asking candidates to complete this questionnaire. Upon receipt of a completed response, we will invite candidates for a zoom meeting on September 28th at 7:30pm. Therefore, please provide brief response to the following questions by September 25th. Thanks.

Name: Denise Belcher

Address: 39 Bogert Street

Years in Teaneck: 40 years

Party Affiliation: Democrat

1. How does Zero-Tax increase work now and what would you propose if elected?

The current council has decided to advocate for no tax increase for 8 years under the pretense of keeping taxes at zero increase however this has been accomplished using debt service. When elected I would conduct a through review of the source of this debt and report a comprehensive review and analysis this debt service. Best practice says that the budget must include an estimate of all expenditures for the year and indicate the amount of income (NOT DEBT) expected from all fees, revenue-sharing, and other sources. The net amount remaining to be raised from real estate taxes is then determined from these figures.

2. What is your vision for development in Teaneck? Please address the following in your response: role of land use boards, Master Plan, areas in need of re-development, open space, and recreation plan.

My vision for development in Teaneck is using the Master Plan as a guide to development. I would do an analysis of alternative types of asset classes other than Luxury High Rise Apartment Rental Development. To include single family and Townhouse style purchases and would incentivize minor subdivision development. The role of land use boards is to guide development by use of the Master Plan. I do not agree with the current use of AINR designation of blight in Teaneck because of its use in residential areas which is not appropriate our suburban town. Since Teaneck is not an urban area where AINR is typically used to address blight that is the result of systemic neglect and institutional injustices such as redlining and blockbusting and environmental issues. I disagree with the use of AINR designation of development. Open space and the recreation plan are an important in order for Teaneck to retain its suburban appeal.

3. What services would you provide or increase to help Teaneck seniors age in place (example: Transportation, affordable senior housing, Rodda Center improvements)?

I would implement services that assist seniors with transportation and services that enable them to age in place, affordable housing where seniors could receive a preference over others in the building of senior citizen projects. I would also identify grants that assist in homestead rebate and utility assistance.

4. How would you meet the demand for more affordable housing for Teaneck residents?

How I would meet the demand for more affordable housing for Teaneck residents would be to examine projects that use criteria outside of COAH requirements that enable development that would give preference to seniors. I would proactively explore government grant programs that promote seniors affordable housing project.

5. How would you increase transparency in government and how will you handle any conflicts of interest (real or the appearance of)? I would institute quarterly Town Hall meetings were residents have an opportunity to express their concerns. I would institute a regular meetup with residents and business owners so council members would understand their concerns. Transparency in government is vital to trust and confidence in leadership. Therefore, identify any conflicts of interest is vital to the success.

6. What is your plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion in Teaneck?

My plan for diversity and equity and inclusion would be to appoint women as full voting members to the statutory Land-use Boards. Not the tokenism that exist under the current leadership. I would bring back the Leadership Academy that would endeavor to provide residents and opportunity to learn about Teaneck government and advisory boards. This forum would aid preparing cohorts of residents in the council having a true representation of our diverse community.

7. Should cannabis retail establishments be allowed outside of Alfred Ave in Teaneck? If yes, where?

I do not believe that cannabis retail establishment should be allowed outside of Alfred Ave simply because the current leadership has done an inadequate job in presenting a comprehensive plan to both residents and cannabis small business applicants who are in jeopardy of license expirations.

8. As our population increases so does the need for adequate parking and traffic concerns. How do you plan to address these needs for our residents and merchants?

I plan to address the deficiency in parking and traffic concerns by finding grant dollars to implement a business district shuttle bus service to make it easier to move throughout town. This is one of many ways that I would address this issue.