

WASHINGTON GROVE'S CANDIDATE FORUM

Saturday, May 1, at 3:00 pm

Come to the annual Candidate Forum! Your neighbors who are candidates in the upcoming Town elections will introduce themselves and answer your questions.

The forum, via Zoom, is one week before the Town Meeting and the ballot deadline on May 8. It has been organized by an ad hoc group of residents in order to give voters an opportunity to better know the candidates.

The Zoom link for the event is <https://zoom.us/j/781347688>. To access the forum by telephone, dial 301-715-8592, and follow instructions to get to Meeting ID 781 347 688.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

In addition to organizing the forum, the ad hoc group asked the candidates to submit statements under 350 words and a photo. See them below.

CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR



John G. Compton

I have played an active role in our community since 1991, serving as Mayor for the past 3 years, previously as Mayor for 9 years, and on the Town Council for 5 years.

Mayor's "platform"

I'm asking to serve again as Mayor to continue oversight of the excellent financial and operational status of the Grove. I aim to maintain the existing spirit of cooperation, effectiveness and accomplishment among elected and appointed officials. I will continue to support and promote the many volunteers who contribute, as unpaid "staff," the time and effort that is essential to sustain the Town's amenities and much of the quality of life associated with our natural beauty and community activities.

Some perspective on Town business in the Pandemic Year

As the Covid-19 health crisis of the past year continues, our lives at home and in the Grove community and the conduct of Town business have settled into new routines. Last year at this time, the Town Council and I successfully scrambled to institute procedures to safely conduct our annual election and the Town Meeting budget process, and since then all involved in Town business (volunteers, employees, elected, appointed officials) have adapted to virtual meetings. And managed to accomplish much, including notably:

- Opening Maple Lake after careful review and institution of safety procedures.
- Major progress on updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan.
- Progress towards completing the long-sought safe and direct multiuser path to the Metro and retail shops; extensive consideration and discussion of routes proposed by residents and the County.
- Oversight of WSSC sewer replacement projects.

Matters to focus on next year

- Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Facilitating the transition of new Town Treasurer Jean Moyer as Mary Challstrom’s successor.
- Ensuring all residents have been heard respecting the route for the multiuser path connection.
- Significant progress on the design and construction phase of the multiuser path.
- Progress mitigating stormwater damage and problems in the West Woods and elsewhere.
- Addressing racial and diversity issues.
- Exploring sustainability initiatives to facilitate use of renewable energy in Washington Grove.

CANDIDATES FOR TOWN COUNCIL

Christine Dibble, Audrey S Maskery, Barbara Raimondo

Vote for two.



Christine Dibble

Hello Grovers!

My husband Tom Land and I have lived at 313 Brown Street for the past 25 years. We had no idea when we moved here what an amazing place the Grove is for kids, and feel lucky to have been able to raise our daughter Annika here. I should add that the pandemic has once again made me feel fortunate to be a Grover; I can’t think of a better place than our lake, pedestrian paths and trails to enjoy the outdoors and socialize with neighbors at a distance.

After 28 years as an attorney and communications professional at the U.S. EPA, I retired about a year ago. I have been looking for ways to continue to serve and “do good works” while enjoying the freedom that retirement brings. I have the energy to actively engage on the Council, and I’d like to use that energy, in part, to enhance communications and transparency in Town decisions. I would like to work with other Councilors and residents to:

Find more ways for residents to communicate their concerns to Councilors, and to encourage Councilors to actively listen to those concerns. For example, as a Councilor, I would consider having “office hours” once a week to chat with residents about any topic.

For Council decisions that are expensive or may prove to be controversial, establish better processes to notify residents in advance so they understand when those decisions will be made, and have ample opportunities to voice their opinions.

Create a way to issue semi-official communications, like committee agendas and minutes, that should go to ALL residents (not just those on the listserv), but are less urgent than Grove alerts.

Transform the Town’s website so that it becomes more useful to residents; actively manage it and keep it current. Then, find ways to encourage residents to use it.

I appreciate your considering my candidacy and thank you for voting!



Audrey S. Maskery

I have always felt that, as a Councilor, I should not impose my opinions on the Town but talk to residents and reflect their views in making my Council decisions. Our town policies must treat all residents equally and fairly.

There are several issues I'm particularly interested in. Although we have significant stormwater management problems, there is no comprehensive Town plan to deal with them. Flooding in residential areas throughout the whole town is becoming more common, and there are serious erosion problems in the West Woods. Fixing one spot only to pass on the problem to another area is not the answer.

Another issue that has everyone's attention is exactly where the 'Shared Use Path' (often called the Bike Path) should be located. Whichever site is chosen, I will work to protect the Town and our trees and vegetation.

Speeding and motorcycle noise on Washington Grove Lane, on streets surrounding Washington Grove, and in Town plague us. We have good evidence that speed bumps we have installed are slowing traffic and making our roads safer for walkers. We should continue this effort and encourage cooperation with Montgomery County and Gaithersburg traffic control units to slow the traffic around us.

As Council member for Forestry, I have worked for many years on tree planting and removals. We have planted over 165 trees in our parks, and along avenues and roads during my time as liaison to the Forestry and Beautification Committee. Our tree canopy is a defining element of Washington Grove and I care deeply about supporting and increasing it. Safety is a critical part of doing this and seven years ago I instituted our Town tree pruning program, which covers one third of the town every year. In my associated role on the Town Memorials Committee, we have added six new benches along our roads and walkways.

Walking my greyhounds has always been a perfect time to enjoy Washington Grove and to talk to my neighbors. Your feedback on town issues has always informed my decisions on the Council. I hope to continue serving you in the future.

Barbara Raimondo



My name is Barbara Raimondo, and I am running for Washington Grove Town Council. I am running because I want to do my part to protect the beauty and character of the Grove.

I have lived in Washington Grove for 20 years. Between 2015 and 2020 I split my time between Rochester, New York and the Grove. Now that my children are grown and I am living in one place, I want to set my sights on better serving my community.

In my day job I serve as executive director of the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (www.ceasd.org). I have been advocating for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families for 25 years. I have a law degree from George Mason University. I spend a lot of time meeting

with policy makers to educate them on issues that impact their constituents. I need to listen to varying opinions on matters and work with others to find agreement so that we can solve common problems and challenges. I believe these skills and experience will be valuable to me as a Council member as the Town responds to growth and pressures around us.

Outside of work I volunteer with Free Minds, an organization that supports incarcerated individuals through literacy activities such as letter writing and poetry. I was a volunteer teacher of English for Speakers of Other Languages teacher for four years. I have also volunteered for candidates during the last several presidential elections.

I am pleased to see some of the new initiatives in Town, such as the Sustainability Group and the Racial Equity Committee. Washington Grove is full of passionate advocates who care about the environment and social justice. I see the priorities in the Grove changing to not just protecting our historical architecture and environment – which is important – but also to assessing our place in the larger community and making sure that we act as responsible partners.

I would be grateful for the opportunity to serve as a member of the Town Council. Thank you for your consideration.

KEEP READING....