

WASHINGTON GROVE CANDIDATE FORUM

Saturday, May 4, at 3:00 pm, via Zoom

Come to the annual Candidate Forum. Your neighbors who are candidates in the upcoming town elections will introduce themselves and answer your questions. Other current town councilors will also be attending.

This forum takes place one week before the election and the town meeting. 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://us02web.zoom.us/j/87451832396>. To access the forum by telephone, dial 301-715-8592, and follow instructions to get to Meeting ID 874 5183 2396.

Candidates were asked to submit one-page statements with a photo. They appear below.

Candidate for Mayor (vote for one):

[John G. Compton](#)

Candidates for Town Council (vote for two):

[Kriss Grisham](#)

[Philip Mento](#)

[Barbara Raimondo](#)

Candidate for Mayor John G. Compton

About me:

In 1991, Sheila and I moved to 202 Ridge Rd where we raised our two girls. I have played an active role in the Washington Grove community, including 3 years as Town Councilor (1996-1999), then 9 years as Mayor (2000-2008), and again serving as Town Councilor (2017-2018) and as Mayor (since 2018).



Mayor's "platform":

I ask for your continued support. As your Mayor, I will continue to successfully manage Washington Grove's affairs, overseeing the excellent financial and operational status of the Grove, promoting and sustaining the existing spirit of cooperation and accomplishment among elected and appointed officials, and of equal importance, facilitating and encouraging our many volunteers (the Town's unpaid "staff") whose time and effort remains essential to sustaining the Town's amenities and the quality of life associated with our natural beauty and community activities.

Of note over the last 12 months, accomplished in cooperation with many town residents, the PC, the HPC and the Town Council:

- The successful virtual 2023 Annual Town Meeting and FY24 Budget adoption process.
- The many events and activities recognizing our 150th Anniversary Celebration year.
- Monitored the agreement with the USPS converting resident PO boxes to free boxes.
- Applied for a \$250,000 State Bond Grant that has now been awarded to the Town for stormwater management projects, supplementing our ~\$450,000 in ARPA funds we will use for this purpose.
- Finalized the Stormwater Infrastructure Maintenance RFP to seek bids to renovate and upgrade stormwater collection west of Grove Avenue and to reduce stormwater runoff onto private property and into the West Woods.
- Passage of Ordinance 2024-02 "Permitting ADUs", that expands residential opportunities in town by giving residents the option to create a small second dwelling on their property for use as an extended family unit or as an income source.
- Support for sustainability initiatives including creation of the Renewable Energy Conversion Incentive Pilot Program now providing cash grants to residents to help replace oil-based heating systems and gas-fueled vehicles with renewable energy alternatives.
- Worked with MCDOT to finalize the alignment of the Washington Grove Connector Shared Use Pathway and successfully advocating for County funding for construction in FY25.
- Supported successful negotiations with Pepco that establish a framework for potential purchase of the Town's streetlights at nominal cost.

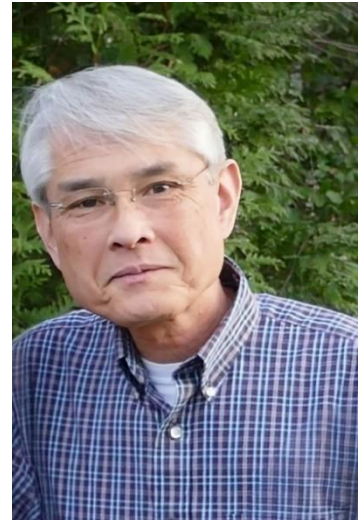
Some of my ambitions for the coming year:

- Complete the project to renovate and upgrade our stormwater management infrastructure intended to mitigate damage and problems in part of residential Washington Grove and in the West Woods.
- Monitor and promote MCDOT progress on engineering and permitting for the Washington Grove Connector Shared Use Pathway to enable construction in FY 2025.
- Work with our Commercial Corner property owner and Gaithersburg to finalize design and property access for a shared use pathway connecting Brown Street to Washington Grove Lane.
- Further engage with the Commercial Corner property owner to promote renovation as envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan.
- Continuation of the Renewable Energy Conversion Incentive Pilot Program.
- Implement technology to make possible in-person and virtual (hybrid) meetings in McCathran Hall and the Town Council room.

Candidate for Town Council Kriss Grisham

My family moved from Silver Spring, MD, to Washington Grove in October 2003. As for many of us in Washington Grove, what drew us here was “a town within a forest.” We were enamored with all of the trees, Maple Lake, uniqueness of the architecture, walking paths, and most importantly, the community. My wife, Deborah Chambers, and I raised our two daughters, Lilla and Jewel, here enjoying the Summer in the Parks, Fourth of July parade, egg hunts, Christmas caroling and many other activities.

In September 2020, I retired from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). I had been involved with various activities associated with the nuclear industry for over 40 years while working at the DOE, commercial nuclear utilities, and the military. My experience includes program and project management, nuclear operations, plant maintenance, in addition to “other duties as assigned.”



I served as Co-Chair of the Town's Shared Use Pathway Task Force (TF) in 2021. Collaborating with exceptional TF members from our town, we used fact-based evaluations to look at different connecting alternatives and paths. In addition to the local and state governments, we gathered and assessed information from the town's citizens, our HPC, and a number of committees within the town (such as Woods, RASEC, Border, and others). We also contacted the Washington Area Bicyclist Association and the Rockville Bike Advisory Committee, as recommended by a few of our residents. We were interested in getting to know them, learning about their concerns and problems, and seeing how well they had handled their multiuse pathway. We aimed to hear and document the various opinions expressed by town people regarding this matter as part of our study of the shared use pathway. As required by the TF mission statement, a final report was provided to the Town Council, Mayor, and Town residents.

I have appreciated the Town's improvements, especially the maintenance of the Meadow while we walk our dog and the addition of path markers, mulching of the trails in the East Woods, and all of the new plantings throughout our town. Things like this inspire me to want to get more involved in this town of ours.

My goal as a Town Councilor is to give back to the town by seeking and listening to the opinion of residents on key current and future issues and to work with other Town Councilors and the Mayor to act accordingly.

I would appreciate your vote. Thank You!

Candidate for Town Council Philip Mento

My family moved to Montgomery County in 1970, where I grew up and attended University of Maryland for undergrad and George Washington for my MBA. I lived in McLean, Virginia, with my wife and two kids until January 2023, when we found this amazing community of Washington Grove. My parents still live in the house they bought in 1970, only fifteen minutes down the road.

I work for the federal government, with 40 years of service in banking regulation. My work experience has given me a strong background in safeguarding the financial solvency for organizations.



My goal in joining the Town Council is to ensure our community has the financial capacity and approval to invest in the Town to not only maintain Washington Grove but to build upon it, from the Woods, the landscapes, the beauty, and the historic character of the Town. I believe there is great opportunity in focusing on executing bigger, more impactful and longer-term initiatives, e.g. stormwater runoff to protect our houses and woods, and influencing development around Washington Grove, including a more vibrant commercial center and improved railroad station area to ensure continued train service.

Our volunteer committees do a wonderful job in trying to maintain what we have, and the town created a thorough and smart [Comprehensive Plan 2022](#). With a focus on executing smart investments we value that have been laid out in the plan, we can achieve the key goals of the town, support our committees and residents, and grow the assets and unique charm of Washington Grove.

I'd like to support our community by joining the Town Council and using my financial and planning expertise to spur on smart investments in our Town that take Washington Grove strongly into the next decade and beyond. That is my goal as a Town Councilor, and I hope I have the chance to earn your trust and work with you in the years ahead.

Candidate for Town Council Barbara Raimondo

Dear Friends,

As a 25-year resident of Washington Grove, I am asking for your support as I run for a second term as a Town Councilor. Serving on the Council over these past three years has been a privilege and an honor. During my first term I was involved in many decisions that make Washington Grove an even better place to live. For example, I worked to:

- Advance the plan for the Washington Grove Connector, a shared use path connecting Washington Grove and Crabbs Branch Way. After several twists and turns requiring the Town's attention and advocacy, the County is now ready to move forward with funding for design completion and construction.
- Support Gaithersburg's plan for a shared use path to connect Olde Towne Gaithersburg with Washington Grove. This plan is currently in the design phase.
- Pass an ordinance permitting Accessory Dwelling Units in Washington Grove. This ordinance provides options and flexibility for property owners while ensuring that the Town has control over elements such as size and setbacks.
- Eliminate the fees associated with our post office boxes so that now we receive our mail at no additional cost.
- Approve the installation of electric car chargers, at Pepco's expense, across from McCathran Hall.
- Develop the Town's [Comprehensive Plan](#), which will guide the Town's progress over the coming years.



I have read hundreds of messages from residents about issues of the day and had numerous conversations to learn what is on people's minds. I have done my best to represent the consensus of residents. I have endeavored to balance protecting what we love about the Grove with taking advantage of new opportunities to improve the Town.

Going forward we have several important matters to handle, such as:

- Implementing the Town's anti-racism resolution in a thoughtful and meaningful way.
- Developing a storm water management plan, for which we have significant funding.
- Addressing the issue of unmaintained properties.
- Improving the playground, including modifications related to Americans with Disabilities Act compliance.
- Seeing through to completion the Washington Grove Connector.
- Supporting Gaithersburg in the development of its shared use path to Washington Grove.

I have attended all Council meetings, served as Mayor Pro Tempore when the Mayor was away, and been the Council Liaison to the [Forestry & Beautification](#), [Lighting](#), and [Racial and Social Equity](#) committees. I have a law degree from George Mason University and recently retired from my job as an executive director and advocate in the field of deaf education.

I plan to continue listening to residents and working to analyze all factors in order to arrive at the best decision. Please [contact me](#) with any questions or concerns. Thank you for considering casting your vote for me.