

## OPINION: Wallingford Democrat Gina Morgenstein seeks re-election



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By Gina Morgenstein

I have been honored and humbled that I was entrusted by the voters 2 years ago to serve this wonderful town of Wallingford. It is a trust I take very seriously as I ask again for re-election to serve for another 2-year term.

Wallingford deserves representation that is not content with the status quo. We cannot be complacent to just repeat what has been done before, no matter how effective it once was. In education we seek excellence, we should also do so in governing. The world around us is changing and as representatives we need to adapt and grow to new challenges, seizing opportunities.

Wallingford needs economic growth. Our grand list is not growing, placing a yearly burden onto our individual taxpayers. This cannot be sustained as we look at expensive school renovations and aging roads, sidewalks and a water treatment facility a decade overdue for upgrades. We need smart targeted investment in a lower downtown that has languished for decades. With a new train station, new residential growth at Parker Place, we can do better if we have the will and vision to do so. We also need smart growth that redevelops a deserted Bristol Myers campus that does not degrade our neighborhoods and our environment.

Wallingford deserves representation that plans for a sustainable energy future. Visionaries took a calculated leap over a century ago to establish Wallingford Electric. That legacy has paid dividends to this community up to the present and it is those visionaries who are responsible for that. We inherit that legacy but we now must be prepared to build on that as energy needs and consumption pose challenges in a world dealing with a climate emergency.

Wallingford deserves a commitment for a healthy community. We should commit not to lose the asset of Community Pool as it has aged and deteriorated. A pool that has drawn together our families, our neighbors, building friendships young and old that knit our Wallingford family closer and closer. We need a leadership that does not avoid or deny for years the opioid epidemic that has taken lives and broken our families and community bonds.

Wallingford needs our first responders. We cannot allow another occurrence of an emergency vehicle, Rescue 3 to be mothballed for a month because our leadership chooses not to use any funds from a "rainy day" fund that holds over \$26 million. We need leaders who will insist that our Police, Fire and Ambulance be properly staffed and equipped to preserve our safety as well as theirs.

As leaders we need to acknowledge and support our teachers who we entrust with our most precious commodity, our children. We need to support our town workers and support their commitment to make this town function and excel. As leaders, we need to support our young and old with opportunities to grow old and grow up in a nurturing community. And finally to our working population we owe a government that can budget wisely and create an environment that adds value to your investment in this community. All of you collectively own this town of Wallingford and as caretakers we as representatives have to ultimately answer to you, the voters if we have met these challenges.

I am asking for that trust again. I am committed to push to support what has worked but push harder when we can do better. Wallingford is my home as it is yours. Our vision should be to always make it better for all our citizens. I humbly ask for your support this November 5.

Thank you all because without you, it cannot happen. We are a community and together Wallingford's future is in our collective hands.

Democrat Gina Morgenstein is seeking re-election to the Wallingford Town Council.

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