

## Friends of the Nyacks 'virtual candidates' forum

### Denise Hogan

- 1) If you lose the Democratic Primary, will you still run in the general election on another party line? Yes, I will run on another party line. I am a democrat with the democratic principles as my core beliefs. I know there are many people who want to support me and share my principles but will not vote on the Democratic line. It is for this reason that I will run on another line, giving everyone, from all parties an opportunity to vote for me.
- 2) One of my concerns regarding the problems in Nyack is that of speeding cars and buses. This is a concern for many in the Village and has been brought to the attention of the Orangetown Police. The best way to solve problems such as these is to call the police and contact the bus companies. I meet with the Orangetown Police once a month and we have discussed this problem. Their suggestion is always to call and report the speeding. The problem cannot be addressed unless the police are aware of the problem, when it is happening, so don't hesitate to call as often as necessary. They will respond. Upper Nyack is patrolled by the Clarkstown police and Orangetown /Nyack does not have jurisdiction in that area, but you can still call and complain. Grandview/South Nyack has its own police force and is a constant presence, enforcing the speeding laws. Calls from the people to Orangetown Police will have a significant impact on this problem.
- 3) How does the CMP fit into your mayoral agenda? Do you have plans for implementing the elements of the plan? Many of the recommendations from the CMP (lights, landscape, trash and recycling receptacles and sidewalks) are in the streetscape design for downtown. It is my desire to move forward with Streetscape which will improve the appearance of our downtown as well as making it safer for our residents. As Mayor I will open discussions on the other elements of the master plan. The Village Board is already moving forward with the zoning revisions of the CMP.
- 4) Redevelopment plan for downtown Nyack; position on Riverspace? On September 10<sup>th</sup> at my request the village board will vote nay or yew on downtown redevelopment. This has been discussed for several years and it is now time to make a commitment for redevelopment of our downtown or leaving it the way it is with the currently planned streetscape improvements. I am in favor of any new development that would create jobs and provide services that are lacking in the village. **Riverspace** is an amazing idea that offers something for everyone. It is still in the planning stages and there are questions that need to be addressed. It should be determined if a project like this is feasible.
- 5) How to bring merchants back into Nyack and fill empty stores? I am in favor of the Streetscape improvements that will improve Nyack's looks. Nyack is not alone; store fronts are empty around the country due to the economic climate. The responsibility of the Village is to maintain a downtown atmosphere that residents and visitors will enjoy.

Improving the appearance and safety (sidewalks, better lighting) by the Village is a good first step in attracting new businesses. We need to send a positive message about our Village and all that it offers, making it a desirable investment.

- 6) My accomplishments; one who will get things done; change in a positive direction? I moved the Streetscape plans forward by making a motion to approve the financing so that the plans move from conceptual to working documents (engineering plans and bidding documents). The first time it failed on a vote of 3-2, the second time it passed. I asked that on September 10<sup>th</sup> the motion to vote on downtown development be added to our agenda. I was instrumental in bringing the bar / restaurant, merchants and police together to discuss ways to improve relationships and quality of life issues. I was not successful in keeping meter prices down and not increasing meter hours. Our parking study had many suggestions that have not been addressed that would improve parking. One of these recommendations would be to change certain parking regulations that would increase residential street parking. I was the liaison for the Citizens Committee and I also am the liaison with the Orangetown Police. We are all aware of Nyack's issues—let's stop talking about the problems and work on solutions. Working hard with integrity and honesty will move Nyack forward in a positive way. The Village needs a leader who is familiar with all aspects of the Village. I have lived here all my life, owning a home, children (and grandchildren) attending our public schools, working in many of the retail and restaurants, having my own business, and a renter. I am fully aware of Nyack's issues and as mayor along with the board will be able to steer Nyack in the right direction (development=ratables=keeping taxes down).
- 7) How to keep Nyack safe and clean? The popularity of Nyack has attracted many restaurants and bars that have made our Village a destination point for many people. As police liaison with the Orangetown police we have had numerous meetings with the bar owners. The Orangetown police have violated bars; the Village has violated bars when the bars allow irresponsible behavior. Many of these violations have resulted in fines and appearances in our court and the A. B. C. Board. The police and the sheriff's department (on horses) are addressing this issue and will continue to address this issue. It is the responsibility of the owner of the downtown storefronts to keep their sidewalks clean and safe. Our code enforcer does a great job but he is only part time. I would be in favor of full time enforcement of our codes and raising the fines if need be to get compliance.
- 8) Dog Park. We have tried to have an off leash dog run to accommodate the owners as well as the animals. There unfortunately were incidents when the hours were not respected, dog feces were not picked up and a dog owner was attacked by a dog. It is unfortunate that we can not accommodate everyone's wants and needs, Memorial park is small and it already has many popular uses.

The safety and health of our residents has to be foremost. A dog park was built in a South Nyack park that is less used by the general public.

- 9) Leaf Blowers: Presently the only ordinance on the books is concerning noise. The noise ordinance for machinery allows use from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM during the week and from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM on weekends. I too find them loud and polluting and raking would improve our environment but again there is no law against them.
- 10) School Taxes: I believe it is the job of our tax payers to elect the most qualified people who have the interest of the school and the community as their priority. The school board meetings and elections are published in the news paper and it is our responsibility to make every effort to attend the meetings and stay informed.
- 11) Parking Garage /negative air quality. I was present at a meeting when Jacquemart (he did our extensive parking study) was asked the question of the impact on the lives of people living in close proximity to a garage (air quality). He found the idea incredible because any garage when designed is subject to air quality standards, and the floors of a garage would have monitors and sensors, which if air quality got bad they would automatically turn on ventilation systems that could take bad air up and out through a chimney vent that are designed to take it away and protect local areas. It is important that people listen to professionals before making statements that put fear in our residents. At this time there are no plans for building a garage.
- 12) TZ Bridge: As mayor I will fight for our residents well being in the planning and construction of any new bridge. We are alone in this fight except for our immediate neighbors, we must continue to attend meetings and ask questions. Nyack must not be left out, our voice will be heard.
- 13) Alternatives to Riverspace: As I mentioned before, on September 10<sup>th</sup> the board will vote on whether they want to proceed with downtown re development. Once that is established we can hopefully proceed with some kind of plan that is consistent with the CMP.
- 14) TZ Bridge: answer Number 12
- 15) Alternatives to Riverspace: answers number 13
- 16) Riverspace Concessions: it is premature to support any concessions until we know if and what type of re development will occur. Remember, the Village must follow State law when it comes to village owned land and parks. The impact on Village property tax payers must be looked at before we can offer any tax abatements. I favor any re development that improves the quality of life in Nyack and has little if any negative effect on our tax payers. If this can be done I will support it.
- 17) Bring business / Visitors to Nyack: Answer Number 5. In addition to my answers for question Number 5, I would like to see ongoing yearly events. We presently have street

fairs, Halloween Parade, Mardi gras celebrations, and more but we need to keep the momentum going. As mayor I will be open to other ideas.

- 18) Muni Meters: Change is difficult and the muni meters are something some people cannot get used to. The Streetscape project will address improved signage design in Nyack, not only for the meters but also for parking. To assist their customers many of the merchants have signs in their stores explaining the where and how of muni meters which is helpful.
- 19) Ferry: It is difficult to address having a ferry when we do not have a pier for one to dock at. The ferry was defeated many years ago and I have heard of no plans to re-visit the subject.
- 20) Property Values: Property values lowered for all of Nyack. Taxes can only go down if services are cut. Yes lower costs can occur through better efficiency. This I will accomplish but I am not in favor of cutting any needed services to our residents. The entire country is experiencing these conditions.
- 21) Health Insurance reform: I would support health care reform that would give quality health care for all. This is a national issue but as an individual I support quality health care for all.
- 22) Cemetery /Village Gate: I spoke with the Building department and the Village attorney and was informed that this problem is in litigation and we will have to see the outcome. Our planning and zoning boards have made rulings on this property and those are public record.
- 23) Bike Path: While I think Nyack has its fair share of bikers having a bike lane on the TZ Bridge which would allow Nyack to cross into Westchester seems like a fine idea.
- 24) Raise Revenues: RATABLES, RATABLES, AND MORE RATABLES. We must support responsible development that increases our tax base and has little if any negative impact on our fine Village.