

# Southampton Town Democratic Committee Platform

In the tradition of Democratic principles, we stand for good government, fiscal responsibility and environmental protection. We pledge to raise funds, choose candidates and campaign in a transparent and ethical manner consistent with the following principles and policies:

## **1. Protect our environment and quality of life, which is the engine of our economy**

- a. Fully cooperate with regional efforts to improve the quality of our coastal waters and preserve the quality of our aquifer. Support the goals and efforts of the Long Island Clean Water Partnership. Investigate long-term solutions to pollution from cesspools, including modern septic treatment plants.
- b. Develop and implement a hazard mitigation plan that recognizes the impact on our beaches and structures of long term climate change and resultant sea level rise.
- c. Improve effectiveness, consistency and transparency of code enforcement, with particular focus on overcrowding in residential housing - including summer shares.
- d. Restrict single-use plastic bags and other plastic packaging to keep them out of our environment and the Town waste stream.
- e. Create an interagency working group from Police, Code Enforcement, Fire and building departments, and the Town attorney that will focus its attention on residential zoning violations, health, safety, and welfare issues and make its actions transparent and trackable to the public.
- f. Increase the number of safe bicycle paths for residents and visitors by working with the New York State Department of Transportation, neighboring municipalities and local advocacy groups.
- g. Make changes as necessary to bring the Community Preservation Fund (CPF) into conformance with the original program intent of preserving our agricultural heritage. Purchase at a fair price as much farmland and open space as the CPF allows where it will have the most favorable impact on the local environment, including lands that are critical to surface and groundwater purity. Partner with not-for-profits where helpful to achieve these goals.
- h. Shape welcoming communities in our Town, by insuring that government structures work equally well for all ethnic and cultural groups. In particular, this means that full language access is available in Town Offices, Police and the Courts. Noting that structures such as Code Enforcement are meant to insure the safety of all residents, we affirm that the human dignity of both residents and landlords is an essential aspect of safety itself.
- i. Support implementation of the Sustainability addendum to the Town Comprehensive Plan as adopted by the Town Board in 2013.

## **2. Grow our economy**

- a. Stimulate locally appropriate economic revitalization; support local commercial and recreational fishing, improved vacation accommodations, and the local colleges to help sustain a year-round economy.
- b. Increase the amount of work-force housing. Consider public/private partnerships to lease public land for affordable and market-based housing.

## **Southampton Town Democratic Committee Platform**

- c. Improve the design of highways and roads as they are repaired to improve drainage and reduce repair and maintenance costs.
  - d. Investigate how to reduce electricity rates in the town. Means might include municipal power generation and/or purchasing power from sources other than LIPA.
  - e. Take responsible measures to safeguard the environmental attractions that are the foundation of Southampton's economy
- 3. Make government more effective**
- a. Pass ethics laws with teeth. Implement strict requirements against conflict of interest for elected and appointed officials, including a code of conduct for Advisory Board appointees similar to the judicial code of conduct. Include stiff penalties for violations.
  - b. Make Advisory Board appointments based on written qualifications, not party or personal affiliations.
  - c. Consider implementing a Town Manager form of government to reduce government costs, reduce taxes, improve administrative efficiency and lessen political influence on day-to-day governmental functions.
  - d. Offset proposed increases in spending by reducing expenses through consolidating services, improving efficiency.
  - e. Increase regional cooperation, e.g., common procurements with other governmental bodies to reduce costs.
  - f. Institute a realistic, fair property assessment process.
  - g. Reduce dependence of Town and school financing on property taxes
  - h. Adopt a capital plan that will reduce overall Town debt with time.
  - i. Consider an abbreviated site plan review process for minor agricultural applications that would avoid a scenario where the review process costs more than the structures being erected.