

Special Insert for Candidate Information

In an effort to assist the residents of Fairfax, we asked each Council Member nominee and Mayor nominee 5 questions.

The questions were:

1. Tell us briefly about yourself
2. What are some of the things most important for the Village of Fairfax to focus on?
3. What do you see are opportunities or challenges that Fairfax will be facing in the future?
4. Please share your thoughts on the Village's relationship to the schools, the surrounding communities, our village's position within the county (and anything else you may want to mention).
5. What is the main reason you are running for Mayor/Council?

Following are their answers. We hope you find this information helpful in making a decision and voting on this upcoming November 5th.

Council Member Nominees (alphabetical by last name)

Janice Arthur Southern Ave.

1. I am a Fairfax native who is now back permanently after moving away for thirty plus years. I left for work and am happy to reinvent myself in now my "middle age". My family has always owned the house and I bought it six years ago from a relative and began fixing it up. Its still a work in progress but the yard is wonderful and its fun to relive old memories, being back.

2. I'd like Fairfax to focus on staying the same, very nice little community its always been, while it goes through this new found popularity. It's wonderful to see kids still ride their bikes and play outside in safety after all these years. That's important. I'd like to make sure Fairfax remains fiscally sound and save for the future too. A nest egg is always important. It would be nice to make sure that we remain our own little community and make our own decisions as a village.

3. Good growth and not just growth because maybe the times are good now. I'm not sure exactly what will come up but let's not jump at every shiny object that might come along. Planning seems to be the key and from what I've seen attending some of the council meetings the people there are often asking those questions already so part of my job would be to help them in any way I can. I always ask a lot of questions.

4. Fairfax has gotten some respect after all those years in the 60-70's when we were just a modest community that no one noticed. As a kid here, the schools were the best thing you could ever wish for your children. That's so true today. Great schools will give these kids a huge advantage over lesser systems. I see, now that I've been out in the world, what a good education means. I don't know but with Madisonville growing a lot now and our schools being so good and other areas so much more expensive Fairfax may just even more popular in the future. I'm not sure the County details or issues but I'd really strongly like Fairfax to stay independent and its own nice place that we, the residents, can control. The tricky part of progress into the future, as I see it, is holding onto enough of the past for comfort but embracing the future when we have to. Safety and security are huge. Balancing fairness and safety going to probably be the hardest to manage in the future. Safety and security needs will continue to grow as more is asked of our Police and officials. Budgeting for those things and again planning for them will be even more important.

5. I'd like to help. I have been away for a long time, as a resident, but have been around Fairfax my whole life. Its fun to see old houses, I remember from a million years ago and streets that are the same. Often times, small villages need people to volunteer. I started attending meetings and finding old friends. I thought I'd run, and if you need someone to help, I can do that. Sitting in meetings is often not fun when we do it at work all the time, I'm ok with that.

Common sense. Its easy to criticize but often times things are done for reasons that make sense when you get the details. I can help if the Village needs some people on council. All of that can make a village that stays hopefully the same into the future with good money management and people that wave at each other.

Kevin Erickson Carlton Ave

My name is Kevin Erickson and I would appreciate consideration for the position of Village of Fairfax Councilperson. As part of my resume, I am a graduate of Wright State University, and work at Fifth Third Bank's Madisonville Operations Center in the Business Loan Department.

My family has been a part of the Fairfax community for 18 years. My wife, Sharon and I have two children who are students in the Mariemont City Schools. We chose to buy a home and raise our family in Fairfax because of the excellent school district, centralized location and the sense of community that the people of Fairfax offer. We feel so lucky to have found this unique and special community. I plan to be a part of the continued growth of the village, which will be built on the foundation that is so deeply a part of who we are. I want Fairfax to be a community in which my own children will want to raise their families.

I have recently joined the Fairfax Planning Committee. This role has inspired me to seek a growing role in the community. It is clear that Fairfax is the place to live and raise a family in Hamilton County. Our proximity to so many other destinations and to downtown Cincinnati makes us the desirable place to live in the region. A vibrant business community is critical to the Village's long-term viability. As your next Councilperson, I will leverage my experience working with small businesses to cultivate strong relationships with the Fairfax business community, while fostering the small town feel that is so important to the Village.

There are a number of challenges that we face as a community. I will work collaboratively with the Mayor, our Village Administrator, other Council members and Chief of Police to tackle issues such as economic development, infrastructure (road and sewer), and pedestrian as well as vehicular traffic on our residential and commercial streets.

Robert Ernst

Simpson Ave.

1. I am currently a member of Village Council and attorney at the law firm of Robbins, Kelly, Patterson & Tucker. My wife Andrea and I moved into the Village four years ago because we wanted to live in a safe neighborhood with great schools for our two kids. I have seen the Village make tremendous progress over the last few years and I would love the opportunity to continue being a part of that success with another term on Council.
2. As a member of Village Council, my focus is on the safety of our residents and the education of our children.
3. Our Village is in a great spot financially thanks to the intentional spending and fiscal responsibility that has been exhibited by the current Village Council and Mayor. As a result, I only see opportunities on the horizon. One opportunity I would like the Village to take advantage of is marketing. In my opinion, increasing awareness of our Village's school system is one way to increase the level of demand for residency in our Village.
4. Our Village's relationship with our school district is of the upmost importance to me and my focus is on maintaining and fostering that relationship.
5. The main reason I am running for reelection is because I want what is best for the Village I live in. As an attorney, it is my job to foresee potential problems and I have applied that mindset as a current member of Council.

Sharon Lally

Lonsdale

1. I have lived in the Village of Fairfax most of my life. I attended Fairfax Elementary School and graduated Mariemont High School in 1976. I have 1 Child Rodney Naticchioni (41) and throughout his childhood I remained active in numerous organizations to include Fairfax Civic Association, Fairfax Youth Organization, Fairfax Swim Club, Parent Teacher Association and Fairfax Youth Softball League. Through these various organizations I proudly held offices to include President, Vice President, member, Room Mom, Coordinator and Coach. I have worked in the Market Research field for over 35 years, making many friends, business partnerships and accomplishments to include the 2003 Dr. Richard B Wirthlin award. I purchased the company (Various Views Research) in 2007 and proudly became a member of the Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE). I am proudly serving on Fairfax Village Council and volunteer and support numerous committees and events taking place in the Village of Fairfax.
2. I feel that making financially sound decisions and keeping the Village of Fairfax in a financially stable position is the most important. I also feel that we need to develop ideas and activities geared towards our youth to keep them active and invested in our community. We must continue to evolve and welcome a balance of new development while maintaining our hometown comfort.
3. Development will provide both the biggest opportunity and challenge for the village. The opportunities are being observed in the residential areas, through the remodeling and redevelopment of houses and in the commercial areas with the opportunity for new development. The challenges are the same challenges that each community faces as they continue to grow. The additional traffic and parking will continue to be a concern with both forms of development. We will need to partner with various organizations such as ODOT to conduct traffic surveys and evaluate different options available to the Village.
4. Being a part of the Mariemont City School district is an enormous advantage and benefit to the Village of Fairfax. It is a driving part in keeping our home values up and encouraging new young families to move into the village and be a part of this district. The Village of Fairfax has always strived to work closely and cooperatively with our surrounding communities in order to develop a partnership needed for joint projects and events.
5. I am running for council for the chance to give back to the community that has provided me with so many memories and opportunities in my life. I want to be a part of the growth and evolution taking place throughout the village and assist in making sound decisions both financial and logistical. I want to be a voice for all of the residents and I have a passion for the creation/ re-creation of a Welcoming Committee to offer an outstretched hand to the new residents moving in and provide them with the information needed to be included and involved in our tight knit community.

Bryce Storm

Meadowlark Lane

1. I was raised in Northeast Ohio and moved to the Cincinnati area to attend Xavier University. After graduating from "X" with majors in Finance and Entrepreneurial studies I immediately started working and have been with my current employer for the last 7 and a half years. I recently celebrated my five year wedding anniversary with my lovely wife Tara. If we aren't out enjoying all that Cincinnati has to offer you can often find us spending quality time at home with our two dogs. We were both drawn to the Village of Fairfax several years ago and have been very happy with our choice. It is a strong hard working community, with a great school district and access to everything you need from the Cincinnati Sports Club to Wal-Mart and a great pizza place in Mac's! We feel like we are growing part of this wonderful community.
2. Within every great community it is important to take a step back and consider what can be done to improve all areas of the village, even the ones that we think are functioning great. This question provides an open forum to discuss goals that we can consider tackling now for the betterment of the community while making sure that we stay within the parameters of the budget. I see no need to spend money if it doesn't provide a greater good for the village. With that said, basic things like providing resources to make sure our police officers and fire department have the necessary tools to continue to keep our community safe is a top of that list. While other areas like a renovation of the rec center and the opportunities surrounding the village pool could be things that are also being looked at. These community staples offer not only a chance for revenue for the village but a central gathering place within the community for the young and old. Focusing on the right opportunities that can enhance the well being of the village and the connection of all of its people are top priorities.
3. The Village of Fairfax is continuing to grow and change. With recent new businesses like the Karrikin Spirits Company, it shows that Fairfax is a place where people and businesses want to be and our community can be competitive in this market. It's exciting that they chose our village to plant it's roots. However with youthful growth we must make sure that we are maintaining the characteristics that made us great in the first place. While drawing people into the community we must make sure that we are taking care of the needs of those that are already here and not forgetting who built this village. Many of my neighbors have told me stories of when they moved onto the street and how exciting it is for them as they watch a new younger generation move in and bring a youthful spirit. While growing and changing we must continue to grow our pride for all within the community.
4. Schools are usually the pulse of a great community and being a part of the Mariemont City School District offers us a tremendous chance to connect and grow with our neighbors. While having our own identity as a village, is important to recognize that the schools can offer us a chance to be closer with our neighbors and learn from what other communities are doing. Being able to increase the greater good of the surrounding communities is something we should all be looking to do.
5. I was raised in a family that believes in serving and helping others. Being a part of the village council will allow me to do this through active listening, responsible follow through and strong proactive communication. It is important to remember that at any given time, someone could possibly be disappointed with something in the village. As a council member it is my duty to make choices in the best interest of the entire village of Fairfax and if that is accomplished I will know that I can sleep well at night. Within any community information ebbs and flows. Like the "telephone game" what is passed on may not be totally accurate and as constituents we may not see a complete picture. I hope as your council person to bring transparency to this role.

Mayoral Nominees (alphabetical by last name)

Barb Blankemeyer

S. Whetzel

1. I have lived in Fairfax my entire life, graduating from Mariemont High School. Earned a Bachelor of Science degree from University of Cincinnati, and my MBA at Thomas More College. Currently I am employed as a Financial Analyst at Child Focus.
2. Presently Fairfax is financially solvent, and that needs to remain a top priority. I would like to run some what ifs scenarios and have a plan ready should we lose income from a major revenue stream. I continue to be concerned with traffic flow through Fairfax. If possible, I would like to review recent changes and determine if they are benefiting our community.
3. I would like more opportunities to speak with residents, and learn their concerns. As I walk door-to-door, I am becoming aware of issues our residents are facing. I also want to know what is working well, and make sure continues. Please look for me canvassing Fairfax. We lost many houses that were purchased by FEMA grants, so Fairfax population was declining. Now I see growth again, houses are being built on many empty lots throughout the village. As a village, we need to be sure that our schools, fire department, water systems, and roads can handle this influx. I do not see this as a problem, but I would be willing to take a closer look. I am constantly working with council to secure grants for Fairfax. I attend meeting where various grant opportunities are discussed, and these ideas are brought back to council for discussion. I would love input from our residents on what we can do for the children. When I grew up here, we had a lot of activities for our kids. Times have changed, and we need to be sure our children have a safe place to play after school. I would also like to see if we could bring back something for our senior citizens. Again, I would love to hear your thoughts and suggestions.
4. Fairfax does it part in helping with Mariemont schools. We have a new business moving into Fairfax, and the tax negotiations went well with Mariemont schools. Mariemont will soon have a new mayor this coming January. If elected, I hope to meet with him, and see how our communities can work together. I am a member of the Hamilton County Municipal League and feel I can talk with those leaders about any issues that Fairfax might face. They meet quarterly and discuss new law being written and how we will be affected.
5. Currently I hold the Clerk-Treasurer position. I would love to advance and become Mayor. If elected, I would have more transparency. I want to learn the concerns of the residents, and make every effort to keep Fairfax a great place to live, raise our family, and retire.

Walter Raines

Meadowlark Lane

1. I have been a resident of the village since May 1996. I am married with three children, two grandchildren and a dog. My family moved from Boston to Cincinnati in 1994. We settled in Columbia Township but wanted to own our own home to raise our family. We settled in Fairfax because like most we wanted the excellent school system for our kids. Also, we loved the location being so close to downtown, while keeping the feel of a small town.
2. It is important to focus on fiscal management, a working relationship with the local businesses and continued growth opportunities for new and existing businesses. Village officials need to re-focus on keeping costs within reasonable limits and keeping our police force well trained and solid.
3. There are opportunities for business growth and expansion on Red Bank Road and Virginia Ave business areas. Red Bank Road offers options at the old Swallens location and expansion on Wooster Pike. Challenges we face as we grow and expand our boundaries are increased traffic on our roads and expansion of our services including police and infrastructure. These factors will place increased importance for village officials to be diligent and safeguard our precious fiscal resources.
4. Our village of Fairfax has been an integral cog in the wheel of education in this school district. Our children have been able to support the school district when asked, and the school district has been instrumental in making Fairfax a willing partner, not only in education but also being involved in the decision making process for our most valuable resource, our children. We have a partnership with other communities, notably the agreement we have with Golf Manor and the Little Miami Fire District. We also have a financial partnership with Columbia Township in providing tax reporting support for their J.E.D Zone.
5. I want to be Mayor because I am the most qualified. I offer fourteen years of experience in village matters. I began my service on council starting June 2002 through January 2007. Immediately after leaving council, I was appointed treasurer by then Mayor Shannon, and I served in that capacity from January 2007 to February 2014. My next service began in February 2014, when I assumed the duties of J.E.D Zone Coordinator, a partnership with Columbia Township. I have knowledge of the intricacies of the village and working with the village employees. If I am elected to represent the people of the village, I promise to provide transparency from my office. I will use a common sense approach for my decisions while in office. I promise to serve and represent Fairfax with pride and energy. I ask for your vote in November.

Carson L. Shelton

Warren Ave

1. I have been married to my lovely wife Judy for 37 years. I have 3 children, Matt, Carson II, and Erin. We have lived in the Village for 37 years. I was first elected to council in 1993. I have been Mayor since Jan. 1st 2012. I recently retired from Fives Cincinnati (formerly Cincinnati Milacron) after a career of 46 ½ years. I have served on the Hamilton County Municipal League board for the last two years.
2. There are several focus areas for the Village in the upcoming years: 1) I know previous Administrations and you current Administration has worked diligently at keeping the business district strong so that we can continue to provide quality services and infrastructure improvements (streets, sidewalks, buildings, etc.) in the Village. 2) We have seen quite a bit of residential growth and new housing developments. Keeping quality housing stock, both new and older construction, along with listening to and addressing the concerns and needs of our residents is key to keeping a livable community. 3) To further expand on infrastructure improvements, we have had residential street replacement project in place for years, but we must set a long range plan to address aging infrastructure such as storm sewer systems, culvert repairs including the Duck Creek culvert along Red Bank Road, parks improvement, etc. Many of these items will be very costly and it will be important to have a financial plan of action to address them.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

Carson L. Shelton (CONTINUED)

3. The world is full of opportunities. It is the responsibility of our Village Administration to be prepared to seize that opportunity when it is presented. One of the biggest challenges that we have as a village is to maintain the quality of service from our safety services – both the police department and Little Miami Joint Fire District, as well as the maintenance department. We are in an excellent financial position currently. As with any small municipality, we need to keep a balance of our expenses and at the same time provide the services to our residents that make our Village a great place to live and raise a family. We also need to pay attention to the current growth our Village has been experiencing. New housing has been occurring for the past several years and although the Village had lost some housing with the FEMA flood plain buy outs, we need to make sure we have the capacity to address the needs of a growing community that consists of both a younger demographic with families and long-time residents that have been in the Village for decades.

4. I have had the pleasure to work with the previous and the present Superintendent for the Mariemont School System. We have always had a good working partnership. The school district is an integral part of our Village, and our continued involvement with the schools makes sure that our voices are heard and that we are involved in the future quality of our schools. I also feel that it is the best interest of the Village to work with our surrounding communities. I have served and continue to serve on many boards with leaders from our surrounding communities such as, Columbia Township (Administrator Mike Lemmon and Trustee David Kubicki), Mariemont (Mayor Dan Policastro), Newtown (Mayor Kurt Kobasuk). I was taught by our former Mayor that if you get your face and name out there, that when the time comes when you need assistance you will receive it.

5. It has been a pleasure to have served this great Village of Fairfax. It has been an honor to have served as your Mayor for the last seven and half years. The Village is in a unique position currently and there is great interest in our community from both a residential and commercial aspect. Having lived here for most of my adult life, I want everyone who lives in Fairfax to have the same experience as I have in providing a safe, livable community, with great schools. We have been very lucky to have a core group of involved residents who have volunteered for many local organizations and I will encourage newer residents to become an integral part of this community as well. It would be an honor to serve four more years so that the Village of Fairfax can continue to be STONG and VIBRANT for many years to come.