



Montgomery County 2022 Candidate Questionnaire - David Jeang

Personal Information:

Name David Jeang

What Office Are You Seeking in the 2022 Election? State Senate District 19

Where Can Voters Learn More About Your Positions Or Contact Your Campaign?
davidjeang4md.com

Please Answer the Following Questions- responses will posted in their entirety and will not be edited.

Someone new to Montgomery County may ask, "What's the Ag Reserve and why is it important?" What's your answer?

The Ag Reserve is an area in the northern and western parts Montgomery County that is preserved for wildlife and agricultural use only. The significance of its existence is that it provides the suburban areas of MoCo, DC, and neighboring counties with locally sourced produce, meat, and dairy products, which is essential to maintaining self-sustaining economy and environmental stability.

What is your vision for the future of the County's Agricultural Reserve? Briefly, how would you achieve that vision?

As my job in animal services sometimes takes me into area of the reserve, I notice with concern encroaching suburban and roadway development at its edges. I would want nothing more than to see that areas of the reserve remain protected so they may serve a greater role in my ideal of transitioning the entire state towards a net-zero consumption system by using state legislation to build food recovery/delivery networks that will expand the Ag Reserve's capacity to provide to more populations in the state.

What are your priorities regarding stewardship of the County's natural resources (water, forests, open spaces) and parkland?

Preservation and conservation must take place above all else. It is for that reason I believe the people who can and should best manage the natural resources in the county areas are the ones who live in those areas and are most affected by their management. Such a system of management would likely entail establishing a county centered commission/board that is citizen based and open to the general public.

What role will you play with regard to ensure that we safeguard our drinking water supply both surface and groundwater?

Limits on chemical uses and bans of certain products that produce waste like single use plastics will help ensure we minimize the manmade negative impact we have on our local estuaries. Furthermore, state/county funding can be issued for promoting environmental projects to create natural barriers to our waterways with local flora, enhancing natural beauty of the area as a plus.

What are your top priorities to help the County address climate change? What role will the Ag Reserve play?

The biggest priority would be to aim for a stable economy that's as close to net-zero waste and

consumption as possible, doing so would ensure the county's impact to climate change is at a minimum. The Ag Reserve is key to this goal as it will be both the largest source of local production and carbon reduction for the county and even various other parts of the state, which are essential factors needed to achieve those goals.

What more can be done to support our local farm businesses and rural communities?

Implementing and expanding food recovery/distribution networks throughout the state can include programs that educate the populace on farmer market locations and times, groceries that buy locally, and the identification of local products. And if possible, the state sales tax could be implemented to have a two tier system, where verified locally grown and produced products are on the cheaper end, giving incentives to commercial franchises and chains to buy locally whenever possible.

What are your regional transportation priorities? Do you support M83 and an additional Potomac bridge and outer beltway through the Reserve or adjacent rural zones?

I seek to reduce traffic through the increased use of regional buses and railways, this will include the expansion of the Metro's red line to commuter heavy suburban neighborhoods like Onley and Aspen Hill for southern traffic, and Bus Rapid Transit routes, stations, and vehicles on existing roads for northern traffic in communities like Gaithersburg, Germantown, and Clarksburg. I have been a long standing opponent of both the M83 and Potomac bridge outer beltway expansion as both do not address the root of traffic congestion but instead simply redirect it at the cost of billions of dollars and leveling miles of natural environment, much of which are protective barriers to our waterways. Bottom line, they're shortsighted plans that follow an antiqued mindset of an overly subsidized road economy that no longer works and is in fact detrimental to the problem it is trying to solve.

How should our County manage its solid waste? What role should incineration, composting and recycling play?

As my beliefs of transitioning to a zero waste economy coincide with solid waste management, my emphasis on the ban of single use plastics in favor of reusables and compostable substitutes will drastically cut the amount of solid waste to manage. For the remaining waste, it should be mostly compostable or recyclable, so the county should expand and educate their current facilities and locations to the public as described in their Suburban Waste Services programs in order to cover the whole county. Providing compost bins along with recycling and trash bins and enacting container deposit legislation will help individual households to properly sort and manage their waste for collection. I frown upon incineration, seeing it only as a last resort for any remaining waste that cannot be reused, composted, or recycled and must be heavily maintained to prevent any runoffs or unsafe exposures to nearby communities.

What are your views on the general plan update "Thrive 2050," both the process and the draft now before the Council?

Identifying the shortfalls of the Wedges and Corridors plan that ultimately led to some of the current problems today, particularly traffic-wise, is an important learning experience as the "Thrive 2050" update shows. And on the urban side of it, I certainly agree to the idea of compacting the areas to 'complete' walkable communities as it is a smart design similar to most European standards where traffic is not nearly as big a problem. However, I do have concerns that this update could be treated as a one-size-fits-all approach to the entire county and could possibly be used to undermine protections from certain developments the Ag Reserve falls under. While it is clearly an improvement nevertheless, it must be approached carefully and viewed with inputs from all sides lest it reaches similar shortcomings like its predecessor and create a whole new set of infrastructure problems, this time on the rural side of things.

Do you believe that the way that local government branches, state entities, and the public currently interact can be improved? If so, what steps would you take?

I think that the best way to improve interactions between local, state, and public would be to establish and be explicit in a clear cut manner the roles and responsibilities of each entity and attempt to decentralize the processes in a way that ensures neither state or local shares those responsibilities.

Many important processes like re-zoning have remained unacted upon for years because both entities keep passing the buck to each other in fear of backlash any change could make. To that end, I would put a task committee together at the state level to identify all the processes involved in such shared tasks, determine whether it is better streamlined to the state or decentralized to the locals, enact legislation to codify the new process into law, and make said knowledge public to what offices, local or state, that the task must be handled by in full.