



Montgomery County 2022 Candidate Questionnaire

Personal Information:

Name Cary Lamari

What Office Are You Seeking in the 2022 Election? County Council district 5

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

www.carylamarinet.net

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?

In simple terms, the Ag Reserve is the lungs and the habitat which protects our Bio-Diversity and provides many food sources as well as jobs in our County. Montgomery County has a history of agriculture and a history of equestrianism our Ag Reserve was created to protect 1/3rd of the County in order to prevent development/sprawl from eroding the fabric of our heritage of farming and to sustain life giving sustenance for us and our environment. The Ag Reserve is today's only real response to reducing carbon based emissions in our County. We are attempting to address Waste and loss of trees and protecting water sources however the biggest success we have had is in protecting and preserving the Ag Reserve.

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

To minimize disturbance from development and potential hazards so we may continue to enjoy the natural benefits of the Ag Reserve while protecting our air, water quality and land. How I achieve these goals is to minimize development to only the approved growth which was established by the 25 acre per home site, which was established in the 80s with transferable development rights and by not providing public sewer and water and preventing any road construction other than to maintain the existing communities and meet the needs of the farming community and further to restrict uses which have the potential of disturbing this natural habitat and farming community. (Protect the air, water and land). I will also seek to promote grants and low interest loans to residents who wish to expand farming activities. The public has an overarching public interest to support farming activities as today we learn more and more about nutrition and how local farm produce and products are healthier for the public.

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

First to protect waterways and stream valleys across our County as with a growing population, drinking water coming from the Patuxent and Potomac rivers in the near future, water will be our most valuable resource. Second to close the incinerator and working with the County Executive find new ways of disposing of trash or potentially converting these plastics to base elements which is being studied in many universities today. Third to protect trees, I believe we should have a no net loss of tree canopy, which means if developers remove an older stable tree, we should make every effort to replace the

canopy which may require replacing the tree with more than one replacement. Fourth I will work to bring jobs to the East County which will be good paying and not toxic to our environment. Fifth I will attempt to reduce reliance on the automobile by supporting a combination of BRT for longer commutes and a more robust ride on for local commutes. I will promote changing routes to where residents live who would benefit from buses and increase scheduling to make them more convenient and more reliable. Also I will support making them free. Today our fare box only brings in 20 million dollars and our buses run with less than 10% ridership, by making these buses free we increase ridership, reduce congestion, reduce carbon emissions and free up many families whom today must own a car which may help these residents more easily pay for food, utilities and save on gas, insurance and vehicle maintenance. Sixth with respect to parks, I will work to fund Montgomery Parks to continue to provide state of the arts parks and be able to maintain them. Seventh I will promote more energy efficient housing codes and support solar canopies in our urban and suburban core and promoting electric vehicle charging stations in homes by encouraging front load seed funding from the general assembly Finally I will address these plastic turf fields once and for all. Today the infill of plastic and rubber flows freely across our natural environment and harms animal, fish and human health. This is an ambitious agenda but potentially possible and worth my efforts

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

As stated in the questions above, we must establish water quantity and better quality control for infill development. Today surface flooding is considered lot to lot flooding which is a civil matter and usually not capable of being properly addressed in the courts. We must establish metrics and practices which reduce the flow of additional run off created from development. Also today in new infill development the only standard is to provide capture for a 1 year storm for quality. For the past two decades because of climate change we are mostly seeing storms of the 4 year and longer rainfall. We have had 3-200 year floods in our state just in the past 4 years. We must do better and there must be technology which could reduce the impacts from these massive rainfall events. I will task the DEP and Office of Storm water Management to research potential options and make recommendations which I will sponsor a ZTA which will improve our overarching water problems. Also I will request an audit of our storm water infrastructure and the current condition of our stream valleys and tributaries to be able to evaluate their condition and potential restoration. And finally we must reduce pollutants as our County has experienced many of these issues in the past. In the 60s a group called the Soil Conservation Corp was created by an architect names Bernard Frank, his goal was to address erosion and flooding from overdevelopment which occurred because developers stripped trees to build new homes flooding much of the Rock Creek. Mr. Bernard Frank championed legislation to prevent this destruction of land for new development and promoted two surface storm water management ponds to be built. Lake Frank and Lake Needwood, however through years of over development and growth, Nitrogen and pollutant runoff and yard pesticides have plagued these two lakes a 54 acre manmade lake and a 75 acre lake which today are struggling because of increased levels of nitrogen and pollutants which now is known to cause Cancer causing bacteria and this bacteria is plaguing its waterways. This may not be allowed to happen again. We should learn from the past so we are not destined to repeat it. Sorry for being so long winded.

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

I am an Electrical contractor and have witnessed firsthand the benefits of the Electric Vehicle emergence and renaissance in the Automobile industry. I believe this will have the largest impact to reduce carbon emission. Second Solar construction of Canopies along bus routes and on top of all commercial buildings and parking lots. I believe as we build the infrastructure we stabilize the electric grid and create options which benefit the environment. I do not support large environmentally destructive solar farms in the Ag reserve as they will encourage soil erosion and be harmful to animals. I have spoken to the largest solar contractor in the DC area Universal Renewables and he agrees. He has built his business plan primarily around solar canopies on top of buildings, parking and urban sidewalks and he believes this could be done in a practical, fiscally profitable way which could benefit the public interest. He also feel we could stand to lose more with solar farms in our Ag

Reserve than we benefit. I agree. I have spoken in detail in questions above of other potential solutions to reduction of carbon which could improve climate change. (Bus solutions, protection of tree canopy in our urban and suburban areas, closing our incinerator etc.)

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

Also as stated above, The Ag Reserve is a sensitive topic and resource. We can and should provide farmers with low interest loans to expand and support their work. We also should promote locally grown farm products as most local farm products have fewer or no artificially induced preservatives and are healthier I suspect. We should provide bus service to our Ag Reserve to potentially offer residents commuter options but more important create business opportunities for the public to participate in the many breweries and wineries in our Ag Reserve as well as potential farm tours if the community believes they would be beneficial. My family comes from the countryside outside Rome they are farmers, the province is called Frosinone and there many farms have small restaurants associated with these family farms. People from the city visit these farms to see the beautiful olive tree orchards, grape vineyards and to enjoy lunch and dinner in nature's beauty. I can see this kind of industry being fostered by family farms here in Montgomery County. The job of a Council Person is only to listen, promote research and to provide legislation and resources to promote the public interest. The actual residents/farmers and community should write the agenda IMHO. The biggest thing we can do for the local farm industry is listen and find ways to promote their best interests IMHO.

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?

- My biggest priority for transportation is to promote a bus system which encompasses both BRT for longer commutes and a re-imagined ride on which has revisited their routes to accommodate the communities which best benefit from buses, increase scheduling and make them free. I support the Norbeck Road/198 improvement project. With direct response to M-83 I am just not sure. I have heard arguments both ways. I do have sympathy for the residents of Clarksburg who bought into promises forgotten. However I have also heard concerns with environmental impacts which trouble me. In all honesty I need to learn more of its history and potential benefits to compare to its negative impacts. I am simply not in a position to address M-83 at this moment. If anyone knows me, I believe in a democratic process with public participation. I also believe reasonableness and data should be part of the equation. Working with stakeholders and effected public usually finds solutions. One person should not be the catalyst for bad ideas which we have seen in the Thrive Montgomery Process for the last 3 years. With respect to a second bridge crossing. Over my dead body! For all the reasons I have spent the last hour trying to put forward. No way no how! We should improve 270 as it goes to the American legion bridge however and this is not a litmus test however I feel toll lanes only benefit the developers and on many occasions have negative impacts to the public. IMHO

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

I have spoken to Marc Elrich on this on at least two occasions. I sent an article on converting waste into its basic elements. Natural gas, Liquid petroleum, and Diesel Fuel. Several Technical Universities are building basically what I can only describe as emissions free or low emission sealed distilleries which convert much of the waste stream. With other parts of the waste stream we can develop building materials which could be cheaper for the public and have a longer life cycle, for outdoor decks possibly outdoor furniture etc. Marc told me he has created a research and study group to look into these ideas as well as other methods to close the incinerator the least favorable is shipping to other jurisdictions. Our CE is expecting a report soon and hopefully this will suggest comprehensive direction on next steps. With organic waste we should promote composting or some sort of organic recycling so we may create fertilizer out of this Organic waste. I am considering the pay to throw away proposals but have not made final decisions. I keep coming back to the age old questions of disincentives or encouragement to make things happen. But I will give fair consideration to such legislation or ideas if they become more articulated. This has been a problem going back several County Administrations (what to do with our waste) and we are closer today than we have been in decades. IMHO

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

I have written about Thrive Montgomery 2050 for 3 years now, I was a member of the HEAT task force for attainable housing and for the past two years lead the Responsible Growth for Montgomery County group.

This exercise began with no real process for public participation. It was only after the General Plan was written that the public started to have real understanding of what was occurring and today many across the county still do not know or understand. Responsible Growth and I oppose Thrive Montgomery 2050, not the entire document but certain and major aspects. First it removed 3 major chapters. The Environment. Racial Equity and Economy. It promotes IMO and Interpretation it promotes our County Urban and Suburban areas into a heavily developed urban umbrella yet does not have the support, need or basis for doing so.

It promotes 32 Complete Communities however is not exclusive as there may be several to a dozen more. The smallest of which will have a cost of 827 Million Dollars. It includes a 6.5 billion dollar bicycle network, over 10 billion dollars for BRT and expands the list of corridors to most major arterial roads and extends BRT to all these roads which with dedicated lanes could disrupt neighborhood access across our County but most importantly it promotes the justification for the Attainable Housing Initiative which changes zoning across our County most especially suburbia and turns our County to Brooklyn on the Potomac. Partially being humorous as the option would be to become annoyed. The biggest potential tragedy will be the loss of tree canopy across our suburban and urban landscape, more impervious runoff leading to more flooding, increased carbon emissions in a suburban communities and potentially destabilizing the existing aging infrastructure and with much more potential harm such as the health of our aging residents in older suburban communities as their air quality and heat island impacts get worse.

They justify all this by a COG report indicating our County may expect new residents to the level of need for 200,000 people. With 75% of these people needing affordable housing. So the AHI supports almost all of this increased housing to be Market Rate starting at \$700,000 dollars. In my opinion as written in totality this new paradigm of growth will not be sustainable, will damage our local environment, will increase the Constant Yield Tax Rate and increase assessments to existing homes and potentially destroy the quality of life for many people who will be displaced with the emergence of a new Speculator/Developer industry to build infill Multiplex housing.

Also this new direction will have severe impacts to our Economic Growth as there are no serious proposals to address the current loss of jobs in our County no less provide for new jobs for this new population in need coming to our County. It should be noted, in the last 10 years our residential growth rate has been .66% per year yet our economic growth rate (jobs) has been .24% per year. This has been described by financial analyst Jacob Sesker to state Montgomery County has caused 38% of job losses for the State of Maryland. It should also be noted that today our approved pipeline for new homes to be built, some at permit stage some waiting is 43,800 units, housing for 130,000 people. Our Staff has identified an additional 85,000 lots which could be applied for.

The real need is in Affordable Housing which I support creating a new Community Land Trust floating Zone which could utilize multiplex housing with some market rate to make it viable but must be Master Plan recommended. Housing is a complicated subject and it is being manipulated by our Chairman of the Planning Board and members of the PHED committee in the County Council. This is a main reason I felt it necessary to run for public office. Today we lack the trust necessary to support the Public's Interest IMHO To be honest I could write much more on our current county services, public safety and more but I Think you get the picture.

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?

The dysfunction in government must stop. It must improve because today the public does not have a voice unless they do what we have done in Responsible Growth which is to spend our money, time and hearts to create such an uproar they had to at least listen. I will also state this Council has been disingenuous with us on Thrive Montgomery. Today only two Council people I can honestly say have been open, transparent and available to us without being pushed. Those Council members are Gabe Albornoz and Sidney Katz. Others have been pushed and prodded to give us attention and at least one

Hans Reimer has refused to meet with anyone who opposes Thrive 2050 from the beginning. People deserve to have a voice. Elected Officials work for the public, they are not supposed to be tyrants with only giving the supporters of their views time to speak at the table. I promise to fight for open, transparent and accessible government. I am known to speak what I believe.