

## **Sussex Preservation Coalition questionnaire – due Aug 7**

**Responses from Stell Parker Selby**, running for reelection to DE House District 20. Friendsforstellparkerselby2024@gmail.com 302.480.6976

1. What can elected officials do to preserve open spaces including forests? Are new ordinances or legislation needed? What should be the priority?

**Overdevelopment and unplanned growth threaten our community. We must find a way to ensure economic growth while maintaining and preserving our beaches, wetlands, forests, and food supplies, including family farms. Growth must be evaluated and not go unchecked. A Sussex County Conservation Plan with strong enforcement mechanisms would be a guide for ensuring we work together for the benefit of all.**

2. Clean water is fundamental to community health. What specific policies or practices are critical to ensuring that all waterways are clean and healthy?

**Environmental preservation is essential to sustaining our economy and protecting the health and wellbeing of our community. Our local economy depends on tourism, which is based on our waterways, beaches, parks, forests, and wetlands. Our families rely on a healthy environment, which includes safe drinking water and recreational water that people can use to swim, fish, boat, and enjoy other activities. We need to preserve our open spaces. Outdoor recreation is essential to our physical and mental health. We must restrict building in sensitive areas and prepare for sea level rise and increased flooding. The infrastructure in Delaware for maintaining quality water standards must remain up to date. Testing and analysis conducted at regular intervals are important to ensure the water system meets appropriate standards. I support funding for the Delaware Clean Water Initiative for all communities, with an emphasis on underserved communities which helps provide clean public**

**drinking water for the State's low income and underserved communities. Our inland bays need to be preserved and protected.**

3. What do you consider the most critical infrastructure problems facing Sussex County, and how do you propose to address those problems?

**We must address increased needs for public transportation as well as adequate and safe roads. To do this, we must find common ground and identify how the state can support growth that does not threaten our environment or undermine the very aspect of this area that makes it so special. We need to make master-planned areas more attractive to landowners and developers, rehabilitating of existing buildings, creating a range of housing opportunities, new businesses and jobs through new construction, renovating vacant building and support historic preservation.**

4. Do you think Sussex County has a good balance between personal rights and community rights? If so, please explain your thinking. If not, how would you work to create a better balance?

**We can work together to ensure the County Comprehensive Plan is embraced and followed. I will work to find common ground and to identify how the state can support non-threatening growth for our community and environment. An important first step would be establishing a committee on regulations on development and ways the State Planning Commission can work with DelDot to explore legislation to find ways to ensure our future is taken care of and our current needs are addressed. Smart growth includes smart thinking on roads and transportation to address support for workers and those that live in these areas can include reliable and well-planned public transportation options combined with hubs for work, retail, grocery shopping and other personal needs. These areas would contain the current sprawl that is occurring throughout Sussex County, resulting in destruction of massive amounts of farmlands, forests, wetlands and byways.**

5. Can and should the working relationship between state and local officials be improved? If so, why and how?

**State financial investments are relevant to planning goals and comprehensive plan status of local governments. DELDOT is responsible for over 85 percent of Delaware's roads. Land use decisions are made by local jurisdictions (municipal and county). For the state to allocate resources efficiently, we need to determine a clear path to our goal of conserving our fiscal and natural resources. The State makes infrastructure and service investments, and local governments make land use decisions. All levels of government need to work together for this to be effective, fiscally responsible, and environmentally sound.**

6. Is there anything else you wish to add?

**Growth in RD20 must not go unchecked. RD20's economy depends on tourism. Tourism is based on the waterways, beaches, parks, forests and wetlands. Our families rely on a healthy environment. I will support and promote a healthy and friendly preservation plan beneficial to all our residents and visitors. Green energy is the future for all of us. Developing and building green technology is crucial. Green spaces support mental health, lowers crime, instills pride, supports our health overall and saves our planet. Sustaining our parks, providing beach replenishment, supports our tourism and our economy. A high priority for DNREC needs to focus on land preservation. Our water source has to be protected. Smart growth includes environmental preservation.**