



www.greenneedham.org

19 November 2021

Dear Karen,

On behalf of Green Needham Collaborative, thank you for stepping forward as a candidate for the Needham Select Board.

Green Needham is a volunteer organization that for 15 years has worked with the Town, as well as with businesses, community groups, and houses of worship, to ensure a sustainable future for Needham. We are submitting questions to both candidates to ask for your thoughts and ideas about sustainability and also to highlight the crucial environmental issues that will be coming up in the near future.

Given the climate crisis, the next 10 years may turn out to be the most important decade of the 21st century. In an effort to avoid the worst effects of climate change, Massachusetts is setting ambitious goals to drastically cut carbon emissions by 2030, on the way to zero net emissions by 2050. For cities and towns, this undertaking will bring not only challenges but also tremendous opportunities as they strive to transition away from fossil fuels in a just and fair way that benefits **all** residents.

I've attached a custom Word document with the questions. **We would appreciate receiving your answers by November 28th.** I invite you to provide your answers between each question, adding as much space as you need. If you prefer, you may send numbered answers back in a separate document or an e-mail. We want this to be as easy as possible for you at a busy time. We will publish the answers – as provided by the candidates – on our website.

For more background, please browse our website -- www.greenneedham.org -- and certainly feel free to use us as an informational resource. And if you have any questions about the questions themselves, don't hesitate to contact me! You can reach me by e-mail at mgreis@comcast.net or by phone at **781 559-4623**.

We look forward to receiving your answers by November 28th.

With our thanks,

Michael Greis
Chair, Green Needham Collaborative



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Sustainability Questions for the December 2021 Needham Select Board Candidates

1 - Although climate change is a global issue, it has very real local impacts (e.g.: severe weather, air quality, and health). Where does our climate crisis rank for you on our Town's priorities? Please share your personal and and/or professional experiences working in this area, if any.

I absolutely believe that the impact on the environment should always be taken into the strongest consideration in all decisions and policies that affect our infrastructure and public buildings, or development of any kind. As a mom, I am especially aware that we are the stewards of our land and water, and must safeguard our community for generations to come.

Throughout my life, I have been passionate about preserving and protecting our environment. From volunteering on conservation projects, to promoting awareness of steps we can take as individuals, households, or in business, I've tried to lead by example, and I will bring this same passion to the Select Board.

2 - The Commonwealth has adopted aggressive plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In March 2021, the [NEXT-GENERATION ROADMAP FOR MASSACHUSETTS CLIMATE POLICY](#) codified a roadmap for the Commonwealth to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, with 2030 and 2040 targets along the way. In June, Green Needham requested that **the Select Board commission the creation of a Climate Action Plan for the Town**. Over the summer, the creation of a Climate Action plan was added to the Board's goals for this coming year. As a new Select Board member, how will you prioritize and support this work?

As a member of the Select Board, I will diligently work with my colleagues to see that we address the need for a Climate Action Plan, by seeking input from Green Needham and other organizations, so that we can be as proactive as possible in staying in step with the efforts and progress made on the state level to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

3 - Needham has an impressive capital plan for both renovating existing buildings and constructing new ones. Although the new Sunita Williams School has solar photovoltaic panels, those were added due to favorable construction costs - they were not incorporated into the initial design. Likewise, energy efficiency is part of the design for the new Public Safety buildings, but they are not designed to be "green buildings."

A: Would you support requiring that solar PV be incorporated into the design for, and be installed on, all new municipal buildings where technically feasible?

Without question, as a member of the Select Board, I would be open to reviewing this concept and applying where technically feasible. We should do all we can to incorporate green design and technology whenever possible.



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B: Would you support a net zero energy use target for new municipal buildings?

I would absolutely consider supporting this concept if it is determined by a diverse panel of experts commissioned to create a climate action plan, and is deemed technically feasible.

4 - As the Town works to cut carbon emissions and help Needham residents adapt to the damaging effects of climate change, what can the Select Board do to ensure that the process is fair and benefits all residents regardless of income, race, or ethnicity?

I think it is critical that the Select Board establish and empower oversight boards comprised of diverse participants that understand the implications of environmental policies on all residents of our community, and that they be proactive in seeking feedback from a cross section of our residents and those that have experience in dealing with similar environmental issues in other communities.

5 - Please address anything else you'd like to include or let voters know how your service as a Select Board member would further sustainable practices in the Town of Needham.

As a wife and mother, there is nothing I care more about than making sure my family lives in a healthy environment. Whether it be ensuring clean air to breath, water to drink, or land that is free of toxins, I am committed to seeing that we have the best environment possible in which to thrive and leave to posterity.

Please return your answers to the questions to Michael Greis (mgreis@comcast.net) by **November 28th, 2021**. You may type you answers in this document, create your own document, or provide the (numbered) answers in the body of an e-mail. If you have any questions, please reach out to Michael by e-mail at mgreis@comcast.net or by phone at **781 559-4623**.