

Susan Reeder Jessee

COUNTY COUNCIL QUESTION

1. This Council will be tasked with appointing a Charter Review Committee, what charter changes do you support? What type of committee members will you be considering for appointment?

ANSWER: I would like the Charter Review Committee to be composed of a wide variety of different citizens and businesses, with neutral backgrounds, that will keep in mind what is best for Frederick County.

The proposed changes I would support include:

- 1) **Allow the council more flexibility in the budget process, possibly being able to add, not just take away budgeted items.**
- 2) **I would like more separation from the County Executive office so that the council can operate as a separate entity.**
- 3) **I would support adding staff to the council if fiscally able to support item #2.**
- 4) **Although this is not a charge to the charter I would like to move the meetings to a later time at 7pm so that more citizens would be able to attend.**

2. [We didn't get to this question at the forum:](#) Based on your respective campaign commitments, what specific growth policies and regulations do you plan to introduce?

ANSWER: I have spent my career in research, collecting data so I would like to research this topic more before stating a policy. I want to make sure I have information from all sides before I make a general statement that could affect our community and businesses. As a Project Manager I believe it's always best to have all interested parties sitting around the table to discuss policies and regulations that may affect them.

3. Livable Frederick, now going on three years of preparations, has been both criticized and lauded for how it evolved. As a Council candidate, what is your perception of Livable Frederick, and what would you want to see in order to gain your support?

ANSWER: A great deal of staff and volunteer time has been spent drafting the Livable Frederick plan, and I believe something with this amount of undertaking and interest is worth further exploring for its vision and application to the future of Frederick County. I believe this vision could be used in combination with the Comprehensive Plan to fully utilize the benefit this county has to offer.

4. What areas should the County Staff/Planning Commission begin with their first Community and Corridor Plans, following Livable Frederick?

ANSWER: More research needs to be done on this before identifying which areas should be addressed first. This process will take time.

5. What approaches would you take to garner support for legislation that you are introducing?

ANSWER: Extensive research on the proposed legislation, communication, and mutual respect are essential elements to any legislation being proposed, that if done properly will be most beneficial.

6. If elected and you knew you had full or enough support what one piece of legislation would you introduce day 1?

ANSWER: There are so many issues that I feel need support in the county and before proposing legislation just to propose it, I would want to do my research on what are the most important needs at the time that would benefit the community and its citizens as a whole.

7. The County Executive has the primary duty of preparing and presenting a balanced budget to the Council. The Council is restricted to reducing planned spending. Do you have priorities that you'd like to present to the County Executive for inclusion in future spending plans?

ANSWER: Yes, the County Executive has been very open to hearing about these needs in the past so I would feel comfortable talking with who every the County Executive is about any future spending that I feel is important to the citizens and businesses of Frederick County.

8. What specific initiatives will you be pursuing to support our small businesses in Frederick County?

ANSWER: I spent 11 years participating in the Frederick Innovative Technology Center Inc., (FITCI), first as a founding board member and then for the next 11 years, as a member of the Client Selection Committee that interviewed/approved clients wanting to come to FITCI. This incubator has an incredible record for helping launch small businesses locally. I would continue to support incubators and business incentives to help any small business thrive.

My husband has owned a small business in Frederick since 1985 so I also understand the struggles small business owners face on a daily basis, and not all are the same. I would like to see a committee formed of small business owners that just focuses on small business issues and work with economic development to address these needs.

9. When it comes to business-friendly policies and regulations, are there specific programs, services and regulatory changes that you would undertake?

ANSWER: I understand that each company has different needs and challenges and not one size fits all. So having policies in place that restrict this individually may make it difficult, so I would like to see more flexibility based on the type of business and what specific needs need to be addressed, to help get them established and grow in Frederick County. Time is money.

10. In your discussion with the business community what have you found to be the greatest challenges facing the business community constituents?

ANSWER: I have talked with many businesses in Frederick County over the years and issues like affordable housing options for their employees, over regulation, rental costs, access to workforce- especially in the trades, are just a few concerns the business community has.

11. If elected, what would you do to improve/enhance the relationship between the County and the Frederick County General Assembly delegation?

ANSWER: I have found over the years of working in business development and management that communication and mutual respect of each other's views and positions, always brings about the best outcome so I would bring this ability to council for the best possible outcome. We must always partner with our Frederick County General Assembly delegation for the best possible outcome for the county.

12. Are there any specific solutions or ideas you have identified to support accelerating the needed widening of US 15 and I-270 projects.

ANSWER: I had a front row seat when I was with my father at a MACO Conference one year, when he was part of the team that got the \$90 million for the East Street Extension project. So I understand it takes a lot of team work and never giving up on working for something that you believe will benefit the community. Also, partnering with our local municipalities like has been done with the City of Frederick on road projects, are essential when state money is not available.

13. The first County Council has been seated for almost 4 years now, and has had to maneuver through establishing certain 'norms', 'processes' and 'rules of order' to administer their agenda. What is your observation of the first council and if elected what would you propose to further refine the legislative process in the County?

ANSWER: Any kind of change always brings growing pains, which we have witnessed in the last four years. I believe as time goes on and new members are elected to the council that are willing to leave their attitudes at the door and will work together for the benefit of the community, you will see progress.

The Yes or No Questions: Please take this opportunity to go beyond the simple answer of Yes or No.

One of the key initiatives the Chamber learned from the Greenville SC trip was a Citywide TIF, that was purposeful, and led to strategic investment of longer term infrastructure needs for all types of development.

1. Do you support Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) mechanisms to support infrastructure necessary to bring forth...Residential Opportunities... (YES/NO)... in Frederick?

ANSWER: No, I don't believe TIF's should be used in residential opportunities.

2. Do you support Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) mechanisms to support infrastructure necessary to bring forth...Employment Opportunities (Yes/NO).....in Frederick?

ANSWER: Yes

3. Do you support Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) mechanisms to support infrastructure necessary to bring forth... Mixed Use Opportunities (YES/NO)...in Frederick?

ANSWER: Yes

Related to financing of Infrastructure, but not utilizing a TIF as described for prior questions:

4. Do you support broad-based taxes and fees to pay for school infrastructure needed as a result of enrollment changes?

ANSWER: Partially as there are other ways to address this rather than implementing broad based taxes.

5. Do you support broad-based taxes/fees to support constructing specific transportation projects?

ANSWER: Yes

Relative to County Operations/Separation of Powers

6. Do you support a completely separate staff for the County Council in order for the Council to have independent-or-autonomous review and analysis of legislative initiatives that come before them?

ANSWER: Yes

Over the last four years the County Executive has introduced as much legislation as the Council. Further if you look at the Council bills, many are as a result of an administrative policy or issues that required the Council to take up as a result of administrative actions.

7. Do you think the Executive Branch is attempting to address too many legislative initiatives as opposed to running the administrative arm of the County, or is this the right approach?

ANSWER: No

The Frederick County Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) has been in existence for nearly 30 years. During that time, there have been specific adjustments to how it is administered with the most recent significant changes occurring in 2008. Now, **in 2018** with a rapidly changing economy, demonstrated shifts in county demographics, and housing choice preference from both existing/resale and new home buyers, combined with programmatic decisions affecting capacity in different ways throughout the County.

8. Do you support a comprehensive review and analysis for best practices and enactment of a better approach that will lead Frederick County's Growth Management into the next decade?

ANSWER: Yes

The council addressed a number of bills brought forth to them affecting business development and land use;

9. Do you support a more targeted approach to updating certain code/zoning changes, rather than dealing with issues on a piecemeal basis?

ANSWER: Yes