

**Tony Chemelik**

### 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 support allowing the County Council having the ability to move money across departments and not just cutting the budget. The Council also needs to have more access to staff if we do not want our government to grow. I think it would be important to reach out to those that created the Charter and seek their input and possibly have one or two on the new Committee. There should be a diverse mix of our citizenry. There should also be an even distribution of Republicans, Democrats and unaffiliated as representatives. I believe a 15 member board would be the maximum number I would want to see. I would also want to see them conduct public hearings throughout the County ad resources be expended to reach as many as possible.

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 would not be proposing any new regulations and would work to pass legislation to define when vesting occurs here in Frederick County. I would like to see a review of the APFO and would work towards streamlining development processes to better serve the community.

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:** I support the concept of the plan, But I have grave reservations as the plan is currently written. It may be too much too soon. The plan got feedback from the State to move forward with certain changes, which I have not seen and look forward to seeing. My biggest concern is what appears to be the ability for piece meal zoning and the potential for abuse by Executives to over extend their authority given the already Executive heavy Charter we are currently operating under. The plan would definitely need amendments as written or walked back and implemented over time, if that were even possible. The idea of being holistic and looking at our County as a whole with all its moving parts beyond land use as we do now in one dimension has merit. The current plan is difficult for most to understand and I have found most are unaware of its implications. While attending a public outreach for the plan I found most people were confused to how it would be implemented. Based on recent comments by the County Executive (during ask the Executive) it is now clear the intent is to hinder growth at all in the County. This should concern everyone.

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

**ANSWER:** When evaluating corridors we should let our existing road network guide us.

**Example corridors extending from Frederick City would be**

south 355 from Frederick to Hyattstown, West Rt340 from Frederick to Jefferson, East Rt 144 to New Market

Our Community plans would then Center around our individual municipalities and should include discussions with and input from them on what they would like to see around their communities

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

**ANSWER: I would work across the aisle to build consensus and also seek input from all stake holders in the community. I have shown my ability to work across the aisle and work together for the best interest of the citizens.**

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

**ANSWER: In four years of sitting on the Council the one thing I have learned is even if you have a majority you need to reach out to the minority and incorporate their concerns in anything you propose. That being said I would push forward with Legislation to define vesting rights here in the County other than vertical construction.**

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: Over the past four years we have witnessed a very large increase in the budget of nearly 17%. While some of the increase was warranted to bring teachers' salaries in line with other Counties, increasing the number of our fire and rescue personnel, including EMT staffing along with an increase in deputies and building new schools, my priorities would be to encourage the County Executive to hold the line and stay with-in the budget to keep the constant yield. My priorities under those parameters would be Schools, Roads, fire and rescue and public safety, in that order.**

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

**ANSWER: The role of the Council in this is limited to tax incentives and other programs that it could legislate. To that end I would request a review of fee structures across the board and look to business owners as to what holds them back from expanding and what rules or zoning could be altered to help.**

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

**ANSWER: SEE #8 above**

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

**ANSWER: Most complaints I hear about is how they are treated by staff when they have a concern or problem. While most are taken care of in a professional manor and I have personally worked with staff over the years I have seen both sides of the coin. This comes from the top down and I have seen the difference in staff attitudes depending on the administration. When someone in the business**

communities makes a mistake or has a problem the only question should be is “How can we help you?” This unfortunately is dictated by the Executive. I have also seen, what appears to be, intentionally slow walking certain permits through the process.

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

**ANSWER: First and foremost, I would ask the Council Send a formal letter requesting a meeting with the delegation and seek their input on the best way to work with them to advance legislation that is beneficial to the County and also how we can help when legislation that is not. Sadly communication between the two bodies has been lacking. The current leadership of the Council and the Delegation have sadly not coordinated any such meaningful discussions.**

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: This is clearly a regional issue that needs the full support of our delegation along with our federal representatives. I would like to see us form a coalition with Montgomery County, Washington County, Adams County PA and Frederick City to act in concert to pressure the State and Federal authorities to make this a priority. In the end no one knows if the fix will be a widening of the road with a public transit component, a public private partnership with toll lanes or alternating lanes from morning to evening rush. I will note one component should be a new interchange for Rout 75 North of Hyattstown.**

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: Moving forward the Council should take the time to revisit the rules, but should wait at least 6 to nine months before doing so. One change that would be helpful would be the ability for the public to give input during workshops in a less formal manor, In addition we have attempted to follow Roberts rules to rigorously I think to the detriment of communication on the Council.**

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:** Yes, depending on the circumstances. Every idea should be vetted to see if it will benefit the community as a whole. While PUD's can trace many of their origins to Columbia, here in MD, they have continued to evolve in complexity and what we are looking for in communities. TIF's could certainly be an answer. Since we have approved several here in the County an independent audit should be conducted to analyze if they have been effective, where the County has benefitted and where there needs to be adjustments. I would be curious as to how the City wide TIF was written and did it include zoning across the board and weight them equally or did they use a sliding scale or some other mechanism to encourage any particular development over another, whether it be residential or commercial or industrial? Did the TIF as written target certain areas?

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

**ANSWER:** Yes, with the same reasoning as #1

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, with the same reasoning as #1

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:** Depends, It is incumbent upon the entire community to provide for the education and welfare of our children. The fees, mainly impact fees, we charge new development was a departure from governmental policies instituted in the 1800's and the reason, I suspect, a rational nexus must be met when charging impact fees on new development. In periods of rapid growth impact fees certainly have shown their ability to assist in building new schools more quickly, but as we have seen in neighboring Counties when growth stagnates you can no longer charge these fees, because they hamper new development. However, we need to recognize that not all new growth is a result of new construction as your question evasively hints too. Demographics, as we have seen, have played a major role in the need for at least one new elementary school. In this instance a broad based tax and or fee would be warranted, but should have a sunset.

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

**ANSWER:** Not at this time. We need to continue the fight to have the highway user revenue fund fully restored to the Counties. The bill passed this year in the General Assembly was certainly a step in the right direction, but it still is not enough.

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. The Charter currently allows the Council, by resolution, to hire its own attorney and I believe this needs done sooner than later and I have been pursuing this for 3 years, the current

**leadership has continually fought against this proposal. The current Council has employed a legislative analyst, a position that was recently vacated and advertised to be filled. Also the Council recently voted to place an amendment on the ballot that would make firing the County Attorney a super majority of the Council or 5 with the support of the Executive. This amendment is needed to bring impartiality to the County Attorney's office. Currently the County Attorney serves at the pleasure of the County Executive and it has proven to be problematic for the Council to get any opinion to run contrary to the Executive.**

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: Yes**

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: NO. As I have come to learn you can't fit a square peg in a round hole. You use the word piecemeal and I would suggest while at times it may seem that is the approach, every case should be weighed independently.**