



Progressive Newton 2023 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Andrea Kelley

Office Sought: Ward 3 Councilor At-Large

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- 1. Did you support the three override votes on the ballot this past spring? If not, why?**

Yes.

- 2. Following the Override votes, what concrete actions will you take to ensure that NPS students have the greatest opportunities to succeed? Additionally, how do you define “academic excellence”?**

Continue to talk with the Mayor and School Committee members about the priority I give to NPS, programming, curricula, teachers, staff etc. Continue to push the Mayor for a better Horace Mann School, to find the funding.

“Academic excellence “is the goal for all Newton students, at all grades and levels, it should address the needs of all learners. It must encompass challenging course material, be welcoming and inclusive, provide math, literacy, fine and performing arts, music, phys ed, , library/media, technology, college prep, IEPs, ELL, athletics, clubs, mental health supports including counselors, social workers, psychologists, and coordination with community organizations.

3. On March 29th, the School Committee voted against the creation of a “NPS Academic Principles Advisory Committee.” What is your stance on this vote and the proposed committee?

After speaking one on one with several of the people behind the parent-initiated “ImproveNPS “group, I believe this effort was well intended, poorly articulated and ill-planned, but not a direct affront to diversity, inclusion and equity despite being accused of that. It was seen as a threat to the NPS staff, School Committee and came across as anti DEI. I did not support it.

4. What does “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” mean to you, and how will you ensure and protect the wellbeing of all students?

DEI is about protecting the well-being of all without regard or discrimination based on race, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, whether visible or invisible. How to do this: engage everyone, value all viewpoints. treat all people with respect and dignity, include racially inclusive curricula in the schools, not tolerating discrimination, bullying, harassment, support the CARES Act, recognize that different perspectives and backgrounds enrich and strengthen us.

5. What does “Black Lives Matter” mean to you?

Acknowledging the history and consequences of white supremacy, work to combat oppression, stop the violence and discrimination inflicted upon Black people.

6. How would you improve access to affordable transportation in Newton?

For some people, more connected and safe bike lanes will provide an affordable method of transportation. NewMo services people within Newton, affordably. The larger system of public transportation won't improve without State help, mainly financially. Lobbying for continuing and more bus routes, better subway and commuter rail service and hours, limiting user fee increases, exploring free transit options (state and national funding needed for this), working with our State delegation: Balsler, Creem, Khan and Lawn, and also with U.S.Rep. Auchincloss.

7. What concrete steps will you take to combat global climate change, increase renewable energy, and decrease energy consumption in Newton?

As a City Councilor, I am in the minority supporting no more gas line extensions or replacements and no artificial turf to be installed on public play and athletic fields. I support Newton's Climate Action Plan goals and benchmarks, BERDA, use of geo -thermal heat, induction cook tops, Passive House building standards, the High Performance Building Coalition, the Stretch Code, Newton Citizen's Commission on Energy, Newton Power Choice. Personally, I take daily small steps such as limiting use of plastics, re-using more, buying less, composting, repurposing, gifting, using native plants, pollinator friendly, with low water needs benefit the environment. When technology improves, my landlord installs a charging station, and I can afford one, my next vehicle will be an EV.

8. What value do you place on increasing affordable housing in Newton, and what concrete steps will you take to expand affordable housing?

Having access to affordable housing has been one of my priorities and values for over 30 years. Getting the zoning redesigned to allow the construction of more homes, in the village centers and elsewhere, at all sizes and types (ADU, micro, family, elderly, rental, ownership, townhouse, single family, multi family, accessible etc.) is a must. The Housing Trust is a relatively new and helpful tool. I continue to vote in favor of Special Permits proposals that include multi-family dwellings. I explain my thinking over and over so that both the public and my colleagues hear why this is so important.

9. What is your definition of public safety? What actions will you take to further this definition in Newton?

Protecting the general public and its physical welfare, through actions and policies, which in Newton primarily falls to Fire, Police and EMT services. These programs and departments must safeguard the well-being, property, peace and security of the public, prevent danger, be humane, evaluate and assess priorities, make and adhere to plans for such protection and safety measures. I support ways in which the Fire and Police Departments assess and adapt to these goals.

10. What do you believe is the role of local elected leaders in promoting progressive policies at the state and national level?

As a big believer in grassroots and local advocacy and action, we local elected can and do play a role in promoting the policies of Progressive Newton, Progressive MA and the National Progressive Party by how we collaborate

with decision makers at municipal, state and national levels, how we vote on matters before us, how we talk to the public about the reasoning behind our votes and actions.

11. Use this space to add anything you have not mentioned and that you would like us to know about your experience, vision for Newton, etc.

State S.872/H.1304 and S.1299/H.203 are bills I support on rent stabilization that would also help many Newton residents who are renters and fear/face untenable rent increases. Also the RAFT bill could help eviction procedures that impact Newton renters as well (at the Albemarle Gardens apartment complex near me tenants are at risk of both unreasonable rent increases and evictions due to inability to pay).

YES/NO (Massachusetts state legislature bill numbers follow in parentheses, where applicable)

1. Do you support lowering the municipal voting age to 16?

YES.

2. If the MBTA is unable to expand service, would you be in favor of having the MWRTA (MetroWest Regional Transit Authority) expand service instead?

YES (even if the MBTA does expand service, this bus/shuttle service is an important component of public transportation needs for the 32-town I-495/MetroWest corridor and should be maintained/expanded)

3. Do you support the “Real Estate Transfer Fee”? (S.1771/H.2747)

YES.

4. Do you support the “HERO bill”? (S.1799/ H.2894)

I am not yet totally sure on this, as I don't know enough about how the funds will be split between climate mitigation/resilience and affordable housing, not sure if a dual/split destination is the most successful model although I support both those objectives.

5. Do you support “An Act to Promote Yes in My Backyard”? (S.858/ H.1379)

YES.

6. Do you support raising the minimum wage to \$20? (S.1200/ H.1925)

YES, but wages for teen employees just entering the workplace, eg. in retail, at camps, etc. may need a separate category.

**7. Do you support “Preventing Fair Share Amendment Tax Avoidance”?
(S.1866/H.2909)**

YES.

[Read about the aforementioned bills here](#)