



Progressive Framingham/MetroWest 2023 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Samantha Perlman

Office Sought: Mayor of Marlborough

Website: <https://www.samanthaperlman.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SamforMarlboro/>

Twitter: [@SamforMarlboro](https://twitter.com/SamforMarlboro)

Instagram: [@samformarlboro/](https://www.instagram.com/samformarlboro/)

What would be your top three priorities if elected to serve?

Long-term Planning: With a rapidly developing community, I will ensure thoughtful and sustainable planning is at the heart of my administration as the next Mayor. From prioritizing a west-side fire station to accommodate the increased demand on our public infrastructure and bolstering existing transit such as the MWRTA, I see strong municipal services and transit access as foundational to our city's bright future. I will champion an accessory-dwelling unit ordinance to maximize existing housing stock that provides affordable options for families and seniors. Further, Marlborough needs a city planner to manage the level of growth, plan for upcoming community needs and assess the wellbeing of our city to inform future development, schools, infrastructure and natural resource preservation.

Climate and Sustainability: The future for our city and our world depends on a liveable planet. I will fight to protect Marlborough's open spaces, expand conservation land, and push for every neighborhood to have access to a public park. I will support public/private tree maintenance to mitigate the urban heat island effect, connect our trail network, install solar across municipal buildings, invest in electric vehicle infrastructure and mitigate flood risks in our city. Our climate crisis must be at the forefront of all decision making within our city.

Education: As a proud graduate of the Marlborough Public Schools and with a professional background in civic education, I look forward to partnering with and building upon the work of our School Committee to impact our youngest residents. We will continue bolstering existing STEM programs, internship opportunities, project-based learning and appointing youth representatives on city boards to expand civic knowledge. Our educators and staff are the heart of our schools and as Mayor, I will work to retain staff through fair salary packages, increasing pay for paraprofessionals and supporting outreach to hire and retain educators of color and bilingual teachers. I will prioritize lowering our student to reach ratio as well to improve the quality of our classroom learning. Upgrades to existing classrooms, bringing back elementary school libraries and identifying new space options for our schools will be crucial to my time as Mayor. I also will prioritize resources in social emotional learning and mental health to strengthen the holistic wellbeing of each student and promote communities of care across our schools.

What is the one policy you've seen pioneered in another city that you'd most like to see adopted in Marlborough?

As Mayor, I will formalize a tailored participatory budgeting process. I am impressed with the youth participatory budgeting process in Boston. As a group, people between the ages of 12 and 25 vote on how to allocate resources for investment back into the community. Trusting residents, especially youth, with decision making around part of the budget is an asset to the city's future. Such a process allows the city to prioritize relevant projects while building leadership and civic knowledge among youth about the role of local government and how a city's budget represents our values.

1. Same Day Registration is one of the best-proven methods of increasing voter participation in elections. Do you support allowing voters to newly register or re-register at the polls on Election Day and during the Early Voting period? (Y/N)

YES.

2. What steps would you propose to reduce income and wealth inequality in Marlborough?

Crucial to reducing income inequality is improving outcomes for our youth. I will expand our universal pre-k programming to jump-start our children's future and reduce achievement gaps based upon income levels that manifest even at an early age. We also must collect expansive data about the

inequalities in our city such as rent-burden, transportation access, food insecurity, education, income and proximity to parks and healthcare so we can accurately assess the needs specific to Marlborough. Diversifying a community's housing stock, increasing transportation access and investing in overall education will return tremendous gains for our entire community. Given our digital age, I also recognize the importance of providing strong reliable internet access here in Marlborough. Communities that offer public wifi promote social inclusion across diverse resident populations. Such a policy can help close the gap when other public spaces like libraries are closed.

3. Do you support local government investment in the fight against climate change including solar panel programs, purchasing electric or hybrid vehicles, and encouraging composting? (Y/N)

YES.

4. Do you support Metrowest communities including Marlborough adopting the opt-in stretch energy code that would increase sustainability in construction? (Y/N)

YES.

5. Do you support or oppose the expansion of charter schools in Massachusetts? (Y/N)

OPPOSE. I support keeping limits on the expansion of charter schools. As Mayor, I will serve as Chair of the School Committee and am excited to continue investing in our public schools.

6. Do you believe that Black Lives Matter and support police accountability measures and policies that will protect black lives? (Y/N)

YES.

7. Do you support a careful examination of the role of school resource officers (SRO) in Metrowest schools in the context of potential psychological harm done to students of color? (Y/N)

YES.

8. How would you expand affordable housing in our community?

I am concerned about the rise of housing costs across Massachusetts and its impact on our residents here in Marlborough. Many people who grew up or

work in our community cannot afford to live here and are rent-burdened. I will partner with our state leaders to access funding to build housing that is affordable, improve transit access across our city and links to state transit networks. I will advocate for an accessory dwelling unit ordinance to allow in-law apartments in single-family zones which can assist all ages to remain in our community and maximize housing options. I also support efforts to codify affordable housing percentage minimums in upcoming developments, especially through inclusionary zoning to support residents with lower AMIs. Coinciding with this challenge is how to promote sustainable development. Unlike surrounding communities, Marlborough does not have a city planner which is detrimental to accessing grant funding, envisioning a citywide plan to development and prioritizing both affordable and senior housing.

9. Do you support local measures to address misinformation coming from crisis pregnancy centers? (Y/N)

YES.

10. The Supreme Court's Dobbs decision has threatened abortion access throughout our country. Do you agree that Massachusetts should take the lead on protecting the right to reproductive health for all residents? (Y/N)

YES.

11. The Supreme Court recently sided with a web designer who argued she had the right to refuse service for a same-sex marriage. Do you support legal mandates that mandate businesses to provide goods and services without regard to a person's background including sexual orientation, race, and gender? (Y/N)

YES.

12. What impact do you feel social media has on participation in local elections? How can we encourage greater participation in local elections?

Social media is one helpful tool to encourage greater electoral participation. Before I ran for office, I worked for a nonprofit that encourages civic education and I helped pass the state law that requires project-based civic education in our schools. In both of my City Council campaigns, I have utilized social media to engage residents, particularly young voters. Out of these efforts grew our Youth for Sam program, which engages youth in local politics. In addition to my civic education background, I also worked in the nonprofit youth voter and civic engagement space where I saw firsthand how important it is to ask people what issues matter to them and empower them to be involved in the

decisions impacting their lives. Applying this to my campaign, I intentionally knock doors to connect with residents and understand their top issues while also building strong relationships and trust. This authenticity and full engagement is vital for encouraging greater sustained participation.