

My Thoughts

I want to thank you for reaching out to me and giving me the opportunity to respond to your request. Because this is the first time I have run for elected office (Councilor for Ward 1) I feel it will be more helpful for me to give you my overall perspective and personal philosophy as I embark on this journey.

I believe it is imperative for an elected City Councilor to always keep at the forefront that their role is to represent the collective voice of the Ward. If I am elected their City Councilor, I will thoughtfully consider and be very careful to be sensitive to the input of the voters and residents of Ward 1.

Goals

My goal as a Ward Councilor will center on being available and responsive to our Community. Ever mindful that I am elected to serve. Being someone that is readily available and grounded in our Community will be a key to my success.

Vibrant Villages and Development

I am proud of the villages in Ward 1. I will work hard to preserve the elements which currently work for our Villages and enhance and encourage the elements which will improve them. This work will include maintaining the unique look and feel of our Villages as well as the openness and inclusive atmosphere we have always enjoyed here. I will support economic and infrastructure improvements to benefit the local businesses and residents. My philosophy is that sometimes bigger is not always better. I believe in appropriate smart growth where the result is an overall improvement for the community from all aspects, with an emphasis on inclusive engagement with our neighbors and our neighborhoods.

Diverse and Local business

I fully support Diverse and Local Businesses. I have fond memories of the local businesses that were staples in both Newton Corner and Nonantum. Ward 1 has always been the gateway to Newton for both people and businesses of diverse populations. Local business is the backbone and engine of vibrancy for every neighborhood. They are also a sound, sustainable, and equitable avenue of progress for racial and ethnic diversity and equality. I make it a point on a daily basis to personally support our local businesses that continue to exist and thrive today. I feel, not enough real work beyond slogans and catchphrases is being done by the city to support diverse and local business development. There is also not enough being done for established local businesses to enable them to continue to grow, prosper, and contribute to our community. I would work to increase awareness and support for these local businesses.

Affordable Housing

I certainly have a passion around this topic. Newton is a very desirable place to live, and I understand that with desirability has come an increase in cost. With that said, we need to provide appropriate mechanisms for residents who chose to remain in our city so they can do so. No one, because of the extreme economic forces we are all experiencing, should be forced to move out and live elsewhere. Resident's preference should play a big factor here. Also, providing opportunities for ownership vs. rentals will promote multi-generational opportunities and ensure residents who have spent their lives growing and contributing to our community, can remain if they chose.

Racial Equality

I do and will continue to support an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere in our Ward and throughout the entire city. Ward 1 has always been the most diverse part of our city. All are welcome. Growing up in this Ward I have lived this reality and will continue to promote and encourage our warm, welcoming and inclusive culture as Ward Councilor.

Closing Comments

I am a lifelong resident of Ward 1 and proud of it. I am running because having lived here all my life it is time for me to give back to our community. I have experienced, firsthand, what has made our ward great and some of the things that have impacted the look and feel of it. I will work hard to preserve the traditions that made us great and those that will continue to make this ward a great place in the future. I will work hard for the members of this community to ensure they have a voice at City Hall.

As a Ward Councilor I will be engrained in the fabric of our community and not just someone who voters see on a Zoom meeting. The members will know who I am, and I will be readily available to serve them. I believe this is a key ingredient to the success of a Ward Councilor.

While I realize there will be many issues to deal with throughout our city, the residents of this Ward deserve a local presence and engagement on the matters that are important to them. As their elected public servant it will be my privilege and my job to represent them.

I am running to be their voice.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully

Kevin Riffe