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2018 Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

| <u>Candidate Name</u> | <u>Municipality</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Katy Austin | Springwater | September 22, 2018 |

Please return the completed questionnaire to the sender as soon as possible, but no later than October 4, 2018. **N.B: As this is a Word document, you can take as much space as you wish to respond.** The answers will be posted on the AWARE Simcoe website.

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1. Water is a finite resource. Do you feel there is a need to protect water, wetlands and recharge areas from development, aggregate extraction and other intrusive activities in your municipality? If so, how will you achieve this?

ANSWER :

Yes. New developments, such as those already approved for Midhurst, have been required to undergo strict assessment of infrastructure plans under the province’s Environmental Assessment process. The Township needs re-assurance that its costs for providing that state-of-the- art infrastructure to protect water, wetland and re-charge areas does not result in the Township having to sustain heavy, long-term debt.

The application to expand Dufferin Aggregate’s permit to take water on its French’s Hill site and use it to wash large amounts of aggregate could have serious effects on the aquifer in Springwater. If re-elected to Council, I would ask to sit in as an observer in the negotiations among Tiny Township, Dufferin Aggregate and the Province.

2. Development charges never fully cover the cost of new development. Will you make sure that all costs that *should be* paid by development charges under existing legislation *are* covered? When considering an application, on what basis will you decide whether a development is a net benefit for the community?

ANSWER

The current Council has been working with the Director of Finance to update Development Charges (DCs); its mandate is to make sure that DCs do cover the cost of required infrastructure; if re-elected, I would work to see that the development Charges Study is completed and implemented.

New developments can be a net benefit to the community if:

- they are built within settlement boundaries where infrastructure already exists (as required by the new provincial guidelines);

- they meet the housing needs of existing residents and newcomers; for example, Elmvale could use more condos and bungaloffs for seniors and retirees;
 - their layout out is more conducive to an active lifestyle, i.e. traffic calming measures such as roundabouts, walking trails to schools and shops, sidewalks, trees on boulevards, and low-impact measures which return rainwater to the ground as opposed to the sewers.
3. Do you support/oppose expansion of the Greenbelt into Simcoe County? In either case, please explain why.

ANSWER

The proposal for the expansion of the Greenbelt into Simcoe County was poorly prepared and presented; that is likely why it remains on the backburner at the provincial level. I agree with many of the local farmers who say that protection of farmland is already being achieved under the existing provincial growth policies and protection of water resources is already being achieved by similar existing legislation and agencies. The burden of a Greenbelt Expansion would weigh most heavily and unfairly on the backs of farmers. Another layer of bureaucracy would be detrimental to their ability to carry on their business; farmers are already good stewards of the land and water.

4. Simcoe County Council chose a county forest in Springwater – zoned Agricultural – as the site for a (needed) waste handling facility, the Environmental Resource Recovery Centre. Springwater Township objected, pointing out that this is an industrial use and there are suitable properties zoned Industrial. What is your view?

ANSWER

While I wish that the facility could be placed in a different location, I also respect the fact that the County went to great lengths to choose what they considered the most desirable site; both a respected consulting firm and a citizens' advisory group spent many hours reaching this decision; one of the members of the citizens' group was Ray Millar, who was a leading figure in the fight against Site 41 and a founding member of Zero Waste Simcoe (ZWS). As a fellow director of ZWS, I look upon the Environmental Resource Recovery Centre as an innovative way to direct waste away from landfill.

5. Since 1924, the Ontario Tree Seed Facility in Angus performed a vital task for the whole province of coordinating seed collection from 37 zones across the province to ensure seedlings are returned to grow in the zone to which they are uniquely suited. The Progressive Conservative government is reviewing the closing ordered by the Liberals. What is your opinion on this matter?

ANSWER:

I suggest the government sell off some of the land surrounding the existing facility since there is no need for all of it and since the land is much more valuable now that it is within the settlement area of Angus. The money could then be used to build a smaller, modern Tree Seed Facility with much lower operating costs while still carrying out its previous functions.

6. If elected, what are your top three priorities?

ANSWER

1. Ask Council to pay for a Consultant with expertise on modern trends in retail business to determine how we can re-invent and re-vitalize downtown Elmvale.
2. Complete the Official Plan Update, Long-Range Financial Plan, Development Charges Study, and implement some of the ideas put forth in the Master Recreation Plan.

3. Dust off the 2012 Municipal Cultural Plan, form a Cultural Activities Advisory Committee and encourage more cultural activities and events throughout the Township.

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Thank you for completing the AWARE Simcoe candidate questionnaire