

Candidate: Christiana Rigby

Questionnaire - County Council Candidates

1. Why are you running for this office? What qualifications do you uniquely bring to hold this office?

I'm running to create opportunity for all in Howard County. I am an experienced, qualified, and dedicated community servant who will continue to advocate for the residents in my district and for the county. I value a fully funded school system, supporting safe and inclusive neighborhoods, and community focused development.

I have over a decade of experience in the nonprofit sector, having spent significant time working with our nonprofit community here in Howard County. I serve on government committees, nonprofit boards, and the Kings Contrivance Village Board.

My experience on the Kings Contrivance Village Board working with the County and the Columbia Association has been invaluable. It's critical that there is an experienced person on the council with a well rounded knowledge of the intricacies surrounding the relationship of the Columbia Association and the County as well as experience with New Town zoning.

2. Describe why you feel you have a viable campaign.

As a nearly lifelong resident of Howard County, I have dedicated my life to supporting and enhancing our community. I'm a Columbia native, a graduate of Hammond High, and have been active in my community through my work on the Kings Contrivance Village Board. I have served on multiple boards and government committees have support from many community leaders.

I am genuinely committed to our community and have demonstrated that commitment over many years. As a graduate of Emerge Maryland I have been trained on the nuts and bolts of campaigning and have taken that education and partnered it with my community and professional experience.

I have the experience, commitment, and passion to fulfill this role.

3. How do you believe one eliminates the appearance of conflicts regarding campaign contributions?

I've been a vocal supporter of campaign finance reform in Howard County (and beyond) and I believe this is the best way to end the appearance of conflicts.

The heart of this issue is integrity - an elected official should make thoughtful decisions consistent with their values and be open and transparent with the community.

<p>4. If you are elected, or reelected, what are your top priorities for 2019?</p>
<p>Ensuring a fully funded education budget, safe and inclusive neighborhoods, and shifting the county toward community focused development (including improved opportunity for community input, partnering with the community that is impacted by the development, an enhanced notification process, and making our regulations more community focused).</p>
<p>5. How would you have voted on the APFO bills, and the amendments regarding roads tests, affordable housing, capacity limits, and categories to add to APFO? If seeking reelection please discuss your votes and reasons. In 2019, would you sponsor legislation to implement any positions you herein outlined, that differ from current law?</p>
<p>I would have supported the APFO legislation but would like to have seen a stronger roads test, and adding quality of life tests for resources such as police, fire, and hospital capacity. Through my work on the Economic Resource Allocation Committee of the Howard County Board to Promote Self Sufficiency, I have been a strong supporter of full spectrum housing across the county but I'm concerned about exempting affordable housing properties from APFO tests due to the impact of increased density in already overcrowded schools, I support lowering school utilization capacity and including high schools.</p> <p>We need stronger planning methods in place to ensure proper capacity across county resources. Prior to reaching full capacity in county resources, a collaborative process must begin between the county council, county executive and stakeholders.</p>
<p>6. Did you seek the endorsement of the MD Builders Assn? Did you meet with the MD Builders Assn, wherein you noted how you would vote, or would have voted, on APFO Bills or amendments? If so, what positions did you communicate?</p>
<p>No, I did not seek their endorsement nor have I met with them.</p>
<p>7. Do you believe the HCPSS budget should have a lower level of increase, or be fully funded? If fully funded, where do you suggest the County budget cut elsewhere to accommodate? If lowered, where do you suggest the HCPSS budget be cut?</p>
<p>Balance and partnership must exist between HCPSS and the County budget. We need to see where duplication of effort exists and how we can combine to enhance partnerships between HCPSS and the county government. We need to make better decisions with existing revenue, an example of this is the county's current approach to community centers and new school construction.</p>

A review of programs and structures for both organizations should be done to ensure that we're being as effective as possible with existing revenue. Processes in place that have existed for decades despite technological advancements should be updated to provide increased efficiency and better service.

I would not cut programs that serve our most vulnerable students (like special education, FARM, etc) or impact student health. Education must be a priority in the county budget.

<p>8. Do you believe developer fees should be increased in the County? Do you believe developers should be allowed to voluntarily pay increased school fees to proceed in closed school districts? If so, at what levels?</p>
<p>Yes, developer fees should be increased. The current fees are not sufficient to cover the cost of resources needed. We are not at a similar level with fees in surrounding counties. I have significant concerns regarding allowing the developer to “buy up” to 120%, because schools should not be allowed to become so overcrowded that education is negatively impacted.</p>
<p>9. Do you believe the current annual residential allocations unit maximums are too high, too low, or should be unchanged? If you believe they should be changed are you willing to sponsor legislation in 2019 to do so?</p>
<p>Our current categories are too broad and that they do not support the nuances in various communities and neighborhoods within Howard county. This must be changed to allow for predictability for the community. I would sponsor legislation to change the categories and allocations process to be more community oriented than category oriented.</p>
<p>10. Do you believe there should be an increased number of Council Members? If so, how many, and how do you propose they be elected?</p>
<p>Seven districts should be created.</p>
<p>11. What is your position on TIF’s, and specifically the TIF for Downtown Columbia/Howard Hughes? What is your position on how much affordable housing should be required by Howard Hughes (HH) on their own property? Many believe the norm being 10-15%, and HH is providing 4%, discuss.</p>
<p>Generally, I am against TIFs, and have spoken out against the Downtown Columbia TIF since the idea was first proposed to the council. HHC should have 15% affordable housing units in each property, instead of concentrating in a handful of buildings. The HHC units should have existed in perpetuity.</p>
<p>12. What do you believe are the best methods to use to provide affordable housing? What do you see as any current difficulties in accomplishing those goals?</p>
<p>This issue has a multi-pronged solution. One of the biggest difficulties in providing affordable housing relates to the lack of political will and the finance options available. Miller’s Court in Baltimore (an Enterprise project for teacher housing and nonprofit workspace) is a great example of a project I would like to see here in Howard County.</p>

<p>Increased partnership with Enterprise Community Partners and other local partners could support increased affordable housing, increased support for Master Leasing programs, and significantly changing the “fee-in-lieu” program so that units are on site, or raising it to a level adequate to acquire an actual unit.</p> <p>I am committed to expanding housing opportunities for people with mobility limitations (adults with disabilities, seniors, etc) in partnership with an improved public transit system.</p>
<p>13. Do you believe Howard County should be a sanctuary County?</p>
<p>I support legislation that would ensure that Howard County is safe, inclusive and welcoming community for all our residents. Victims and witnesses of crimes should feel safe in relations with police and when testifying. This type of legislation would also ensure local resources stay committed to local use.</p>
<p>14. Do you support allowing developers to build residences on parkland, whether by swap, gift or purchase?</p>
<p>No. Public parks are for everyone.</p>
<p>15. Would you support restricted development in areas that the County has designated as part of the Green Infrastructure Network?</p>
<p>We should not allow high impact development in areas designated as part of our Green Infrastructure Network. We need to preserve these remaining areas.</p>

<p>16. Are you in favor of implementing the Development Regulations Assessment recommendations? What, if any, suggestions did you make during this process so far?</p>
<p>There are many good suggestions, but we should not wait until the whole process is complete to start implementing them. Additionally, we need a New Town Zoning taskforce to provide solutions that the council can enact to preserve and protect the vision of Jim Rouse. This cannot be put off any longer than it already has been.</p>
<p>17. Have you ever testified before the County Council? If so, describe some positions you have taken.</p>
<p>I have testified before the council on many issues including (but not limited to): development issues such as opposing Downtown and Laurel TIFs, supporting the Terrasa proposal for affordable housing in Downtown Columbia, and supporting a stronger APFO. I have advocated for changing the senior tax credit with our council and at the state delegation and am pleased that the first steps toward change have begun. I have supported our first responders to ensure that the people who risk their lives to keep us safe can live here. I've testified for stronger APFO legislation and improved walkability in our communities. I've advocated for campaign finance reform since the inception of the Question A campaign.</p>
<p>18. The Clarion Zoning study showed we have only 1% of land in Howard County in each of B1, B2, M1 and M2. There continues to be a push to place high density residential development. How would you balance the need to retain commercial zoning with the desire for residential development? Are there incentives you would consider to make sure we have enough commercial zoning in the future, as markets change?</p>
<p>Commercial development is critical to expanding the commercial tax base, increasing job attraction and retention, and even improving our environment with shorter commute times. I would consider data driven incentives that have a demonstrated history of working in similar areas to spur redevelopment and revitalization that ensures we have the capacity for commercial zoning available as markets change.</p>
<p>19. How would you expedite or improve the Ellicott City master plan, or other storm water management requirements/recommendations to further protect that area? Do you believe downtown Ellicott City could be made ADA compliant?</p>
<p>Having worked for US Fish and Wildlife, studied environmental policy at UMBC and as a Howard EcoWorks board member, I recognize the critical importance of quality stormwater management. As a councilperson, I would advocate that the stormwater</p>

management fee revenue be used in a way that would expedite the most impactful recommendations that have been made by the county's research.

Continuing to involve the community of residents, business owners, and county employees in the ultimate solutions to control stormwater runoff is imperative to reaching the best possible solution. Sidewalks that are not made of individual bricks would have limited some of the property damage and replacing brick sidewalks with something historically appropriate should be a consideration as well.

ADA requirements are important and even in old buildings, requirements are triggered when buildings are substantially renovated. Federal tax credits exist to assist business owners in ADA renovation costs. ADA compliance is a goal to work toward as historic Ellicott City evolves and I support these efforts

20. Describe positions you have taken, or votes you have made which you feel are the most important with regard to the Council position. Describe how you championed these causes or how you publicized your position. Include information about any votes or positions you have made that you regret, or about which you feel differently.

The ability to build coalitions of support and find common ground through opposing viewpoints has been at the heart of my professional and community work.

Over the years I have advocated and organized around many issues - including but not limited to development (most recently - downtown columbia, affordable housing, APFO Downtown Columbia TIF, Laurel TIF, Patuxent Branch Trail etc), improved stormwater management, public health initiatives (increased walkability and community health models), electing our board of education by district, a higher emphasis on community oriented policing, support for our first responders, and campaign finance reform.

I stand by the positions I've taken in the best interest of our community and I'm equally proud of the work I've done to make Kings Contrivance a more walkable community, creating safe opportunities to walk to and from school, pushing for expedited renovations for Hammond High, advocating and informing community members about county issues, and working towards transparent and open processes.

I am ready to enact policies that support a fully funded education budget, safe and inclusive neighborhoods, and drive the many facets of the development process to become one that is truly community focused.

21. How much time do you think should pass before an elected official, according to Ethics Laws/Regulations, can be compensated by a private company that could have benefited from the decisions of the official?

This is a particular concern when it comes to development projects, in my opinion 7- 10 years is a reasonable time frame to elapse.

By Authority, The People's Voice PAC, Lisa Markovitz, Treasurer

The People's Voice, LLC

Ethics Ballot TM

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Supplemental Question sent after filing of new Mulching Bill, Answers due Wed. April 11.
Please state your views about CB21 (Mulching Bill) below.

By Authority, The People's Voice PAC, Lisa Markovitz, Treasurer