

Precinct 4 Town Meeting Candidates

Eight to be elected for 3 years, fourteen on the ballot

One to be elected for 1 year, three on the ballot (S. Fagerstrom, C. Furlong, and S. Bonnell)

One to be elected for 2 years, two on the ballot (K. Valone and P. Karle)

If no candidate profile is shown, the candidate did not submit a profile.

(* indicates incumbent)

Eric DiMare

Eric.DiMare@outlook.com

Community Activities:

Locally you can find me downtown on a Saturday inspecting, repairing, and refueling our wonderful town members vehicles.

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

Sound fiscal policy, everything else is secondary. We cannot keep spending money and in turn drive out elder town members who provide a lot to the community.

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

As previously stated, sound fiscal policy is my priority. I come from the aerospace world where every decision we make involves thorough financial planning. As a younger resident with a newborn, we need to focus 20-25 years out, not 5 years out. We need to do what is write for our neighbors and their children.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

Winchester is the best town in the country when it comes to being close knit community that comes together for one another. However, Winchester needs to adapt to modern fiscal practices for residents and businesses and focus on the future of the town.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

This truly is a \$6,000,000 question. On one hand I think Winchester should have the best academic facilities in the state. On the other hand, I come from an industry where SpaceX is being run by the world's richest man from a trailer in Texas and wonder why we might need another ivory tower. This is a complex decision that requires significant analysis, justification by the administrators, and input from the various development professionals who live in town (and those that have offices downtown) before this quickly becomes an \$8-10 million project.

Gerard Marino

James A. Ferguson*

jim@jimferg.com

Community Activities

Town Meeting Member
Member of Rules committee.
Youth sports coach.
Fifteen-year resident.

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

Addressing the 40B real estate development issue, and making sure Winchester's resources are not overtaxed (pun intended). Maintaining a quality school district, including rebuilding schools when needed. Using our collective political strength to combat any temporary economic trends that may lower our real estate values. Make sure our town employees have the resources to keep our parks, streets, and shared spaces safe, clean and beautiful.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

I'm so appreciative of our Town employees. I believe they do great work for us.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

Before we agree to do that, I would like to hear about using the Mystic school as a possible site of school expansion.

Miroslav Predny

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

- Fiscal Responsibility & Management of Town Operations
- Support for our school system and adherence to Smart growth policy
- Transparency and Better Resident's Awareness about Town Select Board agenda

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

- Fiscal Responsibility with Better Planning & Management of Town Operations comes first
- As a longtime resident I care deeply about the future of our Town, the retention of its core values and character
- I would like to play a positive role and help the Town meeting to make decisions needed for Winchester to remain affordable to all homeowners

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

- Winchester invested heavily into school infrastructure and it offers a nice mix of educational facilities and recreational sport areas. The Town center preserved its green areas, character and charm, it appeals to all age groups.
- Encourage economic development in downtown business; Preservation of parking areas
- Promotion of Fiscal Discipline

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

No. \$5.9 Million to reconstruct the Carriage House for 18 school administrators (\$328,000 per person) is excessive. A less costly solution should be found.

Roger D. Marian*

Horacio G. Facca

hfacca@yahoo.com

LinkedIn Profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/horaciofacca/>

Please list your Community Activities:

- Italian-American and German-American family resident in Winchester since June 2010. Married to Simone and dad of Christina and Lukas (8-year-old twins).
- Involved in numerous children's activities such as boys/girls' soccer (including Winchester Soccer and SFC), tennis, languages and music.
- Parishioner at St. Mary's Catholic Church.
- Often work with Boards of Directors, Board of Management and/or Boards of Trustees as part of my profession and/or in volunteer roles, e.g., former Board Member of Silver Creek Valley Association in Northern California, former Board of Trustee Member and Chair of both the Advancement and Finance Committees of the German International School Boston (where I remain a volunteer). Former Finance Committee Member at another well-known private school in Massachusetts (additional volunteer role).
- Spearheaded petition to add "children at play" street signs in parts of Precinct 4 where sidewalks are absent, and families are concerned about their kids' overall safety.

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

- Preparedness with regards to future pandemics. Albeit this is a global, federal and state matter, much of our readiness can happen at town level.
- Maintaining overall public safety and order, ensuring the continued attractiveness of our town in terms of desirable community to live in and where to raise a family. · Investing in education, including sports, music and cultural activities. · Augmenting inclusiveness and diversity in the broader sense, which also includes attention towards our own seniors and citizens with special needs.
- Historic preservation and other important investments in our present and future. · For all the above we need commensurate resources, including a thoughtful tax base, innovative fund-raising, and alternative financings, amongst others. Also, we need judicious assessment of how to deploy our resources, balancing short-term needs with long-term strategic objectives.

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

By means of background, I work hard to have a holistic perspective while being thoughtful, reasonable and fair in everything I do. I am an electrical engineer and an economist by educational training (valedictorian in both) and hold an MBA from Harvard Business School.

One of my passions in life is youth education, culture and sports. Beyond that, I am also passionate about sound, fact-based decision-making that takes into account the needs of all constituents and that makes financial sense along the way too. One of my goals as a candidate for the Town Meeting (Precinct 4) is precisely that, i.e., to bring into the forefront of our decisions their financial consequences, always with exemplary inclusion, transparency and accountability.

Within our family, we believe in educating our children to be exemplary world citizens. Our roles as parents (in unison with educators), among others, are to teach and educate while, at the same time, providing opportunities for our children to flourish into wonderful people and to pursue their personal and professional dreams. In our view, education, culture and sports have a major role in both the intellectual and social development of our children and thus of our citizens, and that on one hand begins in Winchester, but on the other hand it transcends it too, hence its paramount importance and focus.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

Winchester is a wonderful, very special town. Among others, Winchester has enjoyed formidable public safety and its schools have been highly ranked over the years too. Many people ranging from public officials and public servants to volunteers worked extremely hard in consistently achieving those results over the years and all that has made Winchester an attractive town to raise a family and a sound place where to buy real-estate too. Our job is to build upon all the previous good-work and augment it in terms of making the town even more attractive and special going forward.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

In principle, I am supportive of initiatives that enhance our children's upbringing in terms of education, culture, and sports and help them be better citizens and more competitive professionals into the future. In that context, if having a stand-alone administrative building for Winchester Public Schools is conducive to better education and culture, then, conceptually speaking, I am indeed very intrigued by the proposal.

The fact that the Carriage House is both of historical importance and of architectural (Beaux-Arts style) significance further captivates my interest in learning more about the various options we have. In my view, historic preservation provides a link to the roots of our own community and our own people and adds to our own quality of life by making for a more livable community. There are economic, cultural, environmental, and educational benefits of historic preservation, all of which are interconnected to one another and are interconnected to the living memory of Winchester.

All that said, the key for any such proposals is always on the details, including the proposed budgets, associated schedules and all the related metrics of success vis-à-vis other competing alternatives.

Ole-Petter Hamnvik

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Please list your Community Activities:

- *Norwegian-American resident in Winchester since 2014 with husband Kevin and two boys, Silas age 2.5 and Jasper age 7 years.
- *Involved in a variety of activities with my children. Previous attendee at Children's Own School, currently at Creative Corner School and Winchester Public Schools (Lincoln). Involved in soccer team, gymnastics.
- *Active member of Winchester Neighbor's Club, Family Action Network.
- *Founding member of local LGBT social group.

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

- *Navigating the pandemic – hopefully primarily a transition towards a new normal, but also being prepared for further waves. While this is a national and international issue, the impact of decisions made locally is great.
- *Creating affordable housing. With little space to spare, thoughtfully developing new housing – especially near transport hubs such as our train stations – will be important to ensure that we have affordable housing options that are developed on our terms.
- *Maintaining the quality of our schools. Key issues include updating the curricula when needed, and ensuring retention of our talented and dedicated teachers and other staff.
- *Supporting business developments to increase tax base. Investments in our schools and other local projects are limited by a reliance primarily on residential tax, which is adding to the high cost of living in Winchester. Attracting businesses to our town will help spread out the tax burden.

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

I am most passionate about ensuring the quality of our schools. This is a major draw of Winchester, and the quality of our schools is something to be proud of! With that being said, it is important not to rest on our laurels. Specifically, I would highlight the need to review the current early literacy curriculum. Grave concerns have been raised about the curriculum used in Winchester and the early identification of learners with dyslexia. I would like to see these carefully reviewed by the WPS administrative team and the School Committee.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

Winchester has created a safe space for families to raise their children, with safe streets, low crime, outdoor space including the Middlesex Fells, and plenty of organized family friendly activities. In brief, it is a great place to raise a family. However, there is plenty of room to improve on our racial and socioeconomic diversity. The lack of diversity is probably one reason underlying unfortunate events such as the theft of the Pride and Black Lives Matter flags from the Town Common, and the theft and vandalism at the Winchester Unitarian Society. There are groups that are working hard to address these issues, but working for policies that will increase the diversity in town, such as affordable housing, will be an important tool to mitigate this.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

The Carriage House is a historically important building, but is currently not usable due to its state of disrepair. To develop the building into administrative space for WPS would allow more suitable space for WPS, preservation of the building, and freeing up of the current administrative space. Therefore, I would support the proposal in principle, assuming that it is thoughtfully developed to limit cost and added tax burden.

Robin A. Wolf*

Email address: robin.ann.wolf@gmail.com

Community Activities:

Former Steering Committee/Treasurer, League of Women Voters of Winchester
Former Treasurer, Lincoln School Parent Association and Winchester High School PFA
Former Co-President, McCall Parent Association
Town Meeting member since 2007

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

1. Managing our budget given our reliance on property taxes and the need to keep Winchester affordable for all its residents while maintaining the quality of our schools and services.
2. Restoring civility and collegiality to civic discussion and improving communication between Town boards/departments and residents.
3. Rebuilding/renovating Lynch Elementary School.

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

Definitely Lynch, which was not designed to serve the needs of elementary school students (having been originally a middle school) and has longstanding issues with its physical plant. These issues must be addressed with the support of the MSBA. While this issue does not affect most Precinct 4 residents, I believe it is important for the sake of equity to have quality school buildings in every neighborhood.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved? Our schools are highly rated and continue to draw new residents to our Town. Our Town employees are dedicated and responsive and provide a high level of service even given our budget limitations. Our residents strongly support our schools, sports teams, and organizations such as EN KA, WFEE, and Wright-Locke Farm. (Wright-Locke is an inspiring example of what can be achieved when residents come together.) For improvements, improving civility in political discourse and better communication between residents and Town government.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House? Not at this time, as I believe other options and costs v. benefits have not been fully explored and converting it to an administrative building may not be the best use.

Shannon Scott-Vernaglia

Community Activities:

Pediatrician, MGH

School parent volunteer

Supporter of WFEE, Wright Locke Farm, Swim Winchester, Historical Society

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

I think moving forward with a new Waterfield project is important. I'm also really committed to the Lynch school project moving forward. The physical and emotional wellbeing of our residents, especially our students, is particularly important to me as a pediatrician.

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

I think we need to move forward decisively and in a timely way on the Waterfield project given the delay. It should benefit all members of our town and be considered holistically, not only from the vantage point of the financial bottom line, although of course that needs to be a large part of the discussion.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

I think our community culture is strong and building it further should be a goal. The last two years of the pandemic have driven more division rather than bringing people together. We need to work to bring our community more and more together which has always been its greatest strength.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

I would have preferred to have the administrative offices be built together with Lynch school but I do not want to delay that project (which would then likely also delay us next working on Muraco). Given that I think the Carriage House is a reasonable choice.

Sean Donlon

Community Activities:

Former Winchester Youth Lacrosse, Baseball & Basketball coach

Former St. Mary's Parish Peace & Social Justice Committee Member

Former St. Mary's Parish Council Member

Winchester Boat Club Member

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

- The most important issues to me are maintaining Winchester's beauty & character that make it so special.
- Education of Winchester's children is highly important to me. My wife and I have three children, which all of them have been schooled in Winchester K-12 (our youngest is currently a freshman at WHS; two children currently in college)
- The maintenance of buildings, grounds, & roadways (infrastructure)

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

Education. This is because my mother was a beloved, special education teacher for many years in the Winchester Public Schools system. The experience of witnessing my own children's education here in Winchester, is a reason to make sure our educational system continues to be one of the best in the state. Having two college students now, we see how they have benefited greatly from their high school education.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

Winchester's Dept. of Public Works does an excellent job in maintaining our facilities, parks, road ways and grounds.

Improvements would be clarity on important voting issues. No hidden agendas, all cards on the table.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

Yes, I support the proposal.

Joseph Zampitella

Michelle Prior*

Community Activities:

Current member of Town Meeting (since 2011)

Current member of the Board of Director of Wright Locke Farm Conservatory (since 2018)

Past:

Chair, Town of Winchester Finance Committee (2013-2014)

Member, Town of Winchester Finance Committee (2010 – 2015)

Member, Town Counsel Search Committee, appointed by the Select Board (2016)

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

Maintaining the current mix of housing types in town and slowing the rate of growth of residential property taxes to enable our seniors to stay in their homes, to remain our neighbors and to support new residents moving in to town. Our ability to remain a town with residents of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, and income types necessitates, and should compel, us to consider the burden that property taxes have on all of our residents, at various income levels.

Declining school enrollment in grades K-5, a trend which started before Covid and continues today, may require layoffs at the elementary schools, or a redistricting of schools to balance out classroom sizes across town.

Looking at a report from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Winchester's enrollment in grades G1-G5 (excluding K since some children attend private Kindergarten), has declined year-over-year from a highwater mark of 1,852 students

(2015/16 school year), to the start of the 2019/20 school year (before Covid hit in March '20) with 1,740 G1-G5 students, and current enrollment of 1,613 G1-G5 students (2021/22 school year). The change is most pronounced at the elementary level with 210 fewer G1-G5 students, however enrollment in the school district is also down over this same time period.

[2021-22 Enrollment by Grade Report \(District\) \(mass.edu\)](#)

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

Maintaining our services (more or less) with the tax base that we have, growing and expanding services when we have sustainable revenues to do so, and making the difficult decisions to delay implementation or expansion of programs and services, if necessary.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

Encourages and make good use of the talents of hundreds of dedicated volunteers. Has strong leadership in key town roles. An area to improve, potentially revisiting zoning by-laws and looking into opportunities for the town to incentivize the creation of accessory dwelling units, or other small housing units, to diversify the type of units available to rent or purchase at various price points.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

I voted No on this article at Fall town meeting and I was in the company of nearly a dozen members of the Finance Committee who also did not support this initiative.

Aimee Burke*

Susan Fagerstrom

Email address: SusanWinchester4@yahoo.com

Community Activities:

Parent to Parent Treasurer and Board Member since 2013
Winchester Garden & Home Club – designed and maintain Ginn Field Garden site
Former Lincoln School PTO Treasurer

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

1. Climate and Protecting our Environment – we have a responsibility to ourselves and to our children to fight climate change locally and to promote sustainability.
2. Schools – supporting a strong school system is beneficial to our children and critical to the value of our housing stock.
3. Financial – as a former financial executive with an MBA and CFA, I believe in maintaining Winchester's financial health by analyzing proposed investments to explore all alternatives to ensure sound financial decisions.

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

Working on mitigating climate change and protecting our environment must be our town's priority as without careful investments in these areas our future, as we know it, is in danger.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

We have one of the most efficient school systems in Massachusetts measured by dollars spent per student; given the high quality of our schools, this is clearly an area our town does well. Winchester should attract and retain more commercial establishments. A vibrant downtown with long-term retail entities benefits all town members by encouraging residents to shop locally. Not only does this give the town more tax revenue, it is also good for the environment for our residents to travel less to shop.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

Although I would have voted yes to study this issue further, I am not yet convinced that all options have been explored and analyzed for their financial effect. I know we need alternative administrative space during the Lynch renovation, but restoring the Carriage House is a long-term, expensive investment. For instance, I would like to know if this restoration could incorporate space that might be rented out to help offset some of this cost. Additionally, I would like to understand further why the Lynch renovation could not incorporate administrative space that might become classrooms should the town need it in the future and then at that time develop separate administrative space. All too often the town has finished a school renovation/build project only to find out that more classroom space is needed; a flexible administrative/classroom space may be more beneficial. The bottom line: I need more data before I vote yes to a stand-alone administrative building by restoring the Carriage House.

Christopher Furlong

Email address: furlong37@gmailcom

Community Activities:

business owner

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

Traffic, overbuilding downtown, affordable housing, road construction.

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

Traffic - have you ever had the pleasure of picking up or dropping off children at the high school or middle school? The dysfunction is but an example of the problem that will escalate over time unless we address it.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

I believe the schools are excellent. The teachers and staff deserve all the praise and support we can give them. As far as what can be improved, my only comment is this: if one were to look at the Winchester residents Facebook page, one would be appalled by the tone some individuals

take toward their fellow neighbors on certain, hot-button (or not) issues. This is not an easy fix but there must be a more personal forum for which to air grievances, concerns, etc that isn't as formal as a town meeting.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

yes

Steven Bonnell

Community Activities

Longtime supporter of Winchester Hospital, Winchester Kids Pan Mass Ride Organizer, Kids Sports Coaching Winchester Sports Foundation, Local Business Owner for over 95 years in the Community

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

As a business owner in town, I would like the Business Community to have a voice in local government. As a lifelong resident I would like to make sure the town maintains its core values and character.

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

Representing Local Business's in Local Government

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

Winchester has always done a great job at keeping the School System as a number one priority.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

I am not familiar with this proposed project and would need to be educated on what it's needed for and where the funding would come from.

Katheryn C. Valone

Community Activities:

Since my recent retirement from a full-time job, I have been looking for opportunities to participate in community activities and give back to the town. While my children were in the public school system, I volunteered in school activities (library, reading to and participating in classroom activities. I also assisted coaching soccer and assisted with my daughter's Girl Scout Troop.

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

Quality education, fiscal responsibility in town management with a smart growth policy, transparency and accountability in the decision-making processes for the Select Board, School Committee and other elected boards.

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

I feel it is important to ensure that planning and financial management of the town should be transparent and take into consideration the most fiscally responsible approach to meeting the development needs of the town. To that end, I would use my financial training and experience to carefully evaluate proposals for spending the taxpayer's money, to ensure that taxes and fees are raised at reasonable rates that allow young families hoping to enter the community, and seniors who hope to afford to stay in the community are able to do so.

What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?

Winchester is a vibrant community that maintains its attractive town center. It is "in demand" because of its reputation for the quality of life it offers to families. I am concerned that there have been several override initiatives that are increasing taxes on families and certain Select Board decisions concerning development of properties are not always consistent with the opinions and votes of the community. I also have concerns that certain hiring practices for positions that offer eligibility for participation in the pension program should be limited and carefully evaluated.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

No. Rather than spend \$5.9 million to restore the Carriage House, I believe there are more fiscally responsible alternatives that should be explored, including space within existing schools/town hall that could be reconfigured or used for school administration. Consideration could be given to providing administrative space in the 10 Converse Place mixed use property. Because of the pandemic, many have become more adept at using on-line meeting applications such as Zoom, which can reduce the need to have physical meeting space at the level we have had in the past. This should be factored into any decisions made around creating more space for administrative activities.

Paul Karle

Community Activities:

Winchester Youth Baseball Coach

Winchester Youth Baseball/Softball – Field Maintenance Coordinator Westside Fields

Winchester Youth Baseball/Softball

St. Mary's CYO basketball Coach

Yes for Skilling's Field Committee

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

Education, community engagement, budget

Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?

Education and maintaining focus on core curriculum to achieve best possible matriculation results.

What does Winchester do well?

Winchester provides a safe environment for families to enjoy and has historically performed well educating its students.

What might be improved?

Transparency in town government, opportunities for small businesses.

Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?

I support the need for the administration to have a professionally office space. I think its short cited and not fiscally irresponsible to historically restore a carriage house for this purpose. A more cost-effective approach would be to build out the space in the existing Mystic School or included in the Lynch renovation project while not adding an additional building asset for the town to maintain.