

Election 2007: Parma town council

Nick Coffee
Parma Town Council



Office sought: Town of Parma Member of Council (4) Years. Endorsements: Democratic Party, Independence Party

Pertinent information: Nick Coffee, 309 Cedar Terrace, Hilton, 25. Parents Sonya & Ignatius LaDelfa, sisters Jamie and Cindy; Katie Hull, fiancee. Community involvement: volunteered with the Salvation Army in Red Kettle campaigns last 4 years. Worked with Rotary in many of their fund raisers at the LPGA, as well as with their service to Camp Haccamo. Worked for a year with the Partnership for Community Development as a teacher training those in need in Computer skills so that they could gain favorable employment. Donate platelets and plasma through the American Red Cross's Apheresis program.

Gary Comardo
Parma Town Council



Office sought: I am seeking election to the Parma Town Council. I have been endorsed by the Republican and Conservative parties.

Pertinent information: Gary L. Comardo, 195 Huffer Rd., Hilton, 55. I am a quality technician at Carestream Health. Before Carestream Health I worked at Eastman Kodak for 34 years. Graduate of Bishop Kearney High School and have earned American Society for Quality certifications in Management, Engineering, Auditing and Technology. My wife, Linda and I have been married for 32 years; two sons. We have lived in Parma at 195 Huffer Rd for 26 years. Recently completed 11 years service with the board of education of the Hilton Central School District; retired as vice president of that board. Continue to be involved with the school district as a community volunteer on the District Improvement Team.

Joseph Reinschmidt
Parma Town Council



Office sought: Parma Town Council, 4 year term. Endorsement Democrat.

James Smith
Parma Town Council



Office: Parma Town Council; Republican, Conservative, and Independence Party endorsements, Served on board 2 years; seeking re-election to a 4 year term.

Pertinent information: James Smith, 254 North Avenue, 54, a graduate of Hilton High School 1971, received an Associate Science Degree from Monroe Community College 1973, and a BS in Civil Engineering from the University at Buffalo 1976.

I have worked for Ashland Water Technologies' Drew Industrial Division 28+ years; my wife Jeanette and I have 3 grown boys. I was a member of the Parma Planning Board for over 12 years. I chaired Parma's Recycling Committee, and was a youth sports coach.

Issues of importance to Parma

Parma is facing many important changes in the years to come. Urban sprawl continues throughout Monroe County and show no sign of slowing. Parma is growing, a fact that is painfully clear to residents.... A new policy of sustainable development in Parma will lead to a reduction in many of the nightmares many of the homeowners in our area have seen. Whether it be the diversion of drainage leading to a flood in a homeowners back yard, or a new development causing an influx of new traffic and dangers to the existing residents, the town council has been alarmingly indifferent to the effects of the developments that they approve. Parma needs new policies promoting sustainable land development to protect our residents and property owners.

Communication with the citizens by the government of Parma is painfully lacking. For most residents the only time that they hear anything at all from the town council is when they receive the legally required notices of public hearings. Those who respond to these notices by attending town meetings are frequently greeted by indifference often bordering on disdain. Public forums should be embraced as an opportunity to seek out both the advice and consent of the public, not as a nuisance that's to be dispensed with.

Issues of primary importance in Parma

The two most important issues facing our town are holding the line on taxes and enhancing the quality of life for our residents.

Taxes - For a number of years Parma has had a well deserved reputation as a fiscally conservative town. As pressure has increased from factors such as spiraling health care costs the debate on the town council on the issue of taxes has intensified. I wish to join those board members who are committed to holding the line. Raising taxes is the easy answer to today's financial challenges. I will bring energy and a fresh perspective to the search for innovative solutions to our financial issues.

Quality of life - The people of our town have clearly expressed their wish to maintain existing open space. The effort to maintain the rural character of the community is well begun through the work of the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Committee but it will take a sustained effort on the part of the town council to ensure success. I am committed to achieving success in the preservation of open space in our town.

Pertinent information: Joseph A. Reischmidt, 336 Ogden Parma Town Line Road. Education: St. John's Elementary, Aquinas Institute, Alfred State Tech, AAS in construction technology. Married 42 years to Heide; three children, 4 grandchildren. Employment: 5 years in general building construction, primarily carpentry and masonry, 3 years as drainage technician Monroe County Planning Department, 10 years at Larsen Engineers. Licensed as a Land Surveyor by New York State Education Department in 1972. Incumbent town councilman, served since 2001. Appointed to Parma Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals in 1966, appointed chairman of both boards in 1970. Appointed in 1977 to full time position with Parma with responsibility for Building Permits, Planning and Zoning administration, Town Hall maintenance, Park development and maintenance, assisting Highway Department with drainage easements and improvements etc. Various church activities Parish Council, Traditional Choir. Currently assisting wife Heide with various Kiwanis projects.

Two issues of primary importance in Parma:

Improvements to the Highway Department and growth/open space. We have a very dedicated and active committee addressing the latter and I will listen very carefully to the programs they will be recommending to the Town Board. Our Highway Department today has the same or perhaps less employees than it had in 1977. This despite the fact that our population has grown, new streets and utilities have been added and new responsibilities acquired such as storm and sanitary sewer and drainage easement maintenance. Over the years there have, for the most part been cuts in the amount of town tax dollars that are allocated to the Highway Department. As in most towns it is the oldest department and like senior citizens, it should not be ignored. We need to develop a plan to improve the equipment and staffing. It is, after all, the one department we absolutely need to keep us all on the road.

Issues of primary importance in Parma

Preserving Farm Land and Open Space, I believe that this is an important issue to most of Parma's residents. I grew up farming and appreciate how difficult it can be. The town has had a long standing policy of encouraging farming. The town board formed a committee last year that is developing a Farm Land Preservation and Open Space Plan. This plan will be the corner stone of how we protect open space for future generations. I believe that by maintaining Parma's rural character we enhance the value of existing homes.

Keeping Parma Property Taxes as low as possible. This continues to be a difficult challenge especially due to the ever rising cost of health care for town employees. The Town Board needs to constantly be looking for ways to make Parma Town government more efficient such as sharing equipment and facilities with others. Last year I made recommendations to reduce the cost of some non essential services which allowed a budget to be passed with a zero percent property tax increase. Parma is debt free and my goal is to keep it that way.

Why are you seeking election?

While it is a lot of work, I enjoy being on the Parma Town Board and that's why I am seeking re-election. There are many challenges ahead and I feel I can have a positive impact. Now that I have two years of experience I see so much more that I would like to accomplish. I first got into Parma politics due to my concern over houses being planted on what used to be farm land. I want to continue to work with the Open Space Committee to develop realistic ways to preserve farm land in Parma as well as areas for smart development.

What I wish I had been asked

How do you feel about the proposed community center?

My feelings on the community center are mixed. The first and most important assessment to make is one of cost / reward. Many of the citizens I spoke to have voiced reservations over the costs of this project and whether we really require a new community center at a cost of nearly \$16 million (more than a thousand dollars per citizen). Citizens are completely unaware that a new community center is proposed highlighting once again the council's desire to keep the taxpayers out of the loop. However in this case the tax payers aren't the only ones being kept in the dark. Both the library board and the Village of Hilton have removed their support for the project, a move that in the future will leave Parma with a hopelessly outdated and undersized library or with another separate building at a huge cost to the taxpayers. Whatever the best solution is, two heads are better than one and 15,000+ heads are better than 5 so I will work to make sure that our taxpayers have their chance to voice their concerns and support.

What I wish I had been asked

What has attracted you to public service?

I first got involved in public service through the school district. I felt I had a perspective on the issues that would benefit the district and the community. I think I brought some valuable ideas to the table but I also learned a great deal listening to others' point of view. There are many people in our community who engage in public service through the scouts, youth sports, fire, police and ambulance services, the schools, and many other venues. I think each of them would say they had been well rewarded for their time and effort by the opportunity to learn and grow.

Reasons for seeking election:

Simply put I desire to be of service to all the people of Parma as we progress. I believe my life long residence and experience provide a good basis to understand the needs and how to address them. I desire that town government be very open to the residents and issues receive more public discussion/debate by the board before they are acted on. The zero increase in the town tax rate is likely impossible to sustain indefinitely unless we cut more Highway Department employees. Costs to the town for virtually everything we need or use go up, such as health insurance. There are also many other factors such as increased assessments, fire and school district tax rate increases, "special" county fees or charge backs that will result in a higher bottom line on your tax bill despite all efforts by the town board.

What I wish you had asked

The obvious in my case is: Why did you change political parties? That was a difficult decision and not done hastily. There are reasons which I would be happy to sit down and discuss with anyone who has a sincere interest. Call me at 352-4956 to set a time to get together.

What I wish you had asked

Why is developing a long range plan for each Town Department important?

Parma continues to grow and with that a need for more services. Developing 5 and 10 year plans will help us better prepare for these needs and other changes that are ahead. This will improve our ability to provide these services at a practical cost.