



**VOTE!
TUESDAY
NOV 4TH**

Cathy

WAUCZINSKI

PRECINCT 5
CITY COUNCIL



Who I Am:

I have lived in Easthampton for over thirty years. I met my husband (who was raised in Easthampton) on a blind date at the 8 Ball Lounge, and we were married and raised our daughter here. I coached her soccer team, was her Girl Scout leader, and helped manage other youth programs she was in. My first job as an adult was working in a glass factory, and I later worked in group homes for adults with developmental disabilities here in town. I have thirty-six years' experience in human services, serving elders, and working with transition-age adults and children with disabilities. In the past I have:

- Worked with families and individuals to identify their current needs and assisted them with accessing support.
- Advocated for individuals in the following areas: educational, medical, transition and Turning 22, vocational, housing, health insurance, public entitlements, elder services, health care, vocational, and legislative. Gave both written and in-person testimony to state legislature.
- Collaborated with local agencies to develop supports for families and individuals to remain in the community or to return to community living from nursing facilities.
- Trained in critical incident management, psychological first aid, and post-traumatic stress management through membership with a trauma response team. Responded to Monson following the tornado and helped groups/individuals manage grief in the immediate aftermath of a tragedy.
- Provided care for a family member who had dementia and coordinated over 100 hours per week of services while working full time for seven years. Provided care and was a medical advocate for a family member receiving cancer treatment and later in hospice care.
- Helped people access and manage public benefits and entitlements (including SSI, SNAP, housing, MassHealth, services from DDS, MRC, DMH and Department of Elder Affairs)
- Fundraised and written grants, both professionally and as a volunteer, including managing an endowment for a local youth team.
- Developed and managed budgets.

Platform & Priorities

- **Issue 1: Accountability and Transparency**

Elected officials and paid city employees are accountable to the current residents and future generations. Deliberation and decisions need to be made within that framework. To be accountable transparency is required. Transparency is not possible if a public records request costs \$53951.88 That does not meet the reasonable standard. What are they trying to hide?

In May 2023, my friends and I created Easthampton Active Citizens. We had been more heavily engaged in advocacy at the city level and discovered it was difficult to find information. Due to this frustration citizens were less engaged. Easthampton Active Citizens was formed to promote local civic engagement regardless of party. Our focus has been sharing information about Easthampton City Government operations and increasing the engagement of citizens in the process of governing. To further that mission I also started holding monthly Coffee Chats and Pizza and Politics. Prior to the election on November 4th, I will hold Precinct 5-specific events that I will continue after I am elected.

- **Issue 2: Fiscal Responsibility and Affordability**

Spending of city funds should be determined primarily by the health and safety of citizens and the efficiency of the infrastructure (such as roads, water, sewer, fire department, and police). Fiscal decisions need to be weighed by what is necessary and how it will impact the fiscal stability of the citizens now and in the future. Previous generations have worked in the local factories and been able to buy a home in the Plains. Now some of our residents are unable to hold onto those homes because of the ever-increasing expenses. Many people working in the remaining factories would find purchasing a home in the Plains out of their reach. Affordability needs to be addressed on many levels. We are stewards of the public trust and managing funds as a limited resource is part of that trust. The tough questions need to be answered: Why have prices skyrocketed for homeownership and rents? What is the city spending money on that is not necessary given limited resources? What steps can be taken as elected officials to ensure that our city remains affordable for those who have built this amazing community? These are complex questions with solutions needing to come from local municipalities, state level legislative/policy changes and federal legislative/policy changes. I will work with local residents to identify areas we can change locally, and advocate for change at the state and federal level.

- **Issue 3: Preserving our Community and its Resources**

My responsibility as a City Councilor is to the Citizens that live in our community. City Councilors need to take that role seriously and approach each meeting, every decision and constituent contact as a solemn opportunity to preserve this community that we cherish. When I say preserve our community I am speaking of layers of preservation. We have a semi-rural city that still retains some agricultural roots. Agricultural resources need to be protected and fostered. We know that the closer the source of our food is to our community, the better it is for the environment and the healthier it is for us. The previous administration expended a great deal of energy, city resources, and tax payer funds (both CPA and grant funds) on development projects, some of which are amazing and others that have squandered what is rated as prime farmland, place a heavy burden on the city resources, urbanizes our community and places our natural resources at risk. I have lived in and supported individuals to access a variety of housing options including low-income high-density housing, as such I am familiar with the positives and the many challenges of congregate housing. There are changes being proposed to our zoning regulations that would allow for doubling the density in some residential areas and allowing more multiple story buildings (3 or more stories in our downtown area.) Preserving means protecting our aquifer (our sole water source), protecting farmland and natural resources and protecting our small semi-rural community from urbanization.