

## 2019 Montgomery Township Committee Reorganization Remarks

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER ED TRZASKA**

I would like to thank my family for their continued support as I begin my ninth year on the Township Committee. As always, I couldn't do it without them. Our daughter, Maddi, will turn seven next month. She helps me stay focused on why we are serving and the importance of protecting the long-term quality of life in Montgomery.

I would like to welcome Marvin and Catherine to the team and congratulate Sadaf on becoming mayor for the first time. It's always exciting to welcome new leadership to the Township Committee. As the senior member of the team, I hope I can be a valuable resource and a good partner throughout the year.

In 2019, I look forward to focusing on the issues that I am truly passionate about – open space, roads and infrastructure, our police department, and of course, our parks. There are many other important issues to deal with, but these represent the foundation of our remarkable community and deserve our attention.

While reorganization meetings are normally about looking forward, I need to spend a few minutes recognizing the past 9 years and my former team members that made our accomplishments possible – Mark Caliguire, Kacey Dyer, Chris Sugden, Rich Smith, Mark Conforti, Patricia Graham, and Christine Madrid.

During this time, we accomplished a lot for Montgomery:

- Stabilized our finances after the nation's economic crisis, held the line on budget spending, reduced township debt, and implemented a multi-year plan that gets us to zero tax increase budgets starting as early as next year
- Preserved almost 900 acres of new open space, including saving Skillman Park from development and just recently preserving the iconic Matthews Farm
- Transitioned the police department to an entirely new leadership team, hired the next generation of cadets and young officers, and increased funding for training, personnel development, and equipment

- Invested more than \$10 million in our roads and sidewalks. This summer, we will complete our 5-year initiative to repave all of the primary roads in town and also continue to aggressively improve our residential neighborhoods.
- Completed the Parks Improvement Initiative – every park in Montgomery has been significantly upgraded, including the replacement of 5 playgrounds, and the reconstruction of 10 tennis courts
- Developed and gained court approval of a COAH housing plan that protects our town until 2025 for only a fraction of the 1000+ housing unit mandate the state was trying to force upon us. We agreed to less than 300 units with only 70 units being brand new approvals.
- Implemented an innovative energy aggregation plan that saved residents over \$3 million in electricity costs. Montgomery was the 2<sup>nd</sup> town in the state to do so, right after Plumstead.
- Established an online video system where residents can watch meetings live or archived in a user-friendly format. We also started broadcasting on Comcast channel 29 and created the “Meet the Mayor” series of town hall meetings and conducted 46 such events since 2013
- Helped design and approved the Montgomery Promenade and Village Walk complexes to create walkable downtown retail experiences for our residents. Whole Foods, L.L. Bean, Starbucks, Panera, Alamo Drafthouse Cinemas, and many others have already signed on to come to our town.
- Finalized plans for the new Municipal Building and Library to provide our community a central public gathering space and much needed new resources. There is also land for Montgomery EMS to use for their new headquarters. Financing for the project was meticulously planned for years and when the new complex opens, we are projected to have a zero tax increase budget.

These are just the broad brush strokes of the past 9 years and the work that was completed. We never lost sight of the big picture and the fact that we were building the future Montgomery for generations to come.

This is an exciting time for our town and 2019 is going to be a great year. I am confident that our new leadership will work hard to make our community an even better place to live and as always, I am proud to be part of the team.