

Hunter Mill District Supervisor Candidate: Shyamali Hauth

NAACP Candidate Questionnaire

1. Will you support the renaming Robert E. Lee High School? (For School Board candidates “support” means voting to change the name?)

Yes, I fully support changing the name of the high school. We should not pay homage to confederate soldiers and white supremacy through something as honorable as a high school name.

2. What is your opinion of the current AAP program?

I would like to see us encourage all children to reach their full potential. The AAP program as it is currently run, is failing to do so. It was established shortly after desegregation in Virginia and the system reflects a bias that we must address. We know that early childhood education is a great equalizer when it comes to long term positive performance. We also know that many people of color (especially African-American and Hispanic families) lack access to Pre-K programs due to its high cost, which creates an impediment to equity in education. So children, who under the right nurturance would easily have qualified for AAP programs, do not. In addition, if you look at demographics countywide and then at TJHSS you will notice a huge disparity. Former students from TJ have written letters stating the lack of diversity in their high school was detrimental to their long term success. This is something that needs to be re-examined because this is not equitable and hurts people of color and the poor disproportionately. The lack of diversity that the students experience hurts them in the future.

3. Do you support the use of police body worn cameras? (For Supervisor candidates “support” means voting to fund use of body worn cameras for all Fairfax police)

Yes, I believe that police officers should be held accountable for their actions and body cameras are a tool to accomplish this. However, there must be regulations in place that ensure they are on and running when there is an engagement.

4. The county has determined a need for new housing to shelter 15,000 new families making less the \$70,000. Because of rising land and construction costs, new units in that price range require some form of public loans or grants. How many of these families should Fairfax County attempt to accommodate and how would you do it? What should happen to those who can find no affordable housing here?

Access to affordable housing is a crisis in our county. Families making less than \$70,000 often spend more than 50% of their income on housing. This leaves little tonoo room for emergency savings or to provide support for family members. These families are often one paycheck or minor medical crisis away from being homeless. Resolving this and providing adequate housing for the most needy must be a priority. Every single family in Fairfax County must have access to

affordable housing. There simply is no excuse for a county with the wealth that exists in Fairfax County to have large numbers of unhoused individuals and families. Though we may never see 100% of the population housed, that should be our goal.

5. Would you support increasing the power of the civilian review panel?

Yes, having a group of civilians holding the police accountable is crucial to a fair system. The civilian review panel should have some level of authority to take on cases with or without a formal complaint. Additionally, a greater capacity to affect change through the review panel would be welcome.

6. What do you believe county should do to address the overcrowding in schools?

There are several ways to combat overcrowding in schools: new construction, creative classrooms (outdoor and office space usage), and even redistricting. While new construction should definitely be in FCPS' long term plans, I believe we must also get creative with our schools. Many options exist - using old office building in urban environments, creating outdoor learning spaces, and using county space when needed. For example, if a school needs a theater for after school activities, they should be able to have access to a local community theatre.

7. Many jurisdictions have stopped prosecuting possession of marijuana, do you believe Fairfax County should adopt a similar policy?

Yes, for far too long policies regarding marijuana have disproportionately affected people of color. We must begin to rectify this by ensuring that our Commonwealth's Attorney does not prosecute petty possession charges in our County. Moving further - anyone who has been charged and found guilty of marijuana possession should have their record expunged and the Commonwealth should begin working toward legalization.

8. Many jurisdictions are ending the use of cash bail, what is your position on this issue?

Absolutely, cash bail is another policy that disproportionately affects the poor and people of color. It allows people with money to buy their freedom while others cannot afford to pay for their freedom.

9. Do you believe that Amazon moving to the area will have a negative impact on Fairfax County? If so, please explain what should be done. If not, please explain.

Amazon's arrival in Northern Virginia has the potential for both harm and good. While we may see improvements in our mass transit system, there is no doubt that Amazon's arrival will have a negative impact on impoverished communities through gentrification and further exacerbating our affordable housing crisis. Although the employees of Amazon will spend their money in the community and generate income for the County, its arrival will be a blow to many small

businesses. That being said, Fairfax County must work to ensure Amazon understand its obligation to the community. We must also ask them to put in writing what they will do to ensure affordable housing is available for all.

10. What is the most important policy the County can promote or adopt to live up to the One Fairfax resolution?

One of the biggest gaps in equity is education, therefore I believe that the most important step we must take to live up to the One Fairfax policy would be to provide universal access to early childhood education. Currently, low income families cannot afford early childhood education which leads to children starting kindergarten years behind their peers developmentally. Many of these students are unable to read, count, and sometimes may not even speak English. This early inequity becomes more evident when we test children in 2nd grade for acceptance into the AAP programs. By providing families with community based, accessible, inclusive, and free early childhood education, we can begin leveling the playing field to ensure equity in our school system and beyond. There are many other ways we can bring the One Fairfax policy to fruition including ensuring everyone is housing and food secure, increasing affordable housing options, ensuring equity in wages, engaging all citizens in community building, and exacting policies in law enforcement that decrease the targeting of minority groups.

11. When the Housing and Community Development office opened its housing choice voucher waiting list this winter, 12,000 people applied and 2,000 were chosen by lottery to be on a wait list of about 2 years. What should be done to assist the other 10,000 very low-income people who applied to the list?

We need creative as well as established solutions to the affordable housing problem. Let's make it easier for office space to be converted into housing for a restricted period of time while we work through the backlog. A small tax increase of 1 to 2 cents towards creating affordable housing is also something worth considering.

12. A new survey shows there are 9,500 market rate housing units affordable to families making less than \$70K in Fairfax County. As land values rise driving rents up and many of these older units are turned into townhouses, we are in danger of losing affordable housing. The county policy is that there should be "no net loss, if possible" of affordable housing. What does "if possible" mean to you? To the county?

The "if possible" clause seems to be a way to remove our responsibility to maintain affordable housing units and it should, therefore, be removed. If that cannot be done, we should explore a mechanism that would hold all agencies involved accountable to ensure we have "no net loss" of affordable housing.