



**Delaware County Council Candidate Interview  
John McBlain and Colleen Morrone**

**1. Why are you running as a candidate for the Delaware County Council?**

John: I currently serve as solicitor for the county. This is an opportunity for me to move from one spot at the table to another. I have represented a number of municipalities as solicitor, and I am looking for a new challenge.

Colleen: I have been on the Board of Supervisors. I am on the board of Supervisors in Concord. We wanted to be active in being a participant in the community. We wanted to be active in making the township what it is today. We are the fourth fastest growing municipality in Pennsylvania. I have been participating in making it a place where people want to live work and play. Also, because of my work with the Good Will of Delaware Valley, I believe that I can bring some practical business experience to the table.

**2. What are the most pressing issues facing the county and what are your plans to address them?**

John: From a county government standpoint, it's about how do we still provide the same level of service with less money. Our Fair Acres geriatric center is something to be proud of, but with the change in how funds are given to the county we are now losing dollars. A few years ago we were turning a profit. We face that in many of the social service areas that we provide. Many of the dollars pass through the county from the state and federal government. Many of those services are still mandated with less money. More and more our businesses look to our county government to be leaders to coordinate state government programs, redevelopment projects, and grants. We need to try to lead our government out of some of those problems.

Colleen: We have been running on the platform of financial and fiscal responsibility, economic development and jobs and creating opportunities. That last one fits well into my back ground. We need to make Delco a place where people live and work. People want convenient retail shopping and other amenities.

**3. In terms of the 2012 county budget, how should the County Council address the issue of falling revenue and increased demand for services caused by the slow economy?**

John: We have a commitment to keeping taxes low. We voted on 33 separate municipal budgets on 25 of those were keeping taxes at the same level or tax decreases. We did a retirement incentive program. We have consolidated positions in some places. We have been able to do some creative things to save money. We still need to provide services, and make government better. We need to modernize the courthouse. We want to be leaders. We need to cut down on the number of trips to the courthouse.



Colleen: We need to be more efficient and manage the resources that we have with the dollars that we have.

**4. Would you support property tax reform in Pennsylvania that gives greater authority to the commonwealth to mandate more regular county-wide tax assessments?**

John: I would support a state effort to come up with a uniform reassessment. We need the legislation to set down rules and regulations about uniform reassessments. Governments are seeking the same thing that the Realtors are seeking and that is stability. We need predictability and a uniform rule across the state. There has to be a computer model that allows us to make these assessments more regular. That affects wild swings in real estate tax increases. Assessment appeals are something that people are doing fairly, but that result in a drop in revenue for school districts and local governments.

Colleen: In Concord, one of the things that we have been facing is a large senior population, and their number one concern for them is the amount of taxes that they are paying.

**5. REALTORS® are very knowledgeable about their communities and the real estate industry. As a member of the Council, how would you utilize this expertise? Would you consider appointing individuals recommended by our organization to real estate related boards and commissions at the county level?**

John: I agree that Realtors are involved our community. I would be appropriate to have representation on committees and boards where that type of expertise would be needed, such as the Board of Assessment Appeals or our economic development agencies. It is important to have people serving who have a sense of what is going on in the community.

Colleen: We need to have realtors involved in the county level and the local level. That involvement on the county level is critical as well.

**6. Access to accurate real estate records is an important issue for our REALTOR® members. Would you support funding to the Recorder of Deeds and Assessment offices to ensure availability and accuracy of this information?**

John: Yes. That's another area where we have come a long way. We are not there yet. There are more technological issues. Putting deeds and mortgage records online could be more efficient. Funding is always a question. The easier we can make it and the fewer trips to the courthouse the better. Tom Judge, our current Recorder of Deeds, has been very active in terms of technology. Digitizing records has been a priority. It's good government and good politics for us.

Colleen: Accuracy is important, too. We need to make sure that the information recorded is correct. In this area technology is extremely critical to this process



**7. Suburban Philadelphia is currently one of the fastest growing regions in Pennsylvania, how do you plan to manage projected population shifts at the county level? How does housing fit into this plan?**

John: I work in the Eastern part of the county. One of the major issues is how do we work with those communities there. How do we deal with aging infrastructure? How do we revive the real estate market?

Colleen: We have seen growth from 10,000 to 17,000 over ten years. We have been very proactive in making it commercial where it needs to be commercial and residential where it needs to be residential. Open space became a big issue for us. We put it out to the residents through referendum. In our current budget 28% of revenue goes to open space, 32% goes to general revenue, and 12% goes to library. We've had to address traffic issues. We have had to balance very gently...public safety has been something that we have put an emphasis on...making our residents the eyes and ears of the community.

**8. Have you been endorsed by any political party or organization?**

Republican Party. There should be additional announcements from groups in the coming weeks.

**9. Why should a REALTOR® vote for you?**

John: I think that our interests dovetail in with interests that Realtors have. You want to see good government that provides good services to the community. The number one thing on our mind is how it effects our tax situation. The creation of a health department-it sounds great, but those are services that are already being provided.

Colleen: We bring a lot of diversity to the ticket. We are representative of the county has a whole. There are three issues that we need to focus on. Fiscal management, economic development and attracting new businesses, we need to bring businesses together with the housing market, it's a great place to be.