

WHO IS ARTHUR SCHWARTZ?

SOMEONE WHO BELIEVES THAT THE ONLY WAY TO CHANGE THINGS IS TO UNITE OUR COMMUNITY AND MAKE OUR VOICES HEARD



To the Members of the Village Reform Democrats:

I have decided to run again for the position of Male member of the State Democratic Committee, a

position I served in as a member of VRDC from 2006 – 2013.

I have served the Village as Male District Leader from 1995 – 2005 and from 2013 in addition to my service on the State Committee. I live on West 12th Street with my wife Kelly and two teenage daughters (one of whom is a freshman in college, living in Baltimore). I have been a labor and civil rights lawyer for over 43 years: presently (and for the last 21 years) my principal client is Transport Workers Union Local 100, the bus and subway workers union. I served on Community Board 2 from 1991 through 2015, and served there as Chair of the Waterfront and Parks Committees, and at the end as Chair of the Arts Committee. I was Chair or Vice Chair of the Hudson River Park Community Advisory Board for 12 years, and was a founder and 10 year Board Member of Friends of Hudson River Park. I started a group called West Village Community Alliance for Parks and Playgrounds, which help rebuild numerous parks in the West Village. I served as a Democratic National Convention Delegate in 2008 (Obama), 2016 (Sanders), and in 2020 (Sanders). I am presently Co-Law Chair for the Manhattan Democratic Party. As a community leader/lawyer I have represented untold numbers of local residents and organizations (mostly block associations) pro bono, in housing matters, estate matters, land use matters, most recently as the lawyer for the East River Park Alliance, where I briefly stopped the destruction of East River Park. I have had a weekly radio show on WBAI-FM called Advocating for Justice, and am also General Counsel to its parent foundation, the Pacifica Foundation. I am a product of the NYC Public School system, having graduated from Bronx Science. I attended Columbia University and Hofstra Law School after that.

I am running for State Committee because I see a need for change in the State Democratic Party. In November the Party's candidate for Mayor of Buffalo, India Walton, saw the State Democratic Chair

endorse her write-in opponent. Instead of spreading its wings and figuring out how to incorporate new activist constituencies into the Party, the State leadership, a product of the Cuomo domination of the Party, keeps circling the wagons. Unless the Democratic Party reflects its growing new constituency and leadership – from Congress members like Jamaal Bowman, Mondaire Jones , and AOC, to our Comptroller and Public Advocate here in NYC, to the dozens of new Assembly members and State Senate members elected across the state – it will keep losing elections like it did in Nassau County last fall. I believe that I can be a forceful voice in this effort.

As to the VRDC questionnaire:

1. Issues-

a) Affordable Housing – it is too darn expensive to live in our district. Even “affordable units” created under existing City programs are ridiculously expensive. One in Soho advertised last week set \$86,500 as the minimum salary for someone applying for an affordable unit. That is absurd. If elected I will use that bully pulpit created by the election to push Mayor Adams (who has called me his “brother from another mother”) to revise that program, so that affordable means something.

b) Mass transit – I am a proponent of free buses; like other cities around the world, I think NYC can afford, and will greatly benefit from free buses, and more true bus lanes. The answer is not bike lanes. I am also a fighter for disabled accessibility. I have fought for elevators in subways and restoration of bus stops to aid the elderly and those with disabilities.

c) Expanded mental health services, and aid for kids who are failing out of school. Like Mayor Adams, I believe that these are the keys to making NYC a safer city

2. Community Accomplishments-

a) Saving Beth Israel and much more - In my “spare time” I have litigated key suits, pro bono, for

our community, suing to stop the closure of Beth Israel Hospital, stopping the development of a Costco on 14th Street and 6th Avenue, stopping the closure of token booths all over the City, winning elevators for local subway stops on 14th Street, challenging, under the NYC Human Rights Law, the elimination of bus stops in the 14th Street Busway, suing to force proper environmental review of that Busway, stopping the destruction of the stacks at the 42nd Street library, and litigating to save the newsstand at Astor Place (Jerry's Newsstand).

b) Helped write the legislation which created Hudson River Park, and then fought to get it funded and keep it a park – through lawsuits which resulted in ballfields on Pier 40, to successful lobbying to prevent commercialization of the Piers. I helped organize parents, maneuvered resolutions through the Community Board, and had to overcome opposition from a Governor and some local electeds.

c) I played a key role in rebuilding Bleeker Playground, Abingdon Square Park, Serevalli Playground, Jackson Square Park, and JJ Walker Park, and helped shape the final product that is Washington Square Park. This involved raising money, organizing parents and community members, securing funding from the Mayors, Borough Presidents and City Council Members, working with the Parks Department designers, and helping conduct Community Board public hearings.

Why Am I the Best Candidate?

I am the best candidate because I am publicly outspoken, have utilized my party positions to organize my neighbors and make sure that the powers that be hear their voices. I don't take theoretical positions, I am a mover and a shaker. And, I have pledged to use this election to help build VRDC as an organization. You will hear from me frequently, I and I will work to make VRDC again a forum for our community.

Contact

I can be contacted at aschwartz@afjlaw.com. I am revising my website, but it will be found, once updated, at www.ArthurforNYC.com.

Enough! I hope that if you got through this, you will see me as a rather unique candidate, and give me the support of your rather unique political club.

In Solidarity,

Arthur Schwartz

