

MorrisTownship-MorrisPlainsPatch

ELECTIONS

Democrat Goldberg Wants More Time to Push Morris Twp. Committee Toward 'Brave Step'

Goldberg could be first ever re-elected Democrat.

By **Kathy Shaskan** October 28, 2010

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Ron Goldberg, who is running for a second term as a committeeman in Morris Township, says voters should return him to office so he can push the committee into the "brave step" of publicly announcing specific goals and objectives and allowing the electorate to judge if they have been met.

"Goal-setting and accountability, that's important," he said. "People need to know what we're trying to do and whether or not we do it."

Goldberg said he wants to require every department head and public official in Morris Township to set annual goals and objectives—and make them public. His idea has been discussed with the committee, he said, but is "not yet agreed upon."

"It would be a brave thing to do," Goldberg said. "I know it would take some courage and I understand why some people might not want it. It's risky, but it would be worth it."

If Goldberg does get re-elected to a second term—he's running against former Republican mayor Peter Mancuso—he will be the first Democrat in the history of Morris Township to do so.

"Republican rule is centuries old in Morris Township and Morris County. It's difficult for citizens or candidates outside that group to get their voices heard," Goldberg said.

However, he said, the people of Morris Township have good reason to re-elect him, because he serves as the only "check" in the system of checks and balances.

"I am a watchdog," he said. Goldberg added that he wants fellow members of the committee, when making decisions, to ask themselves, "How's that going to play when Goldberg takes it to the public?"

"They (The Morris Township Committee) have ways of working and they will revert to them," without the oversight of someone with a different viewpoint, Goldberg said.

The incumbent candidate said he is especially perturbed by what he calls "slippage in the ethical area," and the belief that it's acceptable to "make decisions outside the proper forums; in private," if that decision serves the public good.

"What's the harm?" is a popular attitude, Goldberg said. "Well, the harm is that you are missing out on public input, which could persuade you to a different outcome. We can't have a constant nibbling away at the ethical foundations of government."

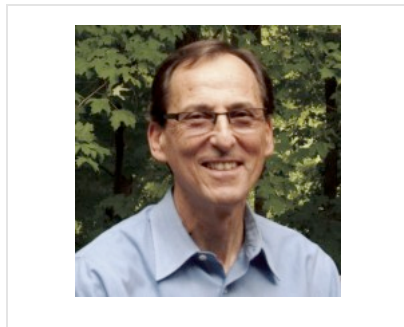
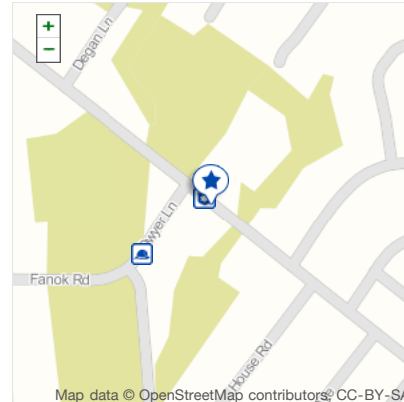
Goldberg cited the appointment of fellow committeeman, Daniel Caffrey, a volunteer firefighter, to the position of deputy fire commissioner in 2009, saying, "It's not healthy to give someone authority over a group to which he belongs."

Goldberg said he protested the appointment, but Mayor H. Scott Rosenbush disagreed, saying, "He'll have good ideas."

Goldberg said he later protested Caffrey's 2010 promotion to fire commissioner because Caffrey was still a member of the volunteer fire department.

"I was right," Goldberg said. "Six months after he [Rosenbush] overruled me, an attorney for the township told him [Caffrey] he'd have to resign one or the other."

Goldberg also wants time to re-introduce an ordinance to fight "pay to play"—the practice of trading



political contributions for government contract work. Goldberg said that the last time he tried to introduce such an ordinance, he couldn't get any of his Republican colleagues to second a motion.

The ordinance he'd like to see passed, he said, "was crafted by the Center for Civic Responsibility." It has been adopted in communities throughout New Jersey

"I don't like to be the preacher, but I don't mind being the standard," Goldberg said. "It really does take holding everyone's feet to the fire."

Each of the [nine candidates \(/info_page/2010-elections\)](/info_page/2010-elections) running for local office in Morris Plains and Morris Township has been invited to do an interview with Patch. We hope to profile each of them prior to the election.



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