

League of Women Voters of Lexington

Election Guide for the Monday March 5, 2018 Lexington municipal election

Question for Town Meeting Member candidates: A motion to ban or reduce plastic bags in Lexington may come before Town Meeting this year. Some nearby towns such as Bedford and Concord have such restrictions. What are your thoughts about banning or reducing plastic bags in Lexington?

Precinct 9

7 three-year terms

Hema Bhatt

E-mail: hpbhatt2012@gmail.com

Phone: 781-402-0279

Community Activities:

- Town Meeting Member since 2016
- Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee member
- Volunteer for many events in and around Lexington

Response:

I am in favor of reducing the plastic bags in Lexington. It will reduce waste and it will help us reduce land and water pollution. It will help us save the environment. Plastic bags, if not recycled properly, are harmful to wildlife and marine life and also to human health. We have better alternatives and opportunity to create sustainable products to use.

Scott A. Bokun

scottabokun@gmail.com

Richard Canale

E-mail: richard.canale@gmail.com

Phone: 781-861-0287

Community Activities:

- Town Meeting member for 25+ years
- TMMA: Former Precinct officer
- Planning Board: Chair, Liaison to the Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee, Liaison to several Town Committees including Battle Road Byway Committee, and Bicycle Advisory Committee

- Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC): Lexington's Representative, former Executive Board member, Former representative and chair of the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC)
- Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): Designee (Alternate) to the MPO

Response:

This is an excellent proposal. The proponents of this Article have produced clear and compelling arguments for passage. This is only one step in a long list of activities needed to address plastic pollution. A state-wide ban/control is needed so it becomes clearer that the problems and solutions are important enough for everyone in Massachusetts.

We have drastically reduced cans littered along streets and highways through the can deposit law. We need to find ways to incentivize residents to be thoughtful about the consequences of convenience over substance. There will be a small burden to many who rely on thin film bags, but the payoff in public recognition and changing habits should be worth the transition.

Mollie K. Garberg

E-mail: mgarberg@alum.barnard.edu

Phil Jackson

E-mail: Philip.Jackson@lexingtontmma.org

Community Activities:

- Town Meeting member
- Long-Range Planning Committee
- Boy Scout Troop 160 Parent & Volunteer
- Little League Baseball and Town Soccer Coach

Response:

A proposed ban on the use of plastic bags is a win-win for Lexington. First and foremost, banning plastic bags is an environmental win - we reduce physical pollution in town, while reducing demand for a product which is difficult to recycle and whose production contributes to climate change. And while there may be some minor hiccups as consumers get used to using paper bags or having to bring their own, we gain so much more as a community and show to consumers that we are a progressive, sustainable, forward-thinking place where you can be proud to shop.

Justine A. Wirtanen

E-mail: juwirtanen@verizon.net

Tom Shiple

E-mail: tshiple@gmail.com

Phone: 781-863-2725

Community Activities:

- Lexington United Soccer Club; Director, 2011-present; President, 2014-2017
- Friends of Lincoln Fields Lights, President, 2016-2017

Response:

I am in favor of banning plastic bags in Lexington. The regulations will need to be carefully crafted to exempt legitimate uses of plastic bags, for example, to prevent leakage for meat or fish. Large municipalities like Cambridge and Boston have already passed bans. Also, the state of California has had a ban in place for over a year now, and the *Los Angeles Times* reports that consumers made the transition smoothly.