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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Government

Vitale: Green Means Gold for Boro

Democratic candidate for Council boosts efforts at sustainability.

October 7, 2011

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Some people say you can't protect both the economy and the environment. I know they are wrong because I know that Madison has already done both. From its Tree City USA Designation to the beginnings of May Day, Madison residents have demonstrated their keen interest in keeping the town "green." Since 1985, Madison has been recognized throughout the state for its tree program. And yet, even in these tough economic times, Madison has also managed to maintain its property values.

We must continue to protect the things that make Madison so special. As a member of the Planning Board, my job is to help maintain the town's Master Plan which was adopted in 1992 to protect the environment, to provide diversity of housing choices, to ensure open space and recreation, to maintain the town center, and to enhance the economic well-being of the town. The Planning Board is in a position to craft zoning regulations to insure smart growth that will support a healthy, financially stable town. I am proud to be serving as a member of the Planning Board, and I am proud of what we have accomplished during my tenure in helping to shape Madison's future.

Recently, a dedicated group of volunteers known as the Madison 2020 Committee worked to pursue certification from the State's Sustainable Jersey program. Their hard work paid off, and Madison received the Bronze Level of Certification from Sustainable Jersey. This designation provides all kinds of support including access to grants and funding opportunities that promote prosperity and conservation to local communities. These are goals our town's Master Plan supports. Unfortunately, the current Council majority chose not to renew the Madison 2020 Committee, and consequently, we are not taking advantage of our accreditation with Sustainable Jersey. If I am returned to Council, I will wholeheartedly support the reinstatement of the Madison 2020 Committee and will work with them to obtain grants for the town of Madison that will help us protect the environment, save us money, and improve our quality of life.

Sounds like a win-win situation to me. We have a group of enthusiastic volunteers working to help Madison take steps to sustain our quality of life over

the long term while ensuring the economic well-being of the town's residents and businesses.

Let's go for the gold to promote the green!

Carmela Vitale

The author is a former two-term Councilwoman and is running again for a seat on the Madison Borough Council.

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