



## VILLAGE OF MARTIN'S ADDITIONS

**Dear Neighbors,**

**This is your official Election Information Packet for the 2024 Village Council Election.**

This is a mail-vote election. The election contractor will mail the ballots to the Village voters in late April. Election Day is May 7, and the votes will be counted on May 21.

You are cordially invited to the traditional **Election Day Celebration on the Sidewalk** on **Tuesday May 7, from 5 to 8 pm** in front of the shops on Brookville Road. The Election Committee will be at a sidewalk table there, with a secure drop-box that you can use to return your sealed, completed ballot envelope. We look forward to seeing you on May 7 – kids and grown-ups alike – and **yes, there will be free ice cream!**

To vote, please return your completed ballot in the official envelope, sign the back of that envelope, then either put the sealed envelope in the Election Day drop-box or mail it in time for the election contractor to receive it by May 21.

Three of the five Village Council seats are up for election this year. Three candidates are running: Arthur Alexander, of Raymond Street; Jeff Blander, of Turner Lane; and Susan Fattig, of Melville Place. All three currently serve on the VMA Council. Write-in votes are also allowed.

This Election Packet includes the candidates' statements and the information about voting in VMA. Extra copies of this Election Information Packet are available in the Village Office. You're welcome to contact the Election Committee at [VMAelections@martinsadditions.org](mailto:VMAelections@martinsadditions.org) if you have any questions about the election. If you're not sure whether you're eligible to vote, please email the Committee. We can add new voters up until 8 pm on May 7.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CANDIDATES AT THE VMA ELECTION FORUM: The **Election Forum** will be held by Zoom on **Thursday April 25**, starting at 7:30 pm. What would you like to ask the candidates? Please send your Forum questions to [VMAelections@martinsadditions.org](mailto:VMAelections@martinsadditions.org), or drop off your questions at the Village Office by noon on April 25 in an envelope marked "Election Committee." The moderator may also be able to include some live questions during the Forum.

We encourage every eligible VMA resident to vote. Local government matters.

With best regards,

Your 2024 VMA Election Committee

Jen Bergeron, Marty Langelan, Naomi Naierman, John Sharrow, and Paul Weller

## **OFFICIAL NOTICE OF THE VMA COUNCIL ELECTION**

The Village of Martin’s Additions will hold its 2024 Village Council Election by mail. Three Council seats are up for election. There are three candidates on the ballot. Write-in votes are permitted. Voters will receive their ballots by mail in late April, and can return their completed ballots in one of two ways: (a) mail the ballot in the official ballot-return envelope in time to be received by the mail-vote contractor by May 21; or (b) deposit the sealed, completed ballot-return envelope in the Election Committee drop-box on Election Day, May 7, from 5 to 8 pm in front of the shops on Brookville Road. Please be sure to sign the back of your ballot-return envelope.

## **OFFICIAL NOTICE OF THE VMA ELECTION FORUM**

The Election Forum will be held via Zoom at 7:30 pm on Thursday April 25. All of the candidates are expected to participate. All residents are welcome to attend by Zoom, and are invited to send the Election Committee questions in advance, to ask the candidates at the Forum. Send your Forum questions to [VMAelections@martinsadditions.org](mailto:VMAelections@martinsadditions.org), or drop off your questions at the Village Office by noon on April 25 in an envelope marked “Election Committee.” The moderator may also be able accept some questions during the event. The Forum will be recorded and will be available for review on the VMA website.

Join the April 25 Election Forum by Zoom or by phone at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4283369355?omn=89110391973>

Meeting ID: 428 336 9355

Dial in: +1 301-715-8592

## **THE 2024 VMA ELECTION SCHEDULE**

- Feb 22: Nomination period opens.
- March 23: Due date for the candidates to file.
- April 6: Deadline for VMA to mail the election information packet to each Village household.
- April 25: The Election Committee holds the VMA Election Forum by Zoom, starting at 7:30 pm.
- April 26: The contractor mails the ballot packets to the voters.
- May 7: Election Day and VMA Celebration on the Sidewalk, 5 to 8 pm. Final day to add new voters to the voter roll. The Election Committee will provide the election drop-box at the outdoor table in front of the shops and then deliver those sealed ballot-return envelopes to the contractor to hold securely until the vote-count day.
- May 14: Final day for voters to request replacement ballots.
- May 21: Vote-count day. Final day for the contractor to receive the ballot-return envelopes by mail. The Election Committee will supervise the vote-counting, resolve any questions, then certify the election as soon as possible and announce the results.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT VOTING IN MARTIN'S ADDITIONS**

In our Village Council elections, the election contractor mails the ballots directly to the voters. The voters send their completed ballots back to the contractor in the official return envelopes. VMA uses a mail-vote system that protects voting security and privacy. Insert your completed ballot into the privacy envelope, then put that into the larger ballot-return envelope. The Election Committee has instructed the contractor to provide postage-paid return envelopes.

**Vote for up to three people this year (but not for more than three).** There are three candidates listed on the ballot. Write-in votes are allowed. A write-in name counts as one of your votes.

(Please don't vote for more than three people, in total. Voting for more than three would disqualify your ballot.)

You'll receive your ballot by mail in late April. On **Election Day, May 7**, the Election Committee will have a secure, accessible drop-box at the outdoor election table from 5 to 8 pm, so you can drop off your sealed ballot-return envelope during the Celebration on the Sidewalk. The Committee will deliver those unopened envelopes to the election contractor, who will hold them until the vote-count on May 21.

If you're going to mail your completed ballot, please be sure to use the official return envelope, and send it in time to be received by the election contractor by May 21. **Please mail your ballot-return envelope by May 15 to allow at least 5 days for postal delivery, and sign the back of the return envelope to make sure your ballot can be counted.**

You qualify as a VMA voter if (a) the Village of Martin's Additions is your primary residence and sole residence for U.S. voting purposes, and (b) you're 18 or older by Election Day. All eligible residents, including renters, students, and caregivers, can vote in the Village Council election. You don't have to be a U.S. citizen or a registered voter in Montgomery County. To check your voting status or add your name to the VMA voter roll, contact the Election Committee at [VMAelections@martinsadditions.org](mailto:VMAelections@martinsadditions.org) by May 7.

VMA elections are voter-friendly. We want every eligible resident to be able to vote.

- If you're a resident who will turn 18 on or before May 7, please email the Committee. We'd be honored to sign you up as a new voter for your first VMA election!
- If your ballot gets lost, damaged, or spoiled, you can request a replacement ballot up until May 14, by emailing the Committee. (No one can vote twice; the contractor cancels the first ballot when the second ballot is issued.)
- If you will not be at your regular VMA address during the voting period, you can ask the Committee to have your ballot sent to a different location. Qualified voters whose primary residence and sole U.S. voting address is in VMA, but who are temporarily living elsewhere for work, military service, or other reasons, can receive a VMA ballot by sending the Election Committee a standard federal FPCA form or a signed VMA Voter Eligibility Form. The Committee will need to receive the FPCA or VMA form on or before May 7. The VMA Form is on the Village website, on the Election Committee page [here](#).

- If you will be unable to receive mail during the voting period (e.g., on travel, or out of the country), you can request an early ballot by notifying the Committee in advance. The administrative logistics determine when the early ballots will be available. The Committee will direct the contractor to send you an early ballot if possible.
- If two people living at the same address accidentally switch their ballot-return envelopes, no problem: Both of the ballots are considered valid and will be included in the VMA vote-count.
- If a ballot envelope mistake is correctable (e.g., someone just forgot to sign the return envelope), the Election Committee will notify the individual voters. You can sign an alternate form within 5 days, and the Committee can then instruct the contractor to open the sealed ballot envelope that you originally sent in, so your votes can then be included in the election.

The election procedures are public documents. The 2024 VMA Election Regulations are available on the Village website [here](#).

The Election Committee encourages all eligible VMA residents to vote in the 2024 election. We look forward to seeing you by Zoom at the **VMA Election Forum** on **Thursday evening April 25**, and in person at the **Election Day Celebration on the Sidewalk** from **5 to 8 pm on Tuesday May 7**.

Thank you for being a VMA voter!

## THE CANDIDATES' STATEMENTS

*The Election Committee does not edit the candidates' statements. The statements are published in a standard format, and presented here in alphabetical order. This year, the Committee gave the candidates the option of including a photo with their statements; two of the candidates chose to include a photo.*

### **Candidate Statement of ARTHUR ALEXANDER 3517 Raymond Street, 301-718-9787, arthur.alexander@att.net**

I am running for re-election to the Village Council. After more than a decade working on Village affairs, I have learned about the many issues shaping municipal affairs in general and Martin's Additions in particular. While this knowledge is an Important consideration for a candidate, the past should be a guide, not a straitjacket. I have always sought improvements and positive change to operations and programs.

What I bring to the deliberations is deliberation, taking a balanced look at proposals, seeking advice from experts, listening to my colleagues on the Council, and soliciting residents' views. When good arguments have outweighed my prior predispositions, I changed my mind. Past positions as Tree Committee head, Village treasurer, and Council chair provide perspective on a wide variety of issues. For example, as treasurer, I recommended reviews by outside experts of our financial procedures and computer-communications systems to ensure that they are safe, effective, and secure from cyber attacks.

When I first ran for this position, I saw that Village affairs required constant attention to planning, implementing, and managing the many activities required for a smoothly functioning community. I decided to volunteer to assist in this civic process. The efforts over the past decade or so have been boring, trying, exhausting, but always rewarding, especially when resolving an outstanding issue.

Thirty-four years ago, we came to Martin's Additions when I became head of a small economic research organization focused on Japan; this closed in 2000. Since then, my work from home has included teaching at Georgetown and Johns Hopkins Universities and conducting economic research for a variety of private and public organizations. While no longer teaching, the economic research continues; I have plenty of time left for Village affairs when I am not out biking or strolling around the neighborhood.

The rewards for serving as council member are not fame, fortune, or acclaim, but the satisfaction of helping make our local community run smoothly, with steady improvements. I look forward to continuing in this effort and seek your vote to help make it happen.



**Candidate Statement of DR. JEFF BLANDER**  
**3413 Turner Lane, 617-930-9554, drjmblander@gmail.com**

I've lived in VMA with my wife Michelle Levine and daughter Rosie since 2013, adding Sky, Hashim, Demi, and Pinecone, our beloved rescue cats. We cherish our community, and we are truly grateful to have so many caring and thoughtful neighbors who engage in daily acts of kindness.

I was raised by my grandparents and grew up in a small close-knit beach community in the suburbs of New York City, often helping my grandparents with their small business. My childhood memories include learning to ride a bike with neighbors cheering me on, digging for hidden treasures at the local park, and a business center whose owners would greet customers on a first name basis. These same qualities of a caring, engaged, and close-knit community are what make VMA so special to our family.



**Experience that would be relevant for service as a council member**

I have the honor of serving as an elected VMA Council Member since the Summer of 2020. Each day I bring to this position the same values I learned growing up. These include being kind, listening closely, and respecting different points of view. Believing that holding a position of public trust means serving with integrity, gratitude, and humility.

I am seeking re-election believing I bring to bear valuable technical knowledge and proven operational experience to our Village. This includes financial management of our accounts, collective stewardship of office staff and contractors, and engagement with residents by advocating for their ideas, addressing concerns, and jointly solving problems.

I am a strong advocate for transparency and accountability, using available data, and hosting public forums to inform decision making, whether in shaping budgets, drafting legislation or policy, and evaluating new proposals. With fellow council members I work to balance new ideas that are considered priorities for our community while ensuring a focus on fiscal responsibility. I am grateful to work alongside council members, village staff, and residents to outline best practices for committee volunteers, who are the backbone of our community, providing their precious time and valuable expertise to benefit all of VMA.

My track record includes:

- Voting to stand-up and serve as a liaison to many taskforces and committees over the years, including elections, community engagement, public safety and antisemitism.
- Hosting in the Fall of 2023 an all-hands VMA committee volunteer orientation session. The purpose was to directly address challenges faced in previous years by improving communications and clearly defining expected roles of all volunteers, village staff, and council member liaisons.



- Maintaining a professional tone in meetings while listening to community opinions, especially when we agree to disagree.
- Championing the development of an annual administrative calendar to support a more strategic outlook for budgeting and scheduling of activities.
- Serving since August 2023 as VMA's treasurer and facilitating the reformatting of our monthly reporting practices to share more line-item details of actual versus budgeted figures and include the balance sheet verified by our office staff and accountant.

As treasurer, I have emphasized that while VMA is currently in a robust financial position with substantial reserves, we need to continue to maintain strong fiscal oversight to avoid future deficit spending. This is especially salient since there are several large capital projects underway and short-term monetary sweeteners from ARPA funds ending in FY2025.

I bring over 25 years of public health, non-for-profit, and business experience to bear. This includes forging public and private partnerships for health, education, and community improvement. I proudly serve at the U.S. Department of State as the Chief Innovation and Investment Officer, for the newly created Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy, supporting the global battle against current pandemics such as HIV/AIDS and COVID-19 in addition to developing preemptive countermeasures to address future public health threats. I have helped plan annual budgets and close strategic partnership deals cumulatively leveraging greater than \$1 Billion USD across a portfolio of over 50 countries. In this role, I earned commendations for outstanding service, including a U.S. Department of State Meritorious Honor Award in 2021.

Other volunteer and elected positions I have held include board member for the Wharton Club of the Nation's Capital Region (2 terms), Vice President of the Harvard School of Public Health D.C. Alumni Chapter, Vice President of the Chevy Chase Elementary School PTA, National Park Service volunteer in-park steward for the C&O Canal's Billy Goat Trail, and regular intake center and adoption event volunteer for the Antietam Humane Society.

### **Important issues facing VMA and how I would address them if re-elected**

At this time there are several essential and important issues facing our dynamic VMA community of families, K-12 learners, young professionals, retirees, and seniors in the near and longer term. These include:

- Addressing community priorities for ground and storm water management, including funding essential technical studies and implementing shovel ready improvement projects.
- Reviewing our building code and permitting processes to ensure they protect private property owner interests.
- Deploying important walkability and traffic safety measures.
- Incentivizing aging in place programming.

- Prioritizing strong fiscal stewardship to ensure we manage our working capital and reserves responsibly.
- Continuing to work with local law enforcement so our resources are well spent to improve crime prevention measures for residents and local businesses.
- Coordinating timely inspections to ensure infrastructure including gas lines, fire hydrants, drainage systems, and public right of way are well maintained.
- Leveraging county and private resources to incentivize programs for ecological friendly water gardens.
- Exploring upgrading our IT platforms and communication tools to send timely alerts, encourage feedback, and inform residents during emergency response situations.



**Candidate Statement of SUSAN FATTIG**  
**6701 Melville Place, 301-785-6017, sefesq@gmail.com**

As a member of the Village of Martin's Additions Council for the past eight and a half years and a resident for over 35 years, I've had the privilege of working to improve our wonderful community. My husband and I raised our twins in the Village and have made many lasting and cherished friendships here.

I was appointed to the Council in 2015 and elected to two-year terms in 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022. During those years, I've brought my Midwestern sensibilities, a law degree from Notre Dame, and my decades of legal and nonprofit board experience—as well as institutional knowledge of VMA—to bear on issues of good governance and municipal administration in Martin's Additions.

The VMA Council has accomplished many significant projects during my tenure, with a forward-looking perspective toward creating a more sustainable community: We installed new energy efficient streetlights, we instituted a leaf vacuuming service, and we recently approved composting for all residents.

Addressing the safety and stormwater issues that are top of mind for many Village residents, we implemented the recommendations of the walkability task force that could be accomplished first. The Brookville sidewalk project is underway but taking longer than any of us would like due to state and county considerations. I will continue to address walkability recommendations such as curb extensions in conjunction with the recommendations of our new stormwater task force, which in its short tenure has already made serious headway in finding workable solutions to the stormwater problem that will only worsen if left unchecked.

We have kept the Village in a strong fiscal position while maintaining one of the lowest property tax rates among local municipalities. I have supported the return of more social events for residents with realistic, not excessive, budgets. I agree that our legal fees are out of line with other jurisdictions, and support cost reduction measures.

I will continue to strive, as I always have, to act in the interest of the entire community.

Together, we have accomplished much, but there is always more to do. I look forward to continuing my service to the community, in the hopes of making the Village a better-run, more sustainable, and welcoming place for all. Please feel free to reach out to me at 301-785-6017.

I would appreciate your vote!