



**Tracy
Peters**

Q: Why are you running for the Charter Revision Commission?

A: The Detroit Environmental Agenda seeks to make our environment sustainable. Similarly, I seek to make local government sustainable by protecting and fostering citizen elector input within our community's governance. Since the charter is construed liberally in favor of the city, I seek to both preserve existing citizen programs as well as advocate for stronger citizen representation where the electorate deems necessary.

I would like to work with fellow Commissioners to encourage high attendance at community meetings and conventions accompanying the revision process. Working as a former public school teacher and current practicing attorney has allowed me to engage fellow Detroiters in numerous and diverse ways.

Importantly, my candidacy at this time reflects the notable absence of steady community outcry for specific charter revisions as in 2009; suggesting to me that city government seeks to realign service delivery or eliminate programs previously established by the People.

Q: What provisions are the most important to preserve or change in the current Charter of the City of Detroit?

A: My analysis of the existing power balance between our city's executive branch (Mayor), legislative branch (City Council) and People who write and adopt the charter outweighs the personal views I hold and would bring to the charter revision process regarding specific charter language. As a Charter Revision Commissioner, I would conduct that analysis by continually asking myself how proposed changes either retain or encourage citizens' power over city government and their own self-governance.

As a citizen, I feel that it is important to preserve the language placed in the charter by the People regarding independent oversight of city government by retaining the departments of Ombudsman, Board of Ethics, Auditor General, Corporation Counsel and Inspector General. Further, I support changes to the Capital Agenda mandating transparency in nondisclosure agreements between city contractors and the state where local tax abatements are involved.

Tracy Peters, continued

Q: Are you familiar with provisions in the Charter related to the environment? What would you seek to change or preserve?

A: The People currently express, generally, the importance of environmental sustainability within several sections of the charter. Important environmental initiatives such as a citywide recycling program and the Green Initiatives and Sustainable Technologies Plan are included within the Department of Buildings, Safety, Engineering and Environmental and Public Works Departments, respectively. A potential danger to such an approach is the argument that environmental issues do not directly relate to the general operation of city government and exist only as programs which can be removed from the charter. An initial step to strengthening the People's expressed view that the charter facilitates environmental sustainability would be to establish Environmental as its own Department within the Executive Branch. Section 6-307 should also be amended to include "environmental impact" within the list of considered factors when city services may be privatized.

Q: How should the Charter Revision Commission engage the community in the revision process?

A: First, the incoming Charter Revision Commission should seek to have a greater participation rate than that calculated during the 2009 revision process. This can be achieved in ways including but not limited to: 1) commissioners making greater efforts to reach citizens lacking computer and/or neighborhood Detroit Public Library branch access; and 2) convening revision sessions addressing the limited transportation options and language barriers faced by some residents. Consistent with the People's expressed will, the Commission should enhance their operation under the "one person one vote" principle by addressing voter disenfranchisement policies which have contributed historically to low voter turnout in Detroit. All elected officials have an affirmative duty to eradicate burdens on their constituents' right to vote in addition to encouraging their participation so that Detroit's chief governing document, the city charter, reflects as representative a sample as possible.