

CANDIDATE BIOS

FARHAD AHMAD

My name is Farhad Ahmad, I am a Society Hill homeowner.

I am an Information Technology (IT) professional; besides IT I have owned a small home renovation business for a few years. I have extensive project management experience in IT and small construction projects.

As a board member, my IT skills can be beneficial in incorporating technology and automation in certain areas such as improving communication, bringing more transparency between the board and homeowners. Project management and construction background will help me make informed decisions on existing or new projects.

I am committed to the betterment of Society Hill.

After owning a condo in Society Hill,

- I have been attending monthly board meetings and conscious of the board's decisions, specifically the special assessment of 2022.
- I joined a team of concerned homeowners to find alternative solutions to special assessments.
- I met with Piscataway Mayor and his team with a few other homeowners regarding township violations and received a conditional extension. As a result of extension from mayor and alternative solution proposed special assessment was decreased from \$2000 to \$1200 per unit.
- The conditional extension gave a path forward for the new board to retain an engineering firm and follow the due process of engineering/construction by acquiring permits and reducing cost per the latest special meeting on Sep. 5th, 2023.
- Currently I am leading a team of volunteers to build a website for Society Hill. The website will include helpful links, a list of active projects, and improve communication between board members and homeowners.

I strongly feel that if someone is committed to run for a board position, he/she should be an active member of the community. My track record shows that I have volunteered for the community on multiple occasions.

As a new board member, I will look for opportunities where technology can be used to make Society Hill a better and welcoming place for all homeowners.

I am looking forward to working with current board members, Syed Mohiuddin, George Tsacnaris, Nalaka Diaz and rest.

ANTHONY BLANCO

As a dedicated homeowner in Society Hill since November 2007 and an experienced IT professional, I bring a strong foundation of expertise to the table. Armed with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Information Systems and Technical Management, I've amassed an impressive 25-year track record in the Information Technology sector, during which I've spent a decade successfully leading teams. Currently, I serve as a pivotal leader within a renowned top-tier marketing firm, guiding and managing a team that plays a crucial role in supporting a global platform that caters to over 90,000 users.

REASON FOR SEEKING ELECTION:

Forward-Thinking Leadership:

- I am committed to focusing on the future needs of our community. Through proactive planning and strategic decision-making, I aim to ensure that Society Hill remains a vibrant and thriving place to live.

Learning from Experience:

- I believe in learning from past mistakes, whether they are my own or those of our community. My candidacy represents a commitment to applying these lessons to improve our neighborhood's governance and decision-making.

Transparency and Inclusivity:

- I believe in open and transparent communication with all community members. If elected, I will provide accessible information and opportunities for residents to engage in the decision-making process.

Collaborative Approach:

- Effective governance requires teamwork and collaboration. I am committed to working harmoniously with the current board and fellow community leaders to achieve our shared goals and address challenges effectively.

Balancing Community Needs and Affordability:

- One of my key priorities is to strike a balance between meeting the needs and expectations of our community while ensuring that monthly fees remain affordable for all residents. I am dedicated to prudent financial management to achieve this balance, keeping fees as low as possible, and a bylaw amendment to require a vote of the owners on future special assessments.

By electing me, you can trust in my commitment to fostering a forward-thinking, inclusive, and financially responsible community that values transparency and collaboration. Together, we can continue to make Society Hill a place we are all proud of. On this basis, please consider me as a choice, along with Zahid Kahn and Kevin Wine who are also supporting me for election.

ZAHID KHAN

I am a 17-year homeowner, with Masters and Engineering degrees in Electronics and Communication, currently working for Mattel in a management role. My wife owns two active businesses, one in IT and another in photography. Formerly, I was managing an IT department in Streaming Media, which currently is part of Dow Jones. I am an Indian national soccer player, and I coach kids at the Piscataway soccer club. I am a member of the Edison Chamber of Commerce and actively take part in several community events. Past member of Society Hill Piscataway Board from 2014 to 2017 as Treasurer. Current member of the Somerset County Advisory Council on Disability Issues.

REASON FOR SEEKING ELECTION:

When I left the Board in 2017, everything was in good order. I was shocked to receive a letter from the Board last summer saying I owe \$2,000 for a special assessment from out of nowhere. What happened?

We elect other owners to represent us on our Board. We are all very busy with our own lives, including myself, and expect and assume that those we elect will act in the best interests of us and all the owners. It was very clear to me that is not what was happening. The Board seemed to be fighting against us instead of fighting for us. They have lost their way and come out of touch with the owners.

The cost of everything has been increasing in the last few years, and we have to pay more everywhere. When I was on the Board last time I supported other ways of saving us money through realistic and innovative capital projects, so that the entire fee burden is not placed directly on the owners. I see all those ideas have been cancelled, the fees have gone up by 37% in just a few years, and we had a \$1200 special assessment. I'm 100% sure the pattern will continue and there will be more fee increases!

If I am elected to the Board I will work with other trustees to:

- Amend the bylaws to require the board to get approval from all the owners by majority vote to approve any large special assessments in the future! Other Associations have this in their bylaws already.
- Restore the community events and the annual picnic. It is very important that residents get to know each other.
- Support alternative ways of reducing costs. We invested a lot of time and funds already in this in the past and these were very sensible plans. Saving money is not just about trimming a few dollars here and there – it is also about looking at big-picture ways of reducing costs.
- Support truly open Board meetings and decisions, so owners can see and hear the Board discussions, and not have all that behind the closed door.
- Make sure the community is fully maintained and repaired and the office phone is answered all the time and not just during election time.
- Build on the progress since the last election – the irrigation system is finally working again, and the dead trees should be removed soon, but there is still much more to do.

If you want sensible Board decisions and control over the costs and maintenance fees, please consider me as a choice, along with Anthony Blanco and Kevin Wine who are also supporting me for election.

JOTIN KEHAIR

I'm writing to offer my services as a trustee for Society Hill Piscataway Condominium association. I've provided a brief of my background and reasons below.

I've been a resident of 300 Hampshire Court for 15 years and enjoyed living here. I'm very careful of our surroundings and am friendly with the staff that works the grounds all the time.

I hold an MBA in finance from New York University, Executive Programs, ranked #1 in finance at that time. I have a deep background in finance working with top banking institutions. My last full-time job, I was an executive director at Sumitomo Bank in NYC, in strategy and business development in investment banking. Before that I was SVP at Wells Fargo, prior to that I was an Executive Director at Morgan Stanley. Prior to that I was an associate principal at McKinsey, the top management consulting firm. Currently, I'm consulting with a biotech startup in Silicon Valley and helping them fundraise for Series B funding of \$60MM.

My experience covers heavy financial analysis and modeling and resource planning. I have managed very large teams at all my work places. I work very well with people of all levels and have a careful eye on details.

I would be an asset as a trustee and can help with planning and management of your community.

PATRICIA MICARELLI

I'm running for a second term for the Board of Directors of the Society Hill Piscataway C.A. , while I have officially lived here since the community was built in 1986.

My background focuses on communication, transparency and financial stability of the community. I've had a long career interacting with people of all ages.

Currently, I am semi-retired thereby affording me the luxury of time to volunteer as a board member. I'm organized, detail-oriented, and collaborative, and have had experience being a team player.

I believe my skills make me a valuable member of the Board. Although serving on the board requires a significant amount of time and dedication, it has been rewarding to meet numerous people in the community and help have issues resolved. I am looking forward to continuing my service to this community

I would be honored to serve on the Board of Directors for another term and I am hopeful you will cast your vote again for me.

CHARLENE SALES

I am running for a seat on the Board to protect our homes and investments. I bring open communication, transparency, and fairness to informed decisions. With my paralegal and risk management experience, plus a 4 year college education, I'll ensure fiduciary responsibilities are met across the Board. I've seen our community devolve and I aim to work together to restore its safety, cleanliness, and overall appeal.

SHAFEEQ SHAIK

I am excited to express my enthusiasm for the opportunity to contribute to the Society Hill community as a board member. With a strong educational background having a bachelor's in commerce and master's in business administration (Finance), combined with years of experience in managing technology sales and recruitment, Profit & Loss, Balance sheet, project management, vendor management, SLA's I am confident in my ability to bring valuable insights to the board. I am committed to contributing my time and effort to ensure Society Hill, Piscataway continues to flourish.

While my professional focus has been in the technology and finance sector, I understand the importance of community engagement. I have actively volunteered in community activity at Society Hill of Jersey City and have attended meetings, provided input on community matters such as safety and security (installation of cameras), and contributed to discussions on neighborhood improvement projects such as installation of electric charging stations. Having an outsider experience as a home owner, I now like to be part of the board to represent and be the voice of the home owners.

If given the opportunity to serve on the board, I aim to:

- Leverage modern technologies to improve community services such as building a website for information, going paperless for better and cost effective communication, audit of accurate information on the centralized website.
- Collaborate with fellow board members to make informed decisions that benefit all residents. Help the board to speed up on pending issues such as soil project, roofing project, audit monthly expense report, audit outstanding statements, review vendor agreements etc.
- Promote open communication channels between residents and the board to ensure transparency and address concerns effectively.
- Work closely with the treasurer, to address outstanding HOA dues effectively and maintain a healthy balance sheet to embrace beneficial projects for the society residents by bringing down costs. Work closely with the treasurer to review and audit monthly statements, implement HOA invoices per month via emails, review bills payable and receivable etc. Work with treasurer in finalizing employee benefits and insurance vendors.
- Work closely with the President to remove construction debris across the society such as Hampshire Ct, implement safety policies, implement checks and balances and have a better play area for the kids.
- Implement sustainable practices that enhance the quality of life in Society Hill.
- I understand that serving on the Society Hill Board requires a time commitment, careful consideration of community needs, and the ability to work collaboratively with **diverse perspectives**. I am ready to embrace these responsibilities wholeheartedly.

Thank you for considering my application. I am excited about the possibility of contributing to the continued success of Society Hill as a board member. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss my vision and qualifications in more detail.

MARY THOMAS

In 1989 my husband and I purchased a Townhouse in Society Hill Piscataway. Since that time, I have been involved in many Society Hill activities, including the Covenant Committee, the Executive Board of Directors, as well as, lending my time to walk the community for site inspection before professional management was on board. I also spoke to and asked many questions during my tenure regarding the manner in which items were being handled (again while self-managed).

During my 6 years as Trustee, we had the challenging task of transitioning from self-management to the hiring professional management company “Towne and Country Management”, “Mirra & Associates Auditor” and “Radom & Wetter” general counsel. By making these changes, we were able to increase the income in our reserve fund while continuing to keep our very competent maintenance staff employed.

Unfortunately, many of the decisions are now made by the two most recent trustees. This is against the NJ laws regarding community board of director’s actions. It also does not benefit the community; case in point, the hiring of a lawn cutting company who is completely incompetent, without realizing the value of the crew we already have to perform that service. The cost is \$5000 per month for each of us to contribute to with no regard for quality of workmanship.

Decisions such as these, in fact all decisions, are required legally to go before the entire board not just two members of the board. These same two members insist on circumventing the management company that we hired to help us and refuse to consider their input. Towne & Country has decades of experience and have been a wealth of knowledge.

I am running for the board to offer a more comprehensive viewpoint on the strengths and weaknesses of our community. My previous *years* of board experience enable me to provide insight into issues that have been overlooked in this past year for the two freshman board members. I also have life wisdom to contribute to making sound decisions from financial decisions to common sense decision for the good of the community.

It is a critical time to have diversity for all on the board. I am here to stay and would ask that you vote for me once again. I will ask the hard questions from everyone involved before a decision is made by two when we are a board of seven!

Thank you in advance for your vote

KEVIN WINE

I served on the Board from 2004 and 2021 during which time I volunteered thousands of hours of my own time and worked for the Association in a maintenance and administrative capacity from 2011 to 2018. I was one of the key Board members supporting the shift to in-house staff in

2008 and the creation of the systems that supported that model of service delivery to our residents. With the support of a majority of other Board members and the support of hundreds of owners, we embarked on several large-scale capital repair and improvement projects, restored a sense of community in the complex (community engagement, committees, events, annual picnic), and ran the Association in a logical, rational, fair and efficient manner, with NO surprise special assessments and very reasonable maintenance fees.

Things were going well and a lot of work was getting done when, in the fall of 2018, a small group of people organized to derail several in-process capital repair/improvement projects (including the pond and “the hill”, community internet service, reclaimed irrigation water system, maintenance building), remove me from an administrative role, and systematically dismantle everything that had been built since 2008. Following the take-over in 2018 and the hiring of an outside management company in 2019, maintenance fees have increased from \$171/month to \$235/month, service has declined, the Board has neglected critical repairs and maintenance to focus on its \$2.5 million roof obsession, and we had a \$2,000/\$1,200 special assessment last year as the final insult to injury!

The special assessment was a classic example of a management company and an unsophisticated board in control of an association. The entire debacle was the direct result of the Board cancelling the plan to remediate “the Hill” as originally filed with the Township Planning Board in 2018, and then doing nothing for 4 years. The initial removal cost of \$1.1 million (\$2,000/unit) was eventually reduced to \$658k but only after extreme pressure on the Board by dozens of owners, multiple community zoom meetings, and a petition I circulated which was signed by nearly 300 owners to remove the Board.

I intentionally didn't run for the board last year, in order to give the prior Board and new members a chance to do what the owners were expecting: Suspend the special assessment until the actual hill removal cost was determined and terminate the management company for their negligence in handling the initial hill removal contract and attempting to overcharge us by at least \$400,000.

But no, that's not what happened. While there has been progress since the last election, we still have a long way to go. We are now spending \$510,000 to remove the hill, instead of the original plan to landscape the hill for much lower cost, make it in to a community focal point with common areas for all residents to enjoy, and another half-mile of walking trails. We are spending \$510,000 and ending up with NOTHING to show for it. And the management company is still here. We already suffered through the management company solution from 1985 to 2008, and now we are repeating the same failed experiment. At the end of the day, it just doesn't work – they just care about the money – we are being ripped off, the board can't be relied on to look out for us, and it's not practical to expect all the owners to step up every time and do the Board's job.

I am running with Anthony Blanco and Zahid Kahn and if elected, we will do what we can with the remaining Board to stop the run-away maintenance fees and special assessments, reassess the maintenance priorities, refactor the management, and restore community events and participation. I guess it's too late to “save the hill”, but there are several other viable and unfinished projects that need evaluation. Am I the only one paying \$240/month just for cable internet service?? Much more detail on the history and my involvement with the association can be found on www.savethehill.org.