

Save Lionville State Farm
Candidate Questionnaire
Eric Roe, Candidate for Chester County Commissioner

1. Do you consider overdevelopment to be an issue in Uwchlan Township and, if so, what would you do to minimize it?

Yes. Overdevelopment is a problem in Uwchlan Township and all of Chester County. **I am proud to be endorsed by the Sierra Club for my commitment to open space preservation and fighting urban sprawl.** Chester County has the most new building in the Philadelphia suburbs, and we are among the fastest-growing counties in the nation.¹ As a state representative, I co-sponsored and passed the Stoneleigh Law, which protects preserved open spaces from development through eminent domain. As a county commissioner, I will preserve green spaces so that there is less land available to overdevelop. I will also steer developers to more appropriate places so that we are not tearing down farmlands, wetlands, and forestlands to build upon.

2. Do you believe Uwchlan Township should require open space and, if so, how would you protect it?

Yes, I believe Uwchlan Township should require the preservation of a certain percentage of its remaining open spaces. Although I do not live in Uwchlan, I live in the Downingtown School District in nearby West Bradford. As a county commissioner, I would work with nature conservancies and Uwchlan's municipal officials to finance conservation easements on open spaces in Uwchlan, as well as other municipalities in Chester County.

3. Do you believe that Uwchlan Township should protect its remaining farmland and, if so, how would you protect it?

Yes, I would be supportive of Uwchlan's efforts to protect its remaining farmland. How it goes about doing that is a question for Uwchlan's voters and taxpayers, but as a county commissioner I would appropriate funds to offset the costs of preserving land in order to reduce the burden to Uwchlan's taxpayers. Preserving land in Uwchlan benefits **ALL** of Chester County – not just the residents closest to the site.

4. If the current Agreement of Sale for Lionville Station Farm is cancelled, would you facilitate a referendum for Uwchlan Township to purchase the property? If so, how do you envision the property being preserved and/or used in a way that enhances the character of Uwchlan Township and Chester County?

I hope the current Agreement of Sale will be cancelled, and I spoke at a Uwchlan Township Supervisors meeting this summer in opposition to the sale. I am opposed to any development that would cover Lionville Station Farm with significant impervious surfaces. Ideally, I'd like it preserved as parkland so that Chester County residents may enjoy it, while ensuring that it does not get covered with asphalt. As a county commissioner, I would not be empowered to facilitate a referendum on the property, but I would lend public support to such a referendum if its passage would lead to the property's preservation.

¹ [Chester County has most new housing in Philly's Pennsylvania suburbs \(inquirer.com\)](http://inquirer.com)

5. What measures, if any, will you take to prioritize the general physical health and general wellbeing of the residents of Uwchlan Township and Chester County?

Chester County needs to be more walkable. Like many suburban places, it can be very difficult to get around on foot or by bicycle in Chester County. That needs to change. We can make Chester County more accessible by foot with more sidewalks, more walking and cycle trails, and better planning. Our trails need to be interconnected so that people can cycle to work or school. Wherever appropriate, we should build sidewalks so people can safely walk or cycle instead of driving. Parks and preserved lands can play an important role in this, since walking trails can easily be incorporated into them. The more we use our legs, the healthier we will be as a county. In addition to using our space wisely, I'll work to save and reopen our local hospitals, and have mobile healthcare units dispatched from the Chester County Health Department to underserved communities so they can access healthcare more easily.

6. What measures, if any, will you take to protect the environment and its effects on the residents of Uwchlan Township and Chester County?

I'm proud to be endorsed by the Sierra Club of Pennsylvania in my race for Chester County Commissioner. I take environmental protections very seriously, and I'm committed to a cleaner and greener Chester County. Here are just a few of the ways I'd like to achieve that:

1. Invest the county's pension fund in planet-friendly growth portfolios.
2. Place solar panels on the roofs of County-owned buildings and put county-owned fields to good use by turning them into solar farms.
3. Put policies into place that require County employees to switch off appliances when they're not being used.
4. Direct the Department of Procurement to include sustainability as a top priority for County purchases.
5. Require that all County vehicles be hybrid or electric going forward.
6. Appoint people to authorities, boards, and commissions who have stated their commitment to environmentally friendly policies.
7. Incentivize SEPTA and other transportation organizations to convert their fleets from gas/oil powered vehicles to electric.
8. Install "smart heating and cooling" systems that adjust temperatures based on how many people are in a given building and where those people remain within the building.
9. Require LED and other energy efficient lightbulbs to be installed throughout County-owned buildings.
10. Promote rooftop gardens where solar panels may not be installed for whatever reason.
11. Conduct a study to determine whether carbon-capture systems are needed at the Chester County Landfill.
12. Lobby Chester County's state and federal legislators to promote carbon reduction and sustainability programs in areas where Counties are not empowered to create public policy.
13. Use the office of the commissioners to report information to the public about how climate change is affecting our local communities.
14. Create a taskforce of retired environmental consultants who local businesses may hire, free of charge, to show them how to cut their energy use and reduce their carbon footprints.
15. Condition public-private partnerships upon the agreed understanding that energy-efficient heating and cooling, transportation, and other energy-related mechanisms be in place on the private sector entity.
16. Invest in bicycle trails that connect to each other so that people can commute to work or elsewhere via trails, instead of roadways.

17. Fund the modernization of our local train stations and increase Chester County's connectivity with rail lines to keep people off the roads and promote public transport.
18. Continue to invest in the reconnection of the West Chester train station to Philadelphia and Wilmington.
19. Improve water quality inspections
20. Incentivize transportation alternatives and energy-efficient housing opportunities in places where residents are under-resourced or underserved in some way.
21. Connect Chester County's rail lines to those of Berks and Montgomery Counties.
22. Create a carpool network so residents can safely ride to work with neighbors who have been verified and vetted as safe drivers.
23. Increase busing to the most rural and most urban parts of Chester County. We have many people who live in southwest and northern Chester County who have no public transportation options. By working with SEPTA, the Transportation Management Association of Chester County (TMACC) and the Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association (GVFTMA) to expand transportation options in rural and urban areas alike, we can reduce reliance on personal vehicles.

7. What measures, if any, will you take to facilitate the proactive coordination of development between neighboring townships in Chester County?

As a county commissioner, I will work with CCATO (Chester County Association of Township Officials) to ensure that our municipalities are talking to each other and planning our communities carefully. Our municipalities are not geographically large, so when one municipality builds indiscriminately, it affects us all. There needs to be coordination between the municipalities so that their needs are met without negatively impacting neighboring areas. County Commissioners are in a strong position to quarterback an effort like that. If not us, then who?

8. What local, state, and national conservation programs do you support that can benefit the general wellbeing of the residents of Uwchlan Township and Chester County?

- Natural Lands Trust
- The Land Conservancy of Southern Chester County
- The World Wildlife Fund
- The Natural Resources Defense Council
- Land Trust Alliance
- WeConservePA
- Willistown Conservation Trust
- Brandywine Conservancy
- Marshallton Conservation Trust
- PA Growing Greener Coalition
- Conservation PA
- Clean Water Action