

John Matthew Smith is a community activist who, among other things, is deeply concerned about the safety and economic well-being of our county. Because the walkability of Hampden Township is of interest to many residents, John ran for Hampden Commissioner in 2017. Although unsuccessful, he feels victorious as walkability in our community has greatly improved and continues to receive significant attention.

John grew up in the Washington DC suburbs and fell in love with aviation when he started flying lessons with a Boy Scouts of America Aviation Explorer troop. John subsequently pursued his aviation interests at the University of Maryland and received a B.S. in 1986 in Transportation Management, Economics, and Organizational Psychology. Upon graduation, John started a career with United Airlines at Dulles Airport. After his wife, Kristi, relocated to Cumberland County for work, John followed, gave up his dream to become a professional pilot, and moved to Hampden Township to facilitate a united and healthy family. He continued to work for United Airlines at Harrisburg International Airport where he used his knowledge of aviation and organizational psychology to help make Harrisburg the safest station in United's system. Recognizing John's success in Harrisburg, United Airlines tasked him with overseeing and successfully developing a culture change program that dramatically improved ground safety at United nationwide.

While supporting Kristi's professional career, John became the primary caregiver to their two boys, both graduates of our highly respected public schools in Cumberland Valley School District. He coached soccer for HMMS for 12 years and his teams won several championships. John has a deep and special connection to the BSA as it was through the Boy Scouts of America Aviation Explorers program that he met his wife Kristi, where they both earned their pilot's licenses. John supported both of his sons in their achievement of the rank of Eagle Scout and he has spent the past ten years as the Eagle Scout coach for BSA Troop 196. After retiring from United in 2013, John obtained a Real Estate License to assist in the purchase and management of rental properties.

John is a proud union member and his union roots run deep. His grandfather was a founding member of the AFL/CIO and worked as a CIO organizer who drafted Hubert Humphrey to run for Senate. John is a strong believer in giving back and supports many charitable organizations. As a teenager, he volunteered with the Civil Air Patrol. As a young adult, he was one of a group of friends who founded the Race for Hope DC which has since raised over \$30 million for brain tumor research. He has been awarded several commendations for his fundraising efforts. Since 2013 John has also volunteered for the Computer Ministry of Mission Central which refurbishes computers for underserved communities. He personally rehabilitated almost one hundred laptops during COVID in conjunction with Johns Hopkins University and Bryn Mar Methodist Church to help those caught in the digital divide.

Over the last 15 years, John has watched most of his former soccer players move away from Cumberland County as well-paying jobs in our community were scarce and this problem is accelerating. He is deeply concerned about the recent relocation of Rite Aid and Harsco to Philadelphia and wants to stem the “brain drain” in our county. He will contribute his level best to ensure local governments recognize our increasingly diverse demographic and work to ensure the playing field for home purchasing and zoning is equitable and inclusive.

In a housing environment challenged and stifled by high inflation and soaring home costs, the “American Dream” for many young adults is being further squelched by cash-paying large hedge funds with which they must compete to purchase their first homes. Many are unaware of this enormous and inequitable barrier, which forces them to rent from many of the same (hidden) Wall Street firms that outbid them during attempted home purchases. The cost of a single-family home is out of reach for too many young families. Currently, 50% of the home purchases in zip code 17015 are cash buyers!

Because John worked while raising two boys, people who have met John know he has the ethical interests, standards, experience and energy to be an effective advocate for young families in our community.