

## SP Council Plans Wider Parking Restrictions Near HS

By FRED T. ROSSI  
 Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — The township council is likely to take action in January to restrict parking on a number of streets surrounding Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School in the wake of increasing complaints from residents about excessive student parking in those areas.

During a meeting last week with Police Chief Brian Mahoney and Scotch Plains Police Sergeant Ernesto Hernandez, supervisor of the traffic bureau, the council agreed to introduce an ordinance in 2007 that will allow permit-only parking on school days for homeowners on Church Street, Portland Avenue, West Court, Sunrise Court, Old Farm Road and Concord Road.

Some limited restrictions are already in place on several of the streets, but a more sweeping ban on student parking on these streets would hopefully lead to more students carpooling or taking the bus to school, Sgt. Hernandez said. He

said he hoped such a ban would also lead to "the board of education getting the message that they have to do something" to provide more on-site parking for students.

Township officials said they anticipate that some students would choose to park their cars in neighborhoods even further from the high school on Westfield Road.

Some officials expressed frustration that the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education has failed to take significant action to increase student-parking options at the high school. Township Manager Thomas Atkins noted that the board had hired a consultant to examine options, but nothing had come out of it. He said he told the board earlier this month about the "many" complaints being received from residents and said the matter needed to be addressed in 2007.

Chief Mahoney said police had met with the board last year but no action

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Horace R. Corbin for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times  
**LOOKING OVER PUBLIC MATTERS...**Scotch Plains Councilman-elect Kevin Glover reviews the plans and specifications for the nearly \$4 million improvements to the Scotch Plains Municipal Building with The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times staff last Friday. Mr. Glover is experienced in construction management.

## SP PB Approves Subdivision For 5 Mountain Ave. Homes

By FRED T. ROSSI  
 Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — After empathizing with neighborhood residents' concerns, the township planning board Monday night unanimously approved a major subdivision application that will result in the razing of a century-old home and the creation of five new lots for single-family homes on Mountain Avenue.

Vincent Wilt, the chairman of the Westfield planning board, plans to purchase the property at 2343 Mountain Avenue and divide it into five new conforming lots. Three of the lots will face Mountain Avenue. A fourth property, to be situated behind those three lots, will face Watchung Terrace, while a fifth will face Harding Road. At the board's first meeting since October 11, Mr.

Wilt estimated that the selling price of the five new homes that will eventually be built would be about \$550,000 each.

Nearly a dozen neighborhood residents attended the meeting, and several spoke in opposition to the application. David Murray of Watchung Terrace warned about existing problems regarding low water pressure and natural gas pressure in the neighborhood, and said the new homes may face similar problems. His wife, Nancy, expressed concern about the safety of the children in the neighborhood during construction, when foundations will be dug and large equipment will be in the area.

Richard Shedlin of Harding Road expressed concern about the potential size of the new homes and how close one of the homes might be to his own adjoining property.

Multiple neighbors said the character of the neighborhood, which is located between Mountain Avenue and Route 22, would change "drastically" if the existing home, built in the 1860s, is demolished, older trees are removed and the new homes are developed.

Board member Joseph Doyle and other board members told residents that an application requiring no variances and in compliance with all local ordinances, such as Mr. Wilt's, must be approved by the board. "If we don't approve [this application]," Mr. Doyle said, "someone else will," namely a court that would, on appeal, overturn a planning board denial of such an application.

"Our hands are tied" was a refrain several board members said on Monday.

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## SP to Hold Hearing On Block Grants

SCOTCH PLAINS — Scotch Plains Mayor Martin Marks has announced a public hearing will be held on the HUD Revenue Sharing Block Grant, 33rd year funding at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, December 4, in Room 202 of the municipal building at 430 Park Avenue.

"We are attempting to set our own priorities and want to know how our own citizens feel the county allocation should be spent," Mayor Marks said.

Scotch Plains has benefited from Community Development funds since 1975 amounting to over \$3,750,000. It is expected that approximately \$6 million will be available to Union County for this year's program.

The hearing will be chaired by Joseph Duff, Robert Johnston and Philip Schick, official delegates to the township's Revenue Sharing Committee. Nineteen towns in Union County are involved and all projects must have a two-thirds majority of the total committee membership approval in order to become a reality.

Applications for projects will be available at the Scotch Plains Township Hall and include complete instructions concerning project eligibility.

Projects funded throughout the 19 member municipalities include housing rehabilitation, neighborhood preservation, code enforcement, senior citizens facilities, childcare facilities and various social service programs.



Victoria McCabe for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times and Potter Architects of Union slanted roof, as well as a second-story addition over the police department. Pictured above are the current structure, left, and an artist rendering of what the building will look like when completed.

## Vehicle Restrictions Take Effect On Senger Place During Scotch Plains Town Hall Refurbishment

By FRED T. ROSSI  
 Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — With the renovation of the municipal building now underway, vehicle access to Senger Place will be partially restricted because police and other emergency vehicles will be displaced during the project and will need to be kept "as near to the building as possible."

At its meeting Tuesday evening, the township council approved a resolution that will temporarily restrict access to Senger Place, which runs behind the municipal building between

Front Street and East Second Street. There will be no access, except for police and other emergency vehicles, to Senger Place from Front Street.

Non-emergency vehicles exiting the municipal building parking lot onto Senger Place will turn left and drive towards East Second Street, where access to and from Senger Place will not be affected. Parking in the parking lot itself will not be affected, except for the multiple parking spaces displaced by the large trailer the police department is using during the renovation.

An ordinance was introduced that

will prohibit parking on the south side of Allenby Lane between 8 and 9 a.m. and 2 and 3:30 p.m. on school days. Councilwoman Paulette Coronato explained that a pathway from Coles School leads to Allenby Lane and, increasingly, parents are parking on both sides of the narrow street to drop off or pick up their children.

The public hearing on the ordinance will be held on Tuesday, December 12.

The council introduced an ordinance that will limit parking on Mountain Avenue and adjacent William Street to two hours during weekdays. Councilwoman Nancy Malool said bus commuters frequently park their cars in that area all day and local businesses "are finding that their customers have no place to park."

The public hearing on the ordinance will also be held December 12. The council approved a resolution

to install a beacon light atop the new communications tower at the south-side firehouse. Mrs. Coronato said that federal regulations require all cell towers located at an emergency landing zone for helicopters to either be painted or equipped with a light. She noted that the field behind the firehouse is available for emergency helicopter landings, especially in cases of medical evacuation emergencies.

The council awarded Conti Communications a \$10,875 contract to install the beacon, which will complete work on the tower. The council approved a separate resolution to release the final payment of about \$48,500 to Procomm Inc., which served as the general contractor for the project that began early last year.

Councilman Frank Rossi said the new tower, which will improve radio and cell phone communications

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Fred K. Lecomte for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times  
**GIRLS JUST HAVING LOTS OF FUN...**Despite inclement weather and the football team's eventual loss, the Raider girls' cheerleaders were in top form in keeping the fans upbeat during the football game with Elizabeth on November 22.

## Ferguson Hopes for Vote on Respite Care Legislation

By PAUL J. PEYTON  
 Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

WESTFIELD — Fresh off the closest election battle of his career, Rep. Mike Ferguson (R-7th, New Providence) said he will be able to work well with the new Democratic majority in Congress come January.

During a visit to The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times last Wednesday, Mr. Ferguson said Republicans were handed defeats "up and down the ballot" across the nation November 7. Mr. Ferguson, who will begin his fourth term in January, said he has worked with Democrats on various pieces of legislation during his tenure.

"I have been somebody who has worked across party lines for six years," he said.

He noted that Democrats would hold a 232-200 majority in the 110th Congress during the 2007-2008 ses-

sion, similar to the current Republican majority. Mr. Ferguson said with a slim majority, Democrats will have to work across party lines to get legislation passed.

"You just can't get 218 votes with just your own people," he said, adding, "Congress is going to be very narrowly divided."

One piece of legislation Mr. Ferguson said he will try to push through the lame-duck GOP majority in December is The Lifespan Respite Care Act or H.R. 3238. Mr. Ferguson is the prime sponsor in the House; Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.) is the co-prime sponsor in the Senate.

Mr. Ferguson's mother, Roberta Ferguson, died in 2003 of multiple myeloma. His father, Thomas, cared for Mrs. Ferguson at home. Mr. Ferguson said the legislation would help family caregivers of seriously ill parents and disabled children find and pay for respite services. The bill includes \$280 million over five years for respite care to assist caregivers.

"In the scope of the federal budget, it is a pittance," Mr. Ferguson said. "I think it has the potential to do an enormous amount of good."

The bill has been supported by a number of Arc chapters statewide, Cerebral Palsy of New Jersey and the Easter Seals New Jersey, Inc.

"We are cautiously optimistic that we are going to get that (House) vote" in the lame-duck session, he said, noting that President Bush has indicated he would sign the measure if it reaches his desk.

In terms of his committee assignments in the new session, Mr. Ferguson said he expects to remain a member of the House Energy and

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## FW Rec. Commission Selects Pembridge, Tannenbaum

By MARIA WOHR  
 Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

FANWOOD — The Fanwood Recreation Commission on Tuesday night proposed that Mary Pembridge be accepted as assistant recreation director and that Jamie Tannenbaum be accepted as secretary.

Two Fanwood residents also proposed to bring a taekwon do program to the recreation commission. Tulay Sencar and Edgar Guzman, instructors of Apex Taekwondo, want to offer a program on Tuesdays and Thursday afternoons to kindergarten through eighth grade and possibly to older teens and adults. The eight weeks of classes would cost \$140 plus a \$35 annual membership fee, which includes the uniform and insurance. The cost would also include a fee per class equivalent to \$10 a child for the eight-week session. The proposed start date is Tuesday, January 9.

"This program gives kids self-confidence and boosts self-esteem," Mr. Guzman said. "We teach them a non-violent response to violence and how to defend themselves against violence if it occurs."

The recreation commission also discussed the Fanwood Borough Council's proposal for a boundless playground at LaGrande Park. A boundless playground would be a playground where all children — disabled

or not — could participate in activities. The proposal calls for the replacement of playground equipment at the park, but some of the commission's members argued that since the baseball field is also in the same area, it might pose a danger to children.

Resident Adrienne Robertello, the mother of an autistic child, had told the borough council at its November 8 meeting that she planned to enter an essay in the Playskool Make Children's Dreams Come True essay contest. The contest will reward \$300,000 towards a complete boundless playground in the community of the essay winner.

"This is a great idea, but the park is so packed as it is that it would be nice to have a facility dedicated to specialized children," said Commissioner Tannenbaum. "However, being a parent of a child with special needs, you don't want to segregate them. Inclusion is a big part of it."

"This is an easy way to update our playground equipment, but the baseball field is not far, and if a ball were to go over the fence it might put children in danger," Commissioner Russell Wells said.

Fanwood will hold its annual holiday celebration on Sunday, December 3. The event will take place at the North Avenue Train Station from 3 to 5 p.m. Children will have the oppor-

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Benjamin Corbin for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times  
**DECK THE STREETS...**Workers decorate downtown Scotch Plains Tuesday on Park Avenue in preparation for the holiday season.



Maria Woehr for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times  
**CONSIDERING...**Edgar Guzman talks with the Fanwood Recreation Commission about offering a taekwon do program to Fanwood residents.

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