

League Challenges COAH's 'Fatally Flawed' Regulations

By MICHAEL J. POLLACK
 Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

Editor's Note: The following is the first of a two-part series on legal challenges to new regulations on low to moderate income housing rules in New Jersey.

AREA - Because the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) denied the League of Municipalities' request to delay the December 31 deadline for towns to submit their compliance plans (called Fair Share Plans), the League has filed a notice of appeal with the Appellate Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey.

The Fair Housing Act of 1985 created COAH as the state legislature's

voluntary, full compliance and COAH certification offer towns protection from these lawsuits.

According to Executive Director William Dressel, the League is challenging the "validity" of the newest COAH regulations.

The third-round rules establish a new ratio of requiring that one affordable unit be built for every four market-rate units, and one affordable unit be created for every 16 jobs added. Any participating municipality must also track its housing and job creation numbers since 2004, and project the trend through 2018.

League Assistant General Counsel Edward Buzak, of The Buzak Law

and said that towns' obligations are based upon "unreliable and inaccurate information and exaggerated projections, which result from false and unsupported assumptions."

Chris Donnelly, a spokesperson for COAH, said the League's motion for an extension on the year-end deadline to submit Fair Share Plans was denied because, "the council did not feel there was sufficient evidence to show that requiring municipalities to submit their plans by December 31, 2008 would cause them harm."

Mr. Donnelly said, "The council also felt that any further delays would be detrimental to the promotion, construction and rehabilitation of affordable housing. We are dedicated to moving forward with the third-round rules and are available to work with municipalities in crafting their affordable housing plans."

He added, "COAH is moving forward with the third-round regulations and the December 31 deadline, and we encourage all municipalities to submit their plans as soon as possible."

COAH falls under the jurisdiction of the state's Department of Community Affairs (DCA). DCA Commissioner Joseph Doria, a former Bayonne mayor and ex-state legislator, said in a statement, "It is important to keep in mind that we are talking about housing for the hardworking men and women of New Jersey and housing that allows children to remain in the communities where they grew up. This is a vital issue and the highest priority for COAH."

He said COAH's new rules continue the use of a "growth-share approach," which bases towns' obligations on market-rate residential and non-residential growth.

Municipalities are required to zone and plan for eventual affordable units; however, they are only responsible for building affordable housing in relation to the growth that actually occurs.

New Westfield Town Planner Bill Drew was hired to replace outgoing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



ALL EARS...Residents delight in the fresh Jersey corn available last Saturday at the Westfield Farmers Market. Brilliant weather made the day a great time to be out in search of tasty produce and friendly conversation with neighbors.

response to a series of New Jersey Supreme Court cases known as the Mount Laurel decisions.

The decisions stipulated that municipalities have a constitutional obligation to provide a "realistic opportunity" for the construction of low and moderate-income housing.

If municipalities in any way deny or hinder the construction of affordable housing, they are at risk for lawsuits. While participation in COAH is

Group, will represent the League in its legal challenge.

He called COAH's regulations "unsustainable and fatally flawed."

Mr. Buzak added, "COAH's regulations, if implemented, will drive up the costs of compliance, and those additional costs will ultimately be borne by taxpayers. We can do better."

The League accused COAH's third-round rules of being "unachievable"



A DAY FOR VOLUNTEERS...Mountainside borough volunteers enjoy a day at the community pool this past Saturday in recognition of their time to the community.

Mountainside Council Has Public Debate Over Pool

By JOHN MAGUIRE
 Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

MOUNTAINSIDE - The decision to close the community pool for a volunteer appreciation event this past Saturday dominated the public comment portion of the Mountainside Borough Council monthly meeting held on Tuesday, with Mayor Robert Vigilanti and the council squaring off with a resident over whether the council had the authority to close the facility.

Resident Ray Feldman rose to the podium and questioned why the pool was closed last Saturday for the volunteer appreciation event. The council defended the decision and dismissed accusations by Mr. Feldman that they did not have the authority to



ROCKET MEN...Jefferson School Cub Scout Pack 673 boys and their families launch and recover more than 30 rockets with the help of McKinley School Cub Scout Pack's Steve Huber and his son, Tim, pictured above. Mr. Huber is a part of Pack 176, and Tim is part of Troop 77 out of St. Paul's Church. For more information about Pack 673, e-mail cubscoutpack673@yahoo.com or meet the group at Jefferson's library in Westfield on Monday, September 15 at 7 p.m.

Lance Busy Greeting Voters, Fundraising for Fall Campaign

By KATIE ROGERS
 Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

Editor's Note: The Westfield Leader spent the day with Republican candidate for Congress from the Seventh District, Leonard Lance, last Friday. A similar article on Democratic candidate Linda Stender appeared in the August 7 issue.

AREA - When most patrons arrived at the Scotchwood Diner on Route 22 last Friday, they didn't realize they would be getting a surprise visit from a state senator and congressional candidate, Senator Leonard Lance (R-23, Clinton) arrived with his entourage of support in tow, including Scotch Plains Mayor Martin Marks, Deputy Mayor Nancy Malool and candidate for township council, Mary DePaola.

Since securing his nomination as

the Republican candidate for Congress in June, Mr. Lance has been working on the state budget in Trenton and campaigning non-stop. This particular day, he started his morning making fundraising phone calls, then stopped at the diner to talk to area citizens before facing an afternoon of door-to-door campaigning.

Mr. Marks led the meet-and-greet by approaching each diner and intro-

ducing them to "a very special friend of his," Mr. Lance, who handed guests a copy of his campaign literature.

Mr. Lance made his way around the restaurant, which included chatting with a prospective law student at Penn State University, a family of five - whose three children's ages he managed to guess correctly on first attempt - and a concerned local union

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



DINER'S CLUB...State Senator Leonard Lance, the Republican candidate to replace Mike Ferguson in the U.S. Congress's Seventh District, met with patrons at the Scotchwood Diner in Scotch Plains. Scotch Plains Mayor Martin Marks introduced Mr. Lance. Above, Mr. Lance speaks with a family of five before distributing campaign literature. He faces a Congressional challenge from Assemblywoman Linda Stender of Fanwood.

Garwood School Bd. Names Emmons Lincoln Principal

By RAYNOR DENITZIO
 Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

GARWOOD - Following its executive session Tuesday night, the Garwood Board of Education (BOE) announced the hiring of Mary Emmons as principal of Lincoln School, filling the vacancy created by Teresa Quigley's elevation to superintendent in May. The salary for Ms. Emmons will be \$88,000 per year.

The board also announced that board member Lisa Marano would resign effective Monday, September 1, due to personal reasons. Ms. Marano, who has two years left on her term, declined to elaborate on her resignation.

The board will seek a replacement for Ms. Marano's seat on the nine-member body. Board President Adele Lewis said the board would advertise for the vacancy and then select a replacement. With the school year set to start in a few weeks, Ms. Lewis said she hopes to find a successor by October.

"We'll advertise the vacancy and hopefully we'll get some interested people to step in," said Ms. Lewis.

Ms. Emmons recently completed a master's degree in administration from Kean University and has worked in the district for eight years, teaching middle school social studies and fourth grade.

Ms. Emmons completed an administrative internship during her master's

degree program. She assisted Ms. Quigley in her roles as acting superintendent and principal of Lincoln School. Ms. Quigley said this experience was one of the reasons she felt Ms. Emmons was a strong candidate for the position.

"She was the person that kind of helped me when I was doing both jobs," Ms. Quigley said. "I really needed someone who could come in and help me and get the school year off to a great start."

Negotiations Committee Chairman John Sullivan also said on Tuesday that the BOE would enter the first stage of the mediation process with the Garwood Education Association on Monday, September 8. Mr. Sullivan said he could not provide an indication of the timetable for the negotiations at this time.

In other personnel matters, the BOE announced the hiring of multiple employees. Nicola Stewart was appointed as a teacher for the district's pre-school special education program. The board had appointed Erica Fuentes to this position during its July 15 meeting, but Ms. Fuentes turned it down. Tara Ridente, Margaret Hak and Shawna Monghan were appointed to part-time positions in the district.

The board named Robert Donahue as the district's architect of record. Ms. Lewis said that this was neces-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Compensation of School Superintendents in Union County

(Note 1: Some differences exist between data reported by the NJ Department of Education and actual contract documents obtained from the respective boards of education, along with differences in the time periods stated for the data. The data below, normalized to the 2008-2009 school year, are believed accurate to within a few percentage points).

District, Superintendent	2008-09 Base Salary	Incl. Bonus	Others
Berkeley Heights, Judith Ann Rattner	\$200,000 ^{note 1}	\$212,000	see note 2
Central Jersey Arts, Benjamin Fox	\$ 92,000 ^{note 1}	unknown	unknown
Clark, Renae LaPrete (new interim)	\$172,000	unknown	unknown
Cranford, Lawrence Feinsod	\$209,020 ^{note 1}	\$233,000 ^{note 1}	see note 2
Elizabeth, Pablo Munoz	\$230,000 ^{note 1}	unknown	unknown
Garwood, Teresa Quigley	\$126,000 ^{note 1}	unknown	unknown
Hillside, Raymond Bandlow	\$180,000 ^{note 1}	\$194,000 ^{note 1}	unknown
Kenilworth, Lloyd Leschuk	\$166,000 ^{note 1}	\$169,000 ^{note 1}	unknown
Linden, Joseph Martino	\$199,900	\$217,000	see note 2
Morris-Union, Kim Coleman	\$222,960	\$237,108	see note 2
Mountainside, Jeanette Baubles	\$135,000	\$138,000	see note 2
New Providence, David Miceli	\$174,200	\$177,200 ^{note 1}	see note 2
Plainfield, Steve Gallon (newly hired)	\$198,000 ^{note 3}	unknown	see note 2
Queen City Academy, RaShawn Adams	\$112,000	unknown	unknown
Rahway, Frank Bughone	\$173,000	\$190,200 ^{note 1}	see note 2
Roselle Park, Patrick Spangnoletti	\$160,225	\$164,000 ^{note 1}	see note 2
Roselle, Elnardo Webster	\$159,862	unknown	see note 2
Scotch Plains-Fanwood, Margaret Hayes	\$189,000	\$214,000	see note 2
Springfield, Michael Davino	\$169,000 ^{note 1}	\$173,000 ^{note 1}	see note 2
Summit, Nathan Parker	\$214,000 ^{note 1}	\$218,000 ^{note 1}	see note 2
U.C. Education Services, William Presutti	\$173,056	indeterminate	n/a
U.C. Executive, Carmen Centuolo	\$120,000		
U.C. TEAMS, Sheila Thorpe	(no response to inquiries)		
U.C. VoTech, Thomas Bistocchi	\$197,131		see note 2
Union Township, Theodore Jakubowski	\$215,534	\$219,500 ^{note 1}	see note 2
Westfield, Margaret Dolan	\$181,650	\$192,000 ^{note 1}	see note 2
Winfield Park, Alice D'Ambola	\$108,971	\$110,000 ^{note 1}	see note 2

(Note 2: Contracts include various forms of compensation for items such as travel, automobile, conferences, memberships and consulting activities. The contracts and NJDOE data can be reviewed at goleader.com. Note 3: Newly hired Plainfield Superintendent contract had been placed on hold by the NJDOE although the hiring of the superintendent is published on the district website. Commentary on the superintendent contracts is provided on page 4.)

Jill Goode was appointed as temporary chief finance officer for the borough at a salary of \$58,000, retro-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

PAGE INDEX

Regional	2-3	Obituary	14	Real Estate	9-13
Editorial	4-5	Education	14	Classifieds	13
Community	6-7	Sports	9-12	A&E	15-16