



LIGHTING UP THE SKY...Fireworks lit up the sky over Nomahegan Park in Cranford on July 4th. The day included canoe races, the annual Firecracker 5K Run and other family-fun activities.

Brooks Crandall for The Westfield Leader



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COMMUNITY EVENT...The Westfield Community Band, under the direction of Thomas Connors, held its annual Independence Day Celebration at the gazebo in Mindowaskin Park on July 5.

### SP Planning Board OKs New Japanese Restaurant

By LISA HAGEN Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

SCOTCH PLAINS - The Scotch Plains Planning Board on Monday night reviewed and approved an application for a Japanese restaurant at 427 Park Avenue.

Applicant Xian Lin, owner of Main Star Chinese Restaurant at 429 Park Avenue, told the board he wants to open the new restaurant, Osaka, adjacent to his existing property. He said that this new restaurant would give people more choices, including a different menu. "I have been serving the Scotch Plains community for more than 10 years," Mr. Lin said. "People have different choices and they can order sushi."

His attorney, Jay Lin, said that since he is already in the restaurant business, he is familiar with how to run such an establishment.

"This would be good for Scotch Plains," he said. "The surrounding neighborhood already has notice of it."

Scotch Plains Construction Official Robert LaCosta, who also is acting co-manager for the township, asked if the building would look any different or what changes would be made. Xian Lin said that things would mostly "remain the same" with no changes to the windows and just a new door with the name of the restaurant above it.

He said the restaurant would have seven tables that serve two people. The board inquired whether it could also have four-person tables, which Xian Lin said is a possibility.

Under a parking agreement from 1988, the restaurant gets one space for every two employees, and in the plan, three employees are proposed. From the calculations, there would be five parking spaces, one space per three seats. Mr. LaCosta said there would be enough parking spaces for the seating, but not enough spaces allotted for the employees according to the agreement. Mr. LaCosta said a variance

### WF Farmers' Market Schedule Announced

WESTFIELD - The Farmers' Market in Westfield is open Saturdays, 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Southside Train Station parking lot. It will run every Saturday through October 27. There will be three farmers selling produce, vegetables and fruit. There also will be bakers, bread and pies and frozen dinners. For more information, contact the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Mary Cirillo, mcirillo@westfieldareachamber.com or call (908) 233-3021.



Greg Ryan for The Westfield Leader

FARM FRESH...Local farms bring fresh-off-the-vine produce and home-made treats to the Westfield Farmers' Market held Saturdays in the southside Train Station parking lot.

## GW Hears Proponents, Opponents on Field Complex

By CHRISTINA M. HINKE Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

GARWOOD - The borough council heard from its auditor Tuesday during its workshop session about the amended bond ordinance summing \$3,257,000 for the athletic field complex that will be introduced at the next council meeting, to be held Tuesday, July 24. The complex would provide a baseball field, a turf field for field hockey and soccer, a basketball and bocce court, and a playground.

Last year's bid amount was rejected for legal reasons and the borough was forced to re-bid. The new bids, which were received last month, had a low bid of \$2,825,000, \$175,000 over last year's low bidder. Councilman Lou Petruzzelli said the hike in the bid is due to an increase in materials costs.

Steve Rogut, bond attorney, Warren Korecky, auditor, and Sandy Bruns, chief financial officer, discussed the details of the amended bond. The amended bond ordinance has increased \$1,147,000 from the original bond ordinance in 2007 of \$2,110,000.

The amended bond ordinance of \$3.2 million includes \$1.1 million in Green Acres grants. In addition, the borough was approved for a Green Acres, 15-year loan of \$600,000 at a rate of 2 percent.

It is still unclear how much taxes would be raised to pay for the bond. Mr. Korecky estimated about \$50 to \$60 per \$100,000 assessed household, and said to the council he could have an exact figure by the next council meeting.

Council President Keith Sluka, Councilwoman Sara Todisco and Mayor Patricia Quattrocchi each voiced that they were in favor of the complex. Councilman Jim Mathieu said he was not in favor.

"I think the project...adds value to the community," Mr. Sluka said.

"I am dead set against it because we can't afford it," Mr. Mathieu said. "I would love to see us change the project to something we can afford."

Ms. Todisco said that the complex would attract attention to potential homebuyers in the area.

Mr. Mathieu asked Mayor Quattrocchi for her view on the matter.

"I would be inclined, if I were in your seat, to vote yes. I would say I am 98.9 percent sure. ... I think it would add value to the community," Mayor Quattrocchi said.

Residents also had opinions for and against the complex.

Douglas Heintz, who coaches T-ball and has three children, said, "Please raise my taxes \$50 to \$75 based on the assessed value. I think it is an asset to the town. I think everyone will enjoy it—the seniors, the kids, the rec department, not just the ball players."

Angelo Alimonte suggested eliminating the field house to save some money, and proceed with the project. "We may never get grant money again," he said.

Richard Kane said the project would increase house values.

Tom Petis, a former choir teacher, said, "If this project wasn't approved a dozen years ago when the economy was good, I think it is ludicrous to do it now when the economy is bad."

Mr. Petis suggested sharing services for the baseball field with Westfield.

Garwood Baseball League President Scott Kessler said, "Regarding sharing services with other towns—we tried to do so. We were shut out many times."

"I am against the project," said

## CF BOA

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Two River Senior Vice-President Robert Werner addressed the board briefly to close out the application. "Cranford is an important market for our bank," he said. "We want to make sure the brand of our bank, as well as the brand of Cranford, remains strong."

Another board member, Chuck Higgins, said that he thought "the town has waited a lot of time for this lot to be developed."

Zoning board members responded positively to the application, and the new plan was approved on the conditions that a pedestrian walkway be added, and that the lights around the 24-hour ATM not exceed the federal minimum standard.

The Medi Weightloss Clinic, located at 198 North Avenue, East, applied to construct a three-foot by four-foot sign, visible from the road, to advertise the business in an exception to a town variance. The board unanimously approved that application.

Gudrun Minton, who lives at The Pointe on North Avenue. She said the residents of The Pointe pay the highest taxes in the borough and the taxes raised for the complex would be substantial to residents of The Pointe.

Bill Nierstedt, a candidate for borough council, said, "I support the development of the athletic field complex. It's time to provide adequate open space for our residents. I believe this complex will improve property values."

Mr. Nierstedt asked, "How much longer will Garwood survive?" considering high-school students attend Arthur L. Johnson High School in Clark and youth sports players play for other communities. Mr. Nierstedt said he felt this was a path for Garwood to become absorbed by another community.

"It is a luxury. It is not a necessity. I have lived here 30 years. The taxes have gone up and the property values have gone down," Dolores Dombrowski said. "Where are people going to get the money from that are suffering—the guy on unemployment, where is he going to get money for food? It's a wonderful project, but this little town can't afford it."

She asked what the anticipated cost was for electric, heat and water and maintenance and repair for the complex as well as the police cost.

The council also adopted a resolution for a two-year contract, with a 2-percent increase in 2013 or a 1-percent increase in salaries, whichever is lowest, for Garwood to continue its contract with the Westfield Regional Health Department.

## WF Council

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Two ordinances were also passed on first reading. One ordinance appropriates \$160,000 for various items for the police and fire departments. These items include generators for traffic lights that become disabled during storms, a mobile light tower, a pickup truck and a portable message sign.

Mr. Gildea said that the generators for traffic signals will save the town money during storm outages as the intersections would not have to be manned by police personnel.

The second ordinance sets in place new parking restrictions in the area of Westfield High School for Edgar Road, Dorian Road, Rahway Avenue, Dorian Place, Dorian Court, Shadowlawn Drive and Nottingham Place.

Public hearings will be held on both ordinances at the public meeting on Tuesday, August 7, at 8 p.m.

The council also held closed sessions to discuss an Unfair Labor Practice Charge being brought by a police officer; firefighter contract negotiations; lease negotiations involving the Reeve House; and Sunnyside Senior Housing versus Town of Westfield, a builders remedy lawsuit.

## Turf Field

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to minimize light flowing outward into neighboring properties. He added that the way the light poles are situated would mean that all seven poles would never be lit at the same time. The board has yet to decide on a time when the lights would be turned off at night, but Mr. Mattesich said it is likely the 9:30 p.m. time currently in effect at Houlihan Field would be adopted for the high school field. Mr. Mattesich also noted that resident complaints about the Houlihan lights have been non-existent since that project was completed several years ago.

Mr. Di Piazza, with the firm of FieldTurf, told residents that an artificial field "increases usability" and eliminates most maintenance costs, among them watering and cutting grass, buying and applying chemicals. And he cited studies showing that turf fields are safer for student athletes than natural-grass surfaces.

The board members in attendance—besides Mr. Mattesich and Ms. Clancy, BOE Vice-President David Finn and board member Rosanne Kurstedt also were present—seemed open to the possibility of holding another community meeting to further discuss the bond referendum and the field proposal. But despite calls from residents to separate the two projects, Mr. Mattesich said the referendum would be voted upon as a single package.



Photo courtesy of Linda Ingram

HOLA!...Pictured, left to right, Linda Ingram, Steve West, Kevin Ingram and Ryan Ingram enjoy a family vacation and The Westfield Leader in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino Resort.

## Westfield Zoning Board

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drainage system, which would flow into two dry wells meant to contain any runoff water that may accumulate. The plan includes installing a 15-inch pipe and storm sewer along the perimeter of the property, and replacing the municipal storm sewer with a new one, at the owner's expense, which, he said, would benefit the entire neighborhood. Westfield Town Planner Bill Drew noted that wetlands were adjacent to the property.

Joe O'Keefe, of 785 Prospect Street, who lives directly behind the Lenape Trail property, still expressed concerns about water runoff to Prospect Street. Mr. Zinagra said there would be a wall along the back of the property with a drain in it.

Landscaper Juan Ospina Londono of Haskell described the trees and vegetation to be planted on the property.

Mr. O'Keefe said, "My concern is still the back of the property. I woke up one morning to see a heavily wooded lot bulldozed." Mr. Ospina Londono said the trees, some of them Norway spruce, and the plants would be carefully placed to help contain water.

Project Planner Kevin O'Brien of Rahway described the proposed \$2-million home as being classic in keeping with other homes in the neighborhood. The Adonis' attorney, Rafael Betancourt of Cranford, said the home would add stability to the town's Master Plan.

Board Chairman William Heinbokel noted that years ago the property had been subdivided with the intention of building two smaller homes on it.

Mr. Betancourt then asked the board to approve the application and to grant three variances.

Mr. Heinbokel said he was comfortable with the request; however, board member Anthony Cerami was not, and said he was concerned about the high percentage of impervious ground cover caused by the house and the driveway. He suggested a gravel driveway, which would allow water absorption and not cause runoff.

Board member Andrew Wasserman agreed, saying, "The style will fit in, but it's the significantly large area (of impervious coverage) that concerns me." Mr. Heinbokel replied, "It is a large structure, but all improvements have been made. We're talking about 2,400 square feet."

Board member Chris Masziale said, "The stone has been changed"

to which Mr. Heinbokel commented, "I look at the improvement."

"The vegetation or organic structure has got to be more standard," Mr. Drew said.

Board member Robert Burslem said there has been a significant improvement in the plan, but a structure this large is much over the percentage. At this point, Mr. Heinbokel called for a five-minute break. Following the break, Mr. Masziale made a motion to deny the application, and the board voted with him.

This is the third time the application has been presented before the board. On the first attempt, time would not allow for a full presentation; on the second attempt, the board was reluctant to grant a (d) variance without a full board present.

In other business, Kimberly Fowler of 740 First Street was seeking approval to elevate the front roofline and to construct a two-story addition to the rear of her house contrary to code. The ordinance requires a side-yard setback of 10 feet, where Ms. Fowler has proposed 6.8 and 9.75 feet. The ordinance allows a maximum continuous length of a zoning sidewall of 25 feet, where the proposed is 27.17 feet. The ordinance also requires a one-car garage, where the proposed has no garage. The application was approved.

Timothy and Kristen Bonn of 737 First Street sought approval to remove a handicap ramp and extend an existing deck contrary to code. The ordinance allows a maximum building coverage with a deck of 22 percent, where the proposed is 26.2 percent. The application was approved.

John and Jennifer Czarniecki of 1036 Grandview Avenue sought approval to construct a two-story addition with a dormer contrary to code. The ordinance allows a maximum building coverage of 20 percent, where the proposed is 21.98 percent. The ordinance also allows a maximum floor area ratio of 37 percent, or 2,223 square feet, where the proposed is 37.69 percent, or 2,263 square feet.

Frances Adriens of 901 Mountain View Circle sought approval to construct a cantilevered bay window contrary to code. The ordinance requires a minimum front-yard setback of 40 feet, where the proposed is approximately 18 feet to the proposed bump out. The application was approved.



Fred T. Rossi for The Westfield Leader

TURF TALK...Nearly 50 residents attend a session held by the Westfield Board of Education on Tuesday to provide information and receive feedback on the proposed lighted turf field next to the high school.