

Westfield Rec. Comm. Hears Plans For Mindowaskin's Centennial

By **KIMBERLY A. BROADWELL**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — At the beginning of the Westfield Recreation Commission meeting, held Monday evening, Deborah Burslem, president of The Friends of Mindowaskin Park, Inc., spoke about the upcoming celebration of the local park's 100th anniversary.

Ms. Burslem stated that the last time there was a celebration in the park was in 2001. She noted the centennial festivities, which are scheduled for Saturday, September 22, from 1 to 5 p.m., will feature all the new improvements and maintenance re-

pairs that the Friends of Mindowaskin Park have been enacting in recent years.

In addition, visitors will see the new playground equipment slated for installation in the upcoming weeks. It was noted that the new playground is being funded by grants and monies from the Westfield Recreation Department and Union County, as well as The Westfield Foundation, The Glasser Foundation and the Optimist Club.

Ms. Burslem stated that The Friends of Mindowaskin Park has put in \$1.2 million of improvements into the park. She also noted that the celebration

would have town and state officials in attendance, invited by the organization.

Ms. Burslem concluded by saying snacks would be provided to visitors on the celebration day and that the event fell the day before the annual FestiFall street fair.

In other business, Heather Re, aquatics supervisor of the Memorial Pool, gave a report noting that membership at the pool is down from last year but that participation in swim lessons has increased for this summer's program. She stated that there currently are 486 children signed up for swimming lessons, which Ms. Re attributed to the addition of lessons on Saturdays to accommodate working parents. She stated that all the Saturday classes have been filling up, and that a newly-added swim lesson class for the youngest age group was filling up fast as well.

In her report she noted that swim team participation was just two shy of the numbers from last year and stated that there were 258 swim team members. She added that there were three swim teams affiliated with the pool — the Blue Team, the Green Team and the White team — and said that meets had already started.

When asked how much a membership to the pool costs, Ms. Re responded that a family membership was \$380.

At the conclusion of the meeting, commission members noted that all the summer recreation programs currently are underway and that plans for a temporary ice rink at Gumbert Park were "moving forward."

The next recreation commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 10, at 7:30 p.m., in the recreation office located at the municipal building. There is no meeting scheduled for the month of August.



Benjamin B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader

REUNITE FAMILIES...Congressman Leonard Lance's (R-7th, Westfield) office in Westfield was among those Republican Congressional offices targeted last Friday by those protesting President Donald Trump's immigration policy concerning the separation of immigrant families at the U.S. border and the detention of immigrants under the administration's "zero-tolerance policy."

Westfield Planning Bd. Discusses Development at Former Cleaners

By **MICHAEL BONACCORSO**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Planning board members heard initial testimony Monday night on the 408 Westfield Avenue, 501 South Avenue, 320 and 322 First Street development project at the site of the former Pan American Cleaners. The South Avenue Apartments, LLC, development will be the first project fulfilling the latest state-mandated affordable-housing obligations in Westfield.

The applicant (South Avenue LLC) is proposing a three-story, mixed-use development housing a commercial and retail space on the ground floor with 30 apartments on the upper floors.

Five apartments will be designated as affordable units as per Westfield's court-mandated, affordable-housing settlements, stated the applicant's attorney, Phil Morin.

The applicant's engineer, Edward S. Dec, said the 30 units will vary between one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom offerings. Mr. Dec said the five affordable units will include one one-bedroom apartment, three two-bedroom apartments and one three-bedroom apartment.

Mr. Dec said the 30 units will include one one-bedroom unit, 13 two-bedroom units, and 16 three-bedroom units. Sixty-two parking spaces will be designated for the development's residents.

Mr. Dec said the parking space number was proposed considering one parking space per unit. However, he said the developer decided to allocate more spaces for visitors or extra cars owned by tenants.

Board member Ann Freedman said she was concerned with parking becoming scarcer as two-bedroom units and three-bedroom units tend to generate more cars per unit than just one.

Mr. Morin said the development

remains committed to marketing itself as a commuter-oriented living space. The development's close proximity to the downtown and the train station could attract tenants "who have chosen to go carless," stated Mr. Morin.

Mayor Shelley Brindle, who sits on the board, said the town has created an economic development entity that can assist the developer in finding tenants before construction has been completed.

Mr. Morin said the development's application approval timeline and construction timeline does not qualify for a tenant-centric outreach process at this time.

Board Chairman Robert Newell said he wanted to inquire why there were more two-bedroom and three-bedroom units versus single-bedroom units in the proposed development. Mr. Newell said three-bedroom units are correlated with more school children entering the Westfield school district.

The one-bedroom units will range from 840 square feet to 1,111 square feet, stated the applicant's architect, Roger C. Winkle. The 13 two-bedroom units will range from 1,103 square feet to 2,110 square feet, stated Mr. Winkle. The 16 three-bedroom units will range from 1,339 square feet to 2,219 square feet.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Benjamin B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader

COUNTER-PROTEST...Republicans staged a counterprotest, on Prospect Street in Westfield, to the one outside of Congressman Leonard Lance's (R-7th, Westfield) office Friday on the separation of immigrant families. They said, Tom Malinowski, the Democratic nominee in the 7th District opposing Mr. Lance in November, served as the assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor during the Obama Administration when immigrant children were held in inhuman conditions in detention centers. See story on page 2.

Zoning Board Approves Warehouse Facility

By **MICHAEL BONACCORSO**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

CRANFORD — The board of adjustment on June 25 unanimously approved applicant 40-42 Jackson Drive LLC to construct an additional warehouse facility at 40 Jackson Drive.

The applicant proposed to subdivide the property into two parcels. The existing warehouse has been vacant for a year-and-a-half, stated the applicant's general counsel, Christopher Erb. The applicant is seeking "marketability" or flexibility by subdividing the lot, stated project engineer Victor Vinegra.

Mr. Vinegra said the existing warehouse was sought after by tenants, such as Mack-Cali, "many years ago." However, operational expenses are increasing for many tenants, who are seeking smaller facilities, stated Mr. Vinegra.

Mr. Vinegra said companies such as Andersen Windows are seeking facilities offering a "mixed-use" for both office space and storage.

Mr. Erb said developing two sepa-

rate facilities versus "one larger" facility affords the property owner flexibility when selling the properties. He said the property owner has no plans to sell either property in the near future.

Architect Maxine Giordano said the proposed facility, "fits in with the Cranford feel (aesthetically)."

"Basically, (it will be) a simple structure. The facility will provide access from office spaces to the warehouse portion of the facility," Ms. Giordano said.

Resident Charles Honara said he was concerned with the possible disruption trucks unloading would have on the surrounding residential community.

"People still live here. The lot hasn't been used in a year-and-a-half," Mr. Honara said.

Mr. Vinegra said the proposed building is "one with the least impact on the neighborhood."

The building's loading docks "are as far as you can (get) from the resi-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

CHS Seniors Make Plea To BOE for Open Campus

By **ROBYN ORR-GIOFFRE**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

CRANFORD — A group of Cranford High School (CHS) seniors made a plea to the board of education at its June 25 meeting to maintain an open campus at CHS for the upcoming school year for the class of 2019.

Procedure for getting class approval for open campus privilege is a three-step process that involves getting approval by the principal, the superintendent and the board of education.

Open campus allows seniors who are considered to be "in good standing" to leave campus during a common lunch when they do not have class. Additionally, seniors may arrive to school late when they have a first block study hall and may leave school early if they have a sixth block study hall. Seniors also may extend their lunch period when a study hall meets the block before or after.

Seniors from CHS, including Class President Grace DiGiovanni, made their case to the board, explaining some of the benefits of open campus. Students told board members open campus provided increased responsibility for students, helped develop time-management skills, gave students a glimpse of the real world in a college-like environment, allowed them more time for dealing with challenging schedules and afforded students the opportunity for stress relief through down time.

Students also spoke of the built-in incentive to follow the rules and be in good standing so privileges would not be taken away.

"No senior wants to be sitting in the cafeteria by themselves," one senior commented.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Jeff Gruman for The Westfield Leader

GRAND OPENING...Columbia Bank held a grand opening ribbon-cutting for their new branch at 251 North Avenue, West, in Westfield last Thursday morning with bank and town officials. Mayor Shelley Brindle, pictured with scissors cutting the ribbon with Columbia President and Chief Executive Officer Thomas E. Kemley, was joined by Branch Manager Antonella Minardo, to the left of Mayor Brindle, and Columbia Board Chairman Noel Holland, fifth from right.



Christina M. Hinke for The Westfield Leader

BEAUTIFUL MUSIC...The Westfield High School (WHS) Chorus performs at the June 22 WHS graduation ceremony.

PAGE INDEX

Regional	2-3	Education	16-17
Editorial	4-5, 15	Sports	9-14
Police	15	Real Estate	9-18
Community ...	6-7	Classifieds	15
Obituary	6	A&E	17-18



WESTFIELD WEST
COLDWELL BANKER
RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE

Extraordinary Professionals.
Whether Your Real Estate Needs are Local, National, or International
Your Move Is Our Move and We're Ready to Assist You
Every Step of the Way.

#600NORTH