

# Town, Service Organizations Seeking \$170,000 In Federal Community Block Grant Funds

By PAUL J. PEYTON  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — During the Town Council's October 26 meeting, local organizations came forward to announce their requests for the 26th year of Community Development Block Grant program.

Since the program has been in existence, more than \$125 million has been distributed to fund more than 2,900 projects "designed to provide decent housing and viable neighborhoods for low and moderate income persons in Union County," according to a letter issued to participating towns by Alfred Faella, Director, Division of Community Development for the county.

The grant money is allocated to Union County by the federal government, according to town officials. The amount of money to be allocated to Union County will be released at a later time, county officials said.

The Town of Westfield and several service organizations in town are applying for a combined \$170,600. "Each year we (the town) have fared fairly well (in the program)," said Mayor Thomas C. Jardim.

The Westfield Community Center (WCC) is seeking \$59,000 to develop an annex facility for adult care for seniors and child care, according to Westfield Community Center Director Ernestine N. Howell.

The facility gained approval by the Board of Adjustment earlier this year. Another \$10,000 is being sought to replace a wood fence with a chain link fence around a parking lot at the WCC on West Broad Street.

The WCC is also seeking another \$5,000 to develop an at-risk youth program.

"This project will provide recreational and cultural activities for teenagers 11 through 17" in Westfield and the surrounding area. The youth will come from low income, single-parent households and are kids that are behind in school and deficient in basic skills. The project is aimed at providing them with recreational and cultural activities.

The WCC is also seeking \$21,600 to fund the salary of the center's senior citizen center coordinator.

Westfield/Mountainside Red cross Chapter Executive Director Dennis Kinsella, said the organization is seeking \$25,000 to replace a roof and repair two porches and canopies at its Elm Street building.

Harold Cohen, President of the Westfield Neighborhood Council (WNC) Board of Directors, said the WNC is applying for a \$10,000 grant for preparation of a site plan for a proposed plan to expand the building on Cacciola Place.

Town Administrator Edward A. Gottko explained that Community Development Block Grant funds originate from the federal government and then are filtered to county government.

Two representatives of 19 towns in Union County, including Westfield, serve on a Community Development Revenue Sharing Committee. They decide how the pot of money should be distributed to the towns and their organizations.

Towns with 50,000 or more in population can apply for the money on their own while the other towns must form a committee to file for the funds.

Westfield and 18 other towns in the county apply for the grants as members of the Union County Com-

munity Development Revenue Sharing Committee. Each of the towns has two representatives on the committee.

The money is generally received by the organizations in September, said Mr. Gottko.

The Town of Westfield is applying for continuation of the neighborhood tree planting program begun last year, according to Town Engineer Kenneth B. Marsh.

Last year, the program was initiated with plantings along Cacciola Place, Sussex Street, Stirling Place and Irving Place. This year the pro-

gram will be expanded to Livingston Street, Myrtle Avenue and Windsor Avenue if the town is rewarded another \$10,000 grant.

The town is also seeking \$30,000 in funding as part of the beautification project on Grandview and Windsor Avenues. A dilapidated chain-link fence around the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Inspection Station property, which is on town property, will also be replaced. Plantings along Grandview and Windsor will also be added to screen the DMV station from the road side.



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times  
HELPING DOWNTOWNS...Princeton Mayor and President of Downtown New Jersey Marvin Reed, left, State Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Jane M. Kenny and Westfield Mayor Thomas C. Jardim are shown at last week's press conference in Westfield, where \$5 million in zero-interest loans were awarded. The town received a \$150,000 loan for parking lot improvements.

## Gunshot Victim Still In Critical Condition

By KIM KINTER  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — The Middlesex County woman who was shot in the head by her estranged boyfriend last week remains in critical condition in the intensive care unit of Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick.

Kimberly Klemser, 30, was shot in the head at close range October 27 while sitting in her car in the parking lot of a Piscataway shopping center where she works.

Investigators have said her former boyfriend, Marc Hoffmann, 32, of Union Township shot Ms. Klemser and then drove to Echo Lake Park in Mountainside and fatally shot himself.

Ms. Klemser, the single parent of a

9-year-old son, has been in critical condition at the hospital since last week. A worker at the shopping center called Piscataway police after seeing the victim in her car with blood on her head.

Several hours later, Mr. Hoffmann's body was found by a passerby who then notified a park maintenance worker. The worker, in turn, contacted police.

Mr. Hoffmann was found in his car, which was parked in the balcony lot area of the park near a hilly spot close to where the county hosts its summer concert series. He was pronounced dead an hour later.

A .32-caliber handgun was found at the scene, investigators said. The Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office, which is investigating Ms. Klemser's shooting, said that investigators have no new information on the case.

In releasing information on the shootings last week, the Prosecutor's Office described the couple's relationship as stormy and said Ms. Klemser obtained a restraining order against Mr. Hoffmann in April of 1998 to bar him from contacting her.

## Westfield Awarded State Loan for Work At Downtown Lots

By PAUL J. PEYTON  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — Westfield's effort to upgrade its existing parking lots in the downtown received support last week to the tune of a \$150,000 zero-interest loan from the state.

State Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Jane M. Kenny chose Westfield as the venue to announce the awarding of \$5 million in loans to finance special downtown improvement district efforts in 11 communities across the state.

Westfield's loan, payable over a period of 15 years, will be used to redesign and reconstruct two parking lots between Prospect and Elm Streets and a third at the train station lot on North Avenue.

The two lots on Elm and Prospect will be re-graded and combined into one lot. Downtown Westfield Corporation Executive Director Michael La Place said the project is expected to add as many as 30 parking spaces to the combined lot.

A parking lot behind the Rialto Theatre will be repaved and is also earmarked for curbing enhancement. Lighting will be upgraded and a locked collection box will be added, thus replacing meters in the lot.

Mr. La Place said the boxes can be accessed with ATM or debit cards and cash depending on the type of machines the town ends up purchasing.

Town Administrator Edward A. Gottko said the town expects to go to bid on the parking lot improvements project later this year or early in 2000.

Maser Consulting, a professional engineering firm based in Matawan, has been hired by the town to complete the necessary engineering work and prepare bid specifications for the project.

The actual construction work is expected to be completed sometime next spring.

The Elm and Prospect lots are also among four sites under consideration by Rich & Associates, Inc., a Southfield, Mich.-based parking consulting, architecture and engineering firm hired by the town to determine the best location for the municipality to build a parking deck. The consultant's report to the Town Council is due in late December.

The DCA awarded 12 zero-interest loans to towns in Bergen, Cape May, Essex, Monmouth, Morris and Union Counties who have established special improvement districts.

The Westfield Town Council established its special improvement district in June 1996.

Summit will use its \$500,000 loan to add new sidewalks, curbs, pavement, lighting, landscaping and other amenities throughout the city's business district.

Cranford intends to use its loan of \$600,000 to develop an underutilized site on the south side of the Cranford Train Station in an area bounded by South Avenue, High Street and the western bank of the Rahway River.

Other improvement districts receiving loans were Ocean City, Morristown, Rahway, Linden, Teaneck, Englewood, Red Bank and Livingston.

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