

Mayor Jung and Assemblywoman Stender Discuss Plans And Cautions for the Future Development of Fanwood

By ELIZABETH CORRELL
Specially Written for The Times

A week after the General Election, Mayor Louis Jung and Assemblywoman Linda Stender are looking ahead to upcoming issues in Fanwood. In interviews with *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood*, Mayor Jung expressed confidence moving forward, and Assemblywoman Stender voiced concerns regarding "very serious challenges" she believes need to be handled in the coming year.

Mayor Jung stated that he was "extremely pleased" about the success of Republican candidates Councilman Stuart Kline, Andrew Calamaras and David Truamp. He commended Democratic candidates Jack Molenaar, Tom Plante and Donna Dolce for getting involved, pointing out that "many towns in our area don't have a choice" of candidates from different parties.

Assemblywoman Stender, Chairwoman of the Fanwood Democratic Committee, believes that "Democratic members and residents must pay close attention to what's going on in Council business, especially with less Democratic representation."

The top priority for Mayor Jung is Fanwood's ongoing Downtown Redevelopment project. A plan was adopted in the spring of this year to build "high end townhouses" on La Grande and Second Avenues, and "upgraded retail" on Martine and South Avenues, with "residential allowed on the second or third floors" of the buildings. The former Dean Oil location at La Grande and Second has been vacant for twenty years, and is an "integral part of the plan," according to Mayor Jung.

Two and a half years into the process, the review committee planned to meet on November 11 to rank three proposals from developers and to choose a date in December to present at least one proposal to the Mayor and Council. Once selected, an agreement will be negotiated with the developer, a conceptual design will be presented to the Council, and a general schedule will be established. This will depend on how much land is purchased by the developer.

Republican candidates were concerned that there had not been sufficient input from the public on this subject, and walked door-to-door speaking with residents during the campaign to hear feedback.

Mayor Jung reported, "People said they were generally in favor of downtown redevelopment."

In contrast, Ms. Stender stated that, in their district walks, the Democratic candidates heard many "concerns regarding the effects of high density" as a result of redevelopment in the downtown area. She feels "there is no consensus on all these issues," and pointed out that the issue of housing on the former Dean Oil site raised an outcry regarding density three years ago, and that this parallels the current concerns about density in downtown development. She has serious concerns regarding "the communication between the governing body and the residents."

Mayor Jung believes that the improvements will "draw on the town's Victorian roots." He feels that "every town needs a theme" and that this project will be a source of "community pride." Ms. Stender recognizes that this is a "commuter town" and agrees, "People want good access to retail services."

However she does not believe people want to see "mom and pop businesses get unceremoniously dumped" and removed from their places of business in favor of the high-end retailers who would replace them. She stated, "I don't want Fanwood to become another open air mall, to become homogenized."

If this redevelopment is done she believes it will "create backlash." Ms. Stender feels that the Fanwood community has a

"belief in a small town and that is why people chose to live here." If there is this much disparity between the desires of residents and the actions of their elected officials, she feels it is "discouraging to see that kind of conduct going on," and posed the question: "How can we trust them to be honest in their governance?"

Overall Ms. Stender believes that the Council has "very serious challenges ahead of them." The Republicans on the Council have "benefited by work that was done by Democrats years ago," she stated, such as procuring the grant money for the downtown project, and plans for improvements in lights and pavers downtown.

Mayor Jung feels the street lamps, replicas of the late 1900s, are a source of pride in the town, and announced a plan to install them also on both Martine Avenue and Sheelen's Crossing, paid for by \$190,000 of State and Federal grants received last year.

Ms. Stender believes they are merely "decorative touches" that do "not address core issues." She believes it is a mistake to lease, rather than purchase, the lamps, as this means the town will be paying for the fixtures for a long time in the future.

Ms. Stender cited several situations that she believes reflect poor communication between town government and the public. First, she pointed out the drainage problems at Forest Park Road during the ballpark renovation, and the elimination of the senior citizen softball team, an activity that

residents have enjoyed for many years. Second, she spoke of residents' concerns regarding the skate park at La Grande Park, and that it is not monitored adequately. Lastly, she spoke of the poor timing choice to do the Farley Avenue repaving on Election Day, when people needed to drive on the street during voting hours.

Mayor Jung reported that property taxes went up 4.1 percent, versus the County at 9.6 percent. Ms. Stender believes that "nothing has been done systematically to address rising property taxes."

Mayor Jung gave a forecast of two projects planned for the coming year. The ballpark at Forest Road Park has been upgraded, and Mayor Jung revealed that the next project at this location would be a renovation of the community room at the Forest Road Park Building. A \$122,000 grant will be used for the room, which will be available exclusively for senior citizens during the day from September through June. The public will be able to use it in the evening, and during the day in July and August, for service organization or community club meetings. An architect will be chosen at the next Council meeting, and the project will begin in the spring.

A second phase of upgrading in the building is planned for 2004. Also, the town has applied for a grant to rearrange the softball field at La Grande Park. The infield needs to be moved 40 feet, to keep fly balls farther from children on the playground.



A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE... Marie Oakie, Project Coordinator, led everyone present in God Bless America at the Remembrance Ceremony honoring Union County's POW's and MIA's. Ceremony participants, from left to right, are: Union County Freeholder Lewis Mingo Jr.; freeholder Angel G. Estrada; guest speaker, Rahway Council member-at-large Sal Mione; Freeholders Rick proctor, Chester Homes and (rear, right) Daniel Sullivan.

**WEISMAN HELY
DIGIOIA & BOYLE**

A PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CERTIFIED TRIAL LAWYERS

INJURY CASES

Jim Hely

See us in the Verizon Yellow Pages.
Only 1 of 40 lawyers is a
Supreme Court Certified Trial Lawyer.
(908) 789-9000

Potomac Homes employee wins Front-line Caregiver's Recognition Award for Excellence in Long Term Care

For Immediate Release
Wednesday, October 30, 2002
Contact: Andrea Stone, Marketing
800 935 9898

Ramsey: Potomac Homes' own Annie Smith was honored today at a special luncheon hosted by NeighborCare Pharmacy with the Front-line Caregiver's Recognition Award for Excellence in Long Term Care.

This award recognizes the most outstanding certified nursing assistants who demonstrate outstanding professionalism in leadership, compassion and patience; advocates quality care and resident rights, and dedicates themselves to their facility and to the field of Geriatrics. The Administrator nominated candidates and selections are reviewed by a committee of professionals.

"Annie is a remarkably gifted person whose compassion for her work and her residents is constant and unwavering. Annie can often be heard tirelessly encouraging the residents using validation therapy to complete even simple tasks that become increasingly challenging for those caught in the web of dementia. People say that Annie has a way with people, even an intuition honed by years of loving and caring for the elderly" notes her Administrator Tamara Singer. "People say that she is gifted, but to our residents and their families, Annie is the gift."

President of Potomac Homes Ben Pearce agrees, "Sometimes as our residents peer through the fog of dementia it seems that they are all just tiny drops of water in a cloud of anxiety and despair, but you know, sometimes when a ray of sunshine hits those drops just right, they sparkle...they do sparkle!" "Annie has brought the sparkle to the eyes of our residents."

Families prefer Potomac Homes because of their intimate environment. "There is a sense of familiarity with the staff here," claims Alan Maxfield whose wife Margie has been a resident of Potomac in Paramus for almost three years. "There is very little employee turnover here because the staff enjoy the family-style work environment. Long-term employees learn to recognize subtle changes in residents' condition, so that the staff gain an intimate knowledge of their residents' personal habits and characteristics, much the same as a mother would recognize a subtle change in their child. This enables them to spot problems quickly as they arise." "I think this is the best environment for Margie, and I don't have to worry about her care, Potomac's employees are the cream of the crop," concludes Mr. Maxfield. Annie has worked for Potomac Homes for five years.

For more than a decade, Potomac Homes has made it possible for those with Alzheimer's disease or dementia-related illness to enjoy the benefits of full-time, professional care in a comfortable residential setting. The Potomac Home concept is expanding into Morris, Mercer, Somerset, and Monmouth counties in the near future. For more information or to schedule a private tour contact Andrea Stone at (800) 935-9898.

Head of SP DEMs Speaks On Lack of Council Seats

By FRED ROSSI
Specially Written for The Times

Four years ago, Scotch Plains Democrats were riding high and looking forward to New Year's Day 1999, when they would take control of the Township Council for the first time in nearly 25 years. Today, the party is reeling from a Republican election sweep that means the Democrats, come New Year's Day 2003, will have no representation on the five-member Council.

In last week's balloting, Republicans Frank Rossi, Carolyn Sorge and Nancy Malool received a combined 56 percent of the vote in winning four-year terms and defeating Democratic Councilwoman Geri M. Samuel and her two running mates, Shelia Ellington and George Gowen.

Mrs. Samuel, who served as Mayor in 1999, was elected in 1998 along with Franklin Donatelli and Tarquin Bromley in an election that surprised the local Republican Party, which had dominated local politics for several decades. Four years after carrying two-thirds of the township's 21 voting districts, the Democrats won only a handful of districts outright last week.

Township Democratic Party chairman Kenneth Lipstein was unable to say precisely why all three Democrats lost last week. Speaking to *The Times*, he said he wasn't certain if the results were due strictly to local politics or whether his candidates got swept up in the overall Republican trend nationally or the effects of the local congressional race in which Republican Congressman Michael Ferguson was easily re-elected.

He did have plenty to say about the Council races, specifically the Republican side's campaign literature that, he said, distorted the positions and records of the Democratic candidates. Addressing the 1999 municipal property tax increase that was approved by the then-Democratic-controlled Council over the opposition of the Republicans, Mr. Lipstein said the GOP literature had pinned the blame on Mrs. Samuel, who was Mayor at the time, while touting the Republicans' own proposal at the time for a zero tax increase.

"At no time during the work sessions [on the budget in early 1999] did Marty Marks and Bill McClintock [the two Council Republicans at the time] mention the zero tax increase. It was all done for the television," Mr. Lipstein said. "It clearly demonstrated that neither had the interests of Scotch Plains at heart. It's clear they only had their own political interests at heart, and played it that way."

Mr. Lipstein also questioned why Republicans, in control of the Council the following year, did not roll back the 1999 tax hike if they felt it had been such a mistake.

"Geri Samuel doesn't have an uncontrollable urge to raise taxes," Mr.

Lipstein told *The Times*. "If the Democrats made any mistakes in 1999, they went in to govern and provide good government and not to play politics. I don't call that a mistake. I call that how I want my government leaders to be."

The whittling down of the Democrats' 3-2 majority over the past four years was due in great part to unexpected and tragic events. The May 1999 death of Mr. Donatelli set the stage for the GOP to regain control of the governing body, just a year after losing it, with Frank Rossi handily winning a special election to fill out the remaining three years of Mr. Donatelli's term. Republicans turned that election into a referendum of sorts on the municipal property tax increase that had been enacted earlier that year on a party line vote. A year later, Republican Councilman Martin Marks won the township's first direct mayoral election, beating Mrs. Samuel, while Republican Paulette Coronato was elected to a four-year term. Both Republicans made the 1999 tax increase one of the centerpiece of their campaigns against the Democrats.

In a special election in November 2001 to fill out the remaining year of the term of Mr. Bromley, who had died in September 2000, Republican Guy Celentano was elected, giving the GOP a 4-1 majority. Mr. Celentano resigned in August and was replaced by Mrs. Malool.

Mr. Lipstein, speaking to *The Times*, also had harsh words for the Republican campaign literature that "used a distortedly bad picture of Geri Samuel in their effort to create a negative image of a woman. I defy anyone to name someone who has done more for Scotch Plains than she has." Saying "I think this is awful," Mr. Lipstein said he "would like each of the three Republican candidates to ask themselves how they'd feel if we put out a distorted campaign picture that made them appear worse than they are."

He also said voters should ask themselves "if they want elected officials using such election tactics."

The Democrats' campaign was "a fact and issue-oriented" one, he continued. "We pained to make sure everything was accurate. That was our campaign. There was one of fear and falsehoods." As for the party's role from now until the next scheduled municipal elections in 2004, Mr. Lipstein said he intended "to take an active part in politics." He said Democrats will "keep an eye on what goes on and when things happen, we'll continue to raise our voices." Despite his party being shut out of the local government,

Mr. Lipstein thinks, "the future is bright. I feel I brought in a number of people interested in playing an active role. Our goal is good government with integrity. I think in the end we'll do well."

Lose Weight Without Struggling via Hypnosis

Dr. Ronny Glassman, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Board Certified / Registered / Insured

Other services:
stress reduction + manage chronic pain
conquer a phobia + stop bad habits
anger management

Private appointments. No group sessions.
908-301-0445 www.DrRonnyGlassman.com

Alzheimer's Disease

Recently, this disease has been showcased in the headlines, as some well known celebrities have been diagnosed with "symptoms consistent with Alzheimer's disease."

If you are taking care of a loved one with dementia, you understand the devastating impact of these words.

Potomac Homes has been quietly providing exceptional care for those with Alzheimer's disease for more than a decade. Our homes are located right in YOUR neighborhood, and we provide extraordinary care in a non-institutional setting. If you care for someone with dementia, or know somebody who does, you need to know about Potomac Homes.

Call for your information packet today, and learn how we provide top quality residential care all at one reasonable fee. Learn more about Alzheimer's disease by logging onto our website at www.potomacgrouphomes.com.

800-935-9898

New residence opening soon in Green Brook!

Call now for Pre-Opening rates & a complimentary tour!
800-935-9898



Potomac Homes

Our homes are close to yours

9 homes in Northern New Jersey.
Opening soon in Somerset and Mercer Counties.

We are pledged to the letter and spirit of U.S. policy for the achievement of equal housing opportunity throughout the Nation. We encourage and support an affirmative advertising and marketing program in which there are no barriers to obtaining housing because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin.

ATTENTION SAVERS

C.D. RATES TOO LOW?
MARKET TOO RISKY?

SAVE WITH ANNUITIES

- * Principal: Full Refund at ANY Time
- * Interest: Immediate or TAX DEFERRED
- * Interest: Minimum 3.00%
Current 4.03% to 5.10%
- * Savings Period: 5 years or 7 years

For Information, Contact:
ANTHONY R. DAVIS AGENCY, INC.
200 East Grove Street
Westfield, NJ 07090
(908) 233-8040, ext. 126

(Attention Current Annuity and IRA Owners - Ask about our tax-free exchange program offering competitive rates)

Personal Injury... PERSONAL ATTENTION



THE ONLY ATTORNEY INVOLVED IN YOUR CASE

"25 Years of Experience
Settling Significant Injury
and Accident Cases."

FRANCIS M. SMITH
2281 South Avenue, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076



Call For a
Free Consultation:

908-233-5800