



HOMEPLACE TALKS... Mark Kuehn discusses parking with First Ward residents at a campaign event last Sunday, September 29, at the home of Lisa Hicks, who lives at the hot-bed traffic corner of Dudley Avenue and Elm Street.

## Candidate Campaign Release Westfield Candidate Kuehn Speaks On Parking Decks

WESTFIELD - Mark C. Kuehn, Westfield Town Council Candidate, addressed First Ward residents on parking decks at a campaign event given at the home of Lisa Hicks, on the corner of Dudley Avenue and Elm Street, a parking and traffic hot spot.

Parking is a complicated question without a clear black and white answer. Mr. Kuehn noted his opponent has stated repeatedly that he opposes a deck near Trader Joe's, particularly during the morning rush when kids are walking to school. "The proposed Elm/Prospect deck is actually for 200 more spaces for downtown employees. These are not additional cars; these people already drive to work downtown every day. The only question is where they park. How does this make more traffic? I can see how it makes for less traffic?" asserted Mr. Kuehn.

Mr. Kuehn does not believe in trying to appeal to the emotions and fears of voters by trying to confuse and sidetrack them.

"Now, if I had my druthers, we'd build just a commuter deck on the Southside, and motivate downtown employees to park there, easing up space for shoppers - Summit did this with a sliding parking-fine scale for employees, and it worked. But a Southside-only deck politically won't happen. The Southside doesn't want to be the only one with a deck, and the reality is: if we try to force that, we'll still be here in another 30 years debating this! So, an Elm/Prospect compromise, not for a 600 or 800 car multi-layer deck, but rather a single new level for 200 downtown employees," stated Mr. Kuehn.

Mr. Kuehn continued, "Is this ideal? No. But is it a well-founded compromise? Yes. I say let's just get on with it (of course, do it right,

attractive, fiscally prudent, etc.), over 30 years of studying and squabbling is enough. And, believe-it-or-not, even as we debate the issue, this two-deck compromise is actually almost finalized, thanks to Mayor McDermott and the Council. Their plan modifies but parallels the recommendations of the Mayor's Parking Advisory Committee (22 local residents including representatives from Elm, Prospect and Ferris) who unanimously presented their report to the Mayor in March to build multiple decks, including Elm/Prospect. While not ideal, I agree with the Mayor and the council that this compromise is in the overall best interests of the community, and it is time to move forward."

Mr. Kuehn finished his talk to the enthusiastic applause of the Elm/Dudley area residents.

Mr. Kuehn further notes similarities between the Westfield and Summit parking problems. Summit solved theirs, but states, "It's ironic that no one besides myself has gone to Summit officials to learn what they did." In fact, Mr. Kuehn has spent time with both Summit's Mayor Walter Long and City Administrator Stuart Brown to learn how they solved it, with two decks and excellent planning.

"I am very impressed with how Mark came up here to help solve the Westfield problem, and I still am surprised that, to my knowledge, no one else from Westfield has approached us about this," states Mayor Long.

Mr. Kuehn concluded, "Isn't 30 years of studying and squabbling over parking without action enough?"

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## Candidate Campaign Release WF Mayor McDermott Tells Of Town Parking Progress

WESTFIELD - Noting that substantial progress has been made in meeting Westfield's demand for parking over the past two years, Mayor Gregory McDermott said that plans to create a long-range redevelopment project that incorporates a parking structure are on schedule. The Westfield Planning Board is expected to review a proposal this month that would authorize the town to designate certain municipal properties as "an area in need of redevelopment".

"The Westfield Redevelopment Project, which was created through a resolution passed by the Town Council this summer, is moving forward. A Project Review Committee has been formed and discussions are underway as to how Westfield can best meet its varied economic needs by improving parking capacity, adding retail space and even, expanding housing opportunities," said Mayor McDermott, who is seeking a second term as Mayor of Westfield this November 5.

"The redevelopment concept offers us an opportunity to do more than simply create new parking spots. We need to take a long-term view of how we want our town to look, and how we want to ensure our future economic vitality. A redevelopment plan, one created as a private-public partnership with recognized development teams, will enable us to achieve our goals without burdening the taxpayer," added the Mayor.

Mayor McDermott cited the Westfield Parking Committee, a citizens advisory group the mayor assembled last year, as being integral to the town's progress on a parking issue that has prevailed for several decades. More than 20 volunteer citizens served on the committee and sub-committees and produced a final report that included among its findings, a parking shortfall of between 800 and 950 parking

spaces in the downtown area and among its recommendations, the construction of parking structures.

"I had promised when I was first sworn in as Mayor that I would involve as many interested residents into the process, especially on issues as complex and emotional, as parking. The committee not only allowed citizens from all parts of town to participate in government, but in the end, town government was offered a new perspective on an old problem," commented Mayor McDermott.

Citing his prior experience as a two-term member of the Westfield Town Council and a member of the council's Building and Town Property Committee, Mayor McDermott also noted that the new long-range parking plan will build on the parking reforms that have already been implemented over the past two years.

Upon taking office, Mayor McDermott implemented a "quick strike plan" designed to provide immediate parking relief for shoppers and commuters. Among the reforms that were instituted to ease parking capacity were the installation of new meters, a reordering in the mix of short and long-term parking assignments, a review of the town's commuter permit system, enhanced enforcement and the hiring of a parking manager.

"We have made progress in providing a greater level of accessibility to our outstanding downtown area. The next step in meeting our parking needs must be to increase parking capacity in a way that enhances our downtown economy, preserves the charm of our town and minimizes the impact on the Westfield taxpayer.

I look forward to continuing to meet that challenge in the year ahead," said Mayor McDermott.



CHARITABLE GOLFERS... Ladies at Echo Lake Country Club conducted the 'Rally For A Cure' golf benefit in September. Pictured, left to right, are: organizers Row 1: Epie Betancourt, Pat Vlach, Christine Sheehan, Debbie Kephart, Jill Sitzer; Row 2: Peggy Oster, Nancy Banta, Dana Gillie, Roberta Fraites. Missing from the photo are Jeanine Baum, Myrna Cummings and Laura Fenn.

## Echo Lake Women Raise Money For Cancer Charity

WESTFIELD - On September 12, Echo Lake women golfers hosted 'Rally For A Cure' and raised over \$13,000 to support the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. Participants played golf and attended a luncheon to "tee off" against breast cancer.

Rally For A Cure is the largest grassroots women's golf program that promotes the awareness and the early detection of breast cancer. Breast cancer is the leading cause of death for women ages 35-54 and accounts for more than 75 percent of all cancer deaths in women 55 years of age and older.

Echo Lake had 143 members contribute and 95 golfers played for this cause. Many local businesses made donations to support a raffle and golf

prizes. These included I to Eye, Steven Daniel Catering, Down Home Catering, artist Gwen Howard, Christine Sheehan of Impromptu Designs for Living, The Gift Monkey, On-a-whim Bags, Menina, Juxtapose Gallery, Linda Elmore Antiques, Nina Rosenberg of Nina & Company Home Design, artist Nancy Banta, Betty Gallagher Antiques, Scarlet Begonias, Falcon Printing and Golf by CR.

Half the money raised will go to Rally For A Cure based in Connecticut. The remainder of the money will go to the local Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation-North Jersey Affiliated, based in Summit.

Organizers of the event hope to promote greater awareness and more research to eradicate breast cancer for everyone.

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