



SWEARING-IN... Westfield Board of Education attorney Richard Kaplow, far right, presides over the swearing-in of newly-elected members to the board prior to the public meeting on April 26. Pictured with Mr. Kaplow, right to left, are: Alice Hunnicutt, Gary McCready, Ann Ormsby Cary, Board Secretary and Business Administrator Robert Berman and Board President Anne Riegel. During the ceremony, Mrs. Hunnicutt, Mr. McCready and Mrs. Cary read the oath of office to begin their three-year terms.

Board OK's Temple Lot Despite Wide Neighborhood Opposition

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ing and exiting the parking lot. Several members of the public attended the meeting both in support of and in opposition to the proposal. "Above all other rights is the freedom of religion," said Westfield resident Gary Mandelblatt. "This proposal provides an overall benefit to the community."

"It doesn't matter if it's Temple Emanu-El, or the White House or the Vatican," said Dave Hall of Topping Hill Road, who was concerned that a parking lot would affect the neighborhood's character. "It's a residential neighborhood."

Michele Albano of Fairacres Avenue claimed there had been insufficient dialogue between the town and concerned citizens, since the application was usually discussed in executive session due to the litigation matter.

But Town Attorney Robert Cockren called the assertion "simply not true," and said there were sufficient opportunities for residents to voice their concerns.

"We were shut off," James Hay of Jefferson Avenue said in agreement with Mrs. Albano, and suggested that the Town Council had "nudged" the board toward approving the application.

Warren Hanscom of East Broad Street

was one of the few neighbors attending who supports the proposal. "I don't like change," he admitted, "but this is a religious institution."

Mr. Hanscom emphasized how the temple benefits the neighborhood and the town.

Other citizens indicated that they were not convinced that the temple is a good neighbor.

Jay Stryker of Jefferson Avenue said that temple-goers walk through his yard to get to their cars, leaving cigarette butts on his property. He also said he has been parked in and out of his driveway.

Dominic Fontana of Tremont Avenue also questioned the temple's neighborliness, saying, "Good neighbors don't sue you when they don't get their way."

"We are all neighbors," said Gail Friedman of Settlers Lane, explaining that temple-goers live in the neighborhood, too. "It is not an 'us against them' situation; it's an 'us against us.'"

Board Chairman William Heinbokel said that he hoped last Wednesday's meeting could be a "jumping-off point" for improved communication between residents, and between residents and the town.

Traffic Committee Meeting Scheduled

WESTFIELD—The Town Council's Public Safety, Transportation and Parking Committee and the town's Citizens Traffic Advisory Committee will hold a follow-up community outreach meeting on Monday, May 9, in the Community Room of the Municipal Building to hear initial findings and recommendations from Keller & Kirkpatrick, the traffic and engineer consulting firm the town hired.

Areas to be discussed will be Woodland Avenue, 7 p.m.; McKinley School area, 7:45 p.m.; Central Avenue and Clover Street intersection and Bailiff Avenue, 8:30 p.m.

A similar meeting was held last Wednesday to discuss Tuttle Parkway and North Avenue, the Franklin School area, and the Lawrence Avenue and East Dudley Avenue and Walnut Street intersections.

The follow-up meetings are based in part on public input presented at two initial community outreach meetings held in March. The safety improvement plan will be generated for each of the eight traffic safety hot spots "once all comments are assembled and a consensus is reached," according to a press release issued by the traffic committee.

The final plan will be presented to the town council for review at a public meeting to be held Tuesday, May 10.

Town Council

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Way. "What about the others involved? Certainly there are at least three other people that should be under investigation, as well as suspended, until the matter has been fully investigated," said Ms. Downer.

Ms. Downer said that Detective Chambers had "actively tried to elevate the image of the police to the community."

"I, as well as many other people I have spoken to, are outraged and extremely disappointed in the way this has been handled," said Ms. Downer, "and I personally question that Detective Chambers would be able to have a fair and impartial internal investigation."

Town Administrator Jim Gildea told Ms. Downer, "you do not have all the facts." He told *The Leader* after the meeting that the matter is going through the "internal affairs process," which is essentially a grievance process. He said the council couldn't comment on the matter because it has not come before the governing body at this time.

In other business, the council adopted ordinances to initiate the collection of assessments for the replacement of sidewalks from the town's 2002 and 2003 residential sidewalk replacement programs. Residents and the town split the cost of the program.

Seneca Place Subdivision Unanimously Denied By Bd.

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rural road would be the applicant. Testifying on behalf of the application was Edward Dec, engineer for the project, and Robert Kraus, attorney for the applicants.

Mr. Dec stated that the plans submitted were revised from their original submission last spring and updated since their last revision in December and April. He noted that the main difference in this new plan was the addition of curbing on both sides of the road.

Mr. Kraus addressed the board stating that his applicant was trying to deal with a unique piece of property in the best way possible. He noted that the applicant did not need to apply for any variances for the subdivision and that the lot width for both houses would be 20 percent more than the ordinance calls for. He noted that this could not be shoe-horned since both properties met or exceeded all of the minimums required. He also stated that the houses in the neighborhood were all built on flat land which is where a lot of the drainage issues come from. He stated that the applicant did not create the drainage issue, but was trying to help the neighbors solve it.

When addressing the application Councilman James Foerst, who also sits on the Planning Board, stated, "I wish to compliment Mr. Buontempo and his experts in finding every loophole in our zoning laws to try and have this application granted."

He stated that he did not agree that a rural road would be appropriate for this neighborhood, noting that the law states that houses occupying a rural road have to have no less than two acres of land each as a minimum measurement.

He noted that the applicant's own traffic expert, Elizabeth Dolen, stated that a cul de sac was a more appropriate alternative for this application if the space was provided.

Planning Board member Anthony Attanasio stated that he did not approve of the application because of the rural road. In prior hearings, it was noted that the design of the road, called a hammerhead, would force emergency vehicles and other service trucks to turn by using someone's driveway.

Planning Board member William Ziff echoed disapproval of the rural road. He stated, "I don't know if it is in the public's safety to minimize the size of roads."

Mr. Fromkin

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the position of chairman. According to Allison O'Hara, WACC Executive Director, the nominating committee will send notice of selected candidates to all its members and there will be an election in June.

"The new term begins July 1 annually, so we would have been doing this at this time of year anyway," Mrs. O'Hara stated. "The new chairperson will be someone from the board."

Overall, Mr. Fromkin reportedly enjoyed his experience working in Westfield, particularly chairing the WACC. He said he will miss his early morning walks in the center of town and taking in the beautiful views at Mindowaskin Park while reading the newspaper.

In the near future, Mr. Fromkin is looking forward to spending more time with his family, although he doesn't rule out working in the furniture business or as an interior designer in Maine. However, he doesn't anticipate opening and managing another store.

Mr. Fromkin continues to urge Westfield residents to support local merchants.

Board of Ed.

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BOE heard a presentation on the new language arts curriculum being introduced in the district. Barbara Ball, district K-8 Language Arts Supervisor, gave the board a brief synopsis of the two-year effort that involved 17 teachers and administrators in the Westfield school district.

Mrs. Ball and her group of presenters, including Mrs. Dura, told the board that the group "wanted to exceed state standards" in the creation of this new curriculum.

The approach involved the concept of "balanced literacy," said Lisa Thomas, a third grade teacher. The concept calls for giving equal time and effort to all aspects of a child's needs in mastering the English language. The new curriculum will have "a great impact on all subject areas," according to Mrs. Thomas.

According to the presentation, it will allow for more collaboration between teachers and guarantee that all students district-wide have certain core experiences. Future teachers will be able to depend on this in planning their instruction.

WESTFIELD POLICE BLOTTER

SATURDAY, APRIL 23
George R. Hirtzel, 43, of Scotch Plains was arrested at West Broad Street and Rahway Avenue and charged with driving while intoxicated. He was released on his own recognizance to a responsible adult.

John Mihlik, 39, of Scotch Plains was arrested and charged with hindering apprehension. He is alleged to have given police a false name and date of birth after being stopped for a routine motor vehicle violation on Driftway Place.

Mihlik, also wanted on an outstanding contempt of court warrant for \$1,000 from Freehold, was held pending posting of bail.

Three individuals, two males and one female, are believed responsible for the theft of approximately \$1,000 in cash from a business in the 300 block of East South Avenue.

One of the male suspects asked to purchase phone cards and, after being handed them, fled the store with the owner in pursuit. The other two suspects then took the cash and also fled, authorities believe.

All three are described as Hispanic. The female suspect was said to be five feet and three inches tall, with red hair. One of the male suspects was said to be five feet and eight inches to five feet and 10 inches tall, with black hair and a thin build. The other was described as five feet and three inches to five feet and five inches tall, with dark hair and a heavy build.

SUNDAY, APRIL 24
Bruce Alfano, 45, of Union was arrested in the 700 block of Central Avenue and charged with driving while intoxicated, pursuant to an accident investigation. Alfano was released on his own recognizance to a responsible adult.

THURSDAY, APRIL 28
Sean Cooper, 22, of Union was arrested in Aberdeen and charged with theft by deception and passing bad checks. He is alleged to have given two checks in excess of \$600 at an East Broad Street store. Cooper, who also was wanted on active contempt of court warrants from Union Beach, Bridgewater and Clark, was held in lieu of bail.

James Connors, 18, of Yonkers, N.Y. was arrested at Sandra Circle and charged with criminal trespass, criminal mischief and harassment. He allegedly dug up part of a homeowner's driveway on April 26 after the homeowner turned down his two earlier offers to do driveway resurfacing. Connors was released with summonses.

James Case, 47, of Westfield was arrested in the 500 block of North Avenue, East, and charged with driving while intoxicated. He was released on his own recognizance to a responsible adult.

SUNDAY, MAY 1
Anthony G. Liaci, 53, of Scotch Plains was arrested at West Broad Street and Lamberts Mill Road and charged with possession of less than 50 grams of suspected marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia. He was released on his own recognizance with summonses.

Police Officer Suspended Over Voided Parking Ticket

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environment has been created," cited Mr. Abdallah. "There has been no attempt at any remedial sanction." He recently received documents from the police department, stating, "They may contain pertinent information to support my client's position."

Officer Chambers received the "Faith In Westfield" award through the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce in recognition for her community ser-

vice. In 2002, she formed the Community Policing Division and was assigned as the coordinator.

"I am surprised by the news because her record of achievement is outstanding," said Allison O'Hara, Executive Director of the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce.

Mrs. O'Hara made reference to some of Chambers' many accomplishments while in the line of duty. For example, Chambers initiated the Police Explorers program, which is a program aimed at getting young people involved in police work. She also developed and coordinated a liaison program between Centennial School, Beadleston and West Lake High Schools, operated by the Union County Special Services Commission, the goal of which is to help bridge the gap between the youth, the police department and the community. Ms. Chambers has also been involved in the D.A.R.E. program and a mentoring program to assist parents in the community with sons and daughters at risk.

The goal of her job, according to a biography Mrs. O'Hara received from Chief Tracy when Ms. Chambers was eligible for the award, is to "bridge the gap between the youth and the police department in the community through a greater understanding of the responsibilities and pressures facing each group."

"What has been done, has been done," responded Chief Tracy. "It's an internal matter and we don't discuss internal matters. The matter will be conducted in the normal process for internal affairs issues."

"She's been an honorable, hard working police officer," expressed her attorney. "She loved her job, she loved her community."

Public Notice

BOROUGH OF FANWOOD

The Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fanwood and the Fanwood Planning Board have scheduled a joint special meeting on Wednesday, May 11, 2005, Mayor and Council Chambers, 75 North Marine Avenue, Fanwood, NJ at 7 P.M. to discuss the Transfer Development Rights Grant that has been awarded to the Borough.

Official Action may be taken.

Eleanor McGovern
Borough Clerk
1 T - 5/5/05, The Times Fee: \$12.75



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Mother's Day Tea and Victorian Fashion Show

Saturday, May 14
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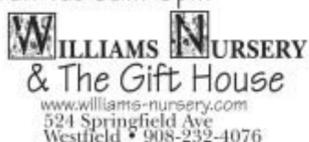
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SUPPORTING OUR TROOPS... Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School National Honor Society students plan a carnival for families of soldiers from the 250th Battalion now in Iraq. The event will take place at the Westfield Armory on Saturday, May 14, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Pictured, from left to right, are: Joanna Rosenberg, Emily Wallden, Michelle Swick, Kristen Henkels and Jeff Mullen.

PERSONAL INJURY LAW



Call

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