

Westfield Planning Board

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foot of barbed wire. He also stated that this type of fencing has been surrounding their substations since 1982.

Ron Tkach, a professional planner for PSE&G, testified that there would be no full-time employees at the Westfield site and that employees having access to the site would only be there at half-hour or one-hour intervals. He also noted that the new equipment would be safer.

In other business, final major site plan approval was also granted for One Elm Street to be used as a bank on the first floor and general business offices on the second floor.

Harold Cook, an attorney and a member of One Elm Street Associates LLC, spoke on behalf of his company's application noting that Hong Kong/Shanghai Bank, trading as HSBC, plans to move into the building would consist of four or five teller stations, an

assistant manager and a manager. He also noted that the building's use, which was approved in 2004 as a restaurant, would be "much less intensive as a bank and offices."

Planning Board member William Ziff stated that he thought the offices upstairs should not be available for medical use. "When a building is used for medical offices there is a tendency to want to drop off patrons in front of the building and then look for a parking space," he said.

Mr. Cook replied that he did not like to restrict tenants, but would agree to no medical operations in the building.

Acting Board Chairman Robert Newell concluded that Mr. Cook should find out the hours of operation of HSBC and the number of persons it plans to employ at the Westfield branch. He said bank employees should look into permit parking.

Roosevelt Enrollment Draws Discussion

By MEGHAN GILL
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Superintendent of Schools Dr. William Foley updated the board of education Tuesday night on enrollment at the town's two intermediate schools.

Many parents were in attendance, with the issue of "class size versus neighborhood school" the theme of the meeting.

Dr. Foley's projected enrollment for subsequent years will reflect a "steep increase" for Roosevelt Intermediate School, while numbers will remain stable for Edison Intermediate School.

This projection, although not new information, was discussed at length, with possible solutions presented by Dr. Foley, board members, and the public.

Board President Anne Riegel stressed that "we will make no decisions, and are not taking action on anything tonight." Dr. Foley explained that there would be three options for the board and the public to consider regarding the enrollment increase.

The first will be to examine Roosevelt School and consider building another new intermediate school, which could cost approximately \$35 to \$40 million.

The second option Dr. Foley proposed would be to add teachers to Roosevelt along with portable classrooms.

The third option, and least costly, would be to move students from Roosevelt to Edison. "Ideally, it would be nice to build a new school," he said.

Elementary schools in the district are also facing enrollment increases in years to come. According to Dr. Foley's forecasts, there will be a need to add another fifth grade in Wilson School, and this will include moving 20 kindergartners to nearby Franklin School or the allowance for a portable classroom at Wilson to accommodate for the additional fifth graders.

Dr. Foley is planning to present these findings at each of the elementary schools starting in December. Some considerations discussed were

the possibility of creating a central kindergarten at Franklin School, and a possible redistricting of Wilson School neighborhoods.

"We need to remember that the most important thing is the quality of teaching," Dr. Foley stressed.

Ellen Devin of Arlington Avenue asked the board if it would be feasible to make Roosevelt a school for all sixth graders, and Edison for seventh and eighth graders. Dr. Foley responded that he hasn't sat down and thought about it, but it is a possibility, "We could do fifth and sixth at Roosevelt maybe. It might be worth looking at."

With these issues in mind, the board has devised a charge for a Citizen's Advisory Group on Enrollment. Led by the board's Long Range Planning Committee, the proposed group would consist of 20 members of the public, from various backgrounds and districts.

The preliminary proposal states, "In the fall of 2007, Roosevelt School will be unable to accommodate the incoming sixth grade without significantly altering the education program."

The panel will consider issues such as defining what a "quality educational program" means, the intermediate school building infrastructure, changes of "the assignment of students or the addition of space," and the financial impact of all proposals. The Citizen's Advisory Group will also examine the situation in the elementary schools and issues such as class size increases, the reassignment of students to neighboring schools, the allowance for additional classroom space for special education, technology, music, art, and other programs, and the financial impact of these proposals.

"The group will not be determining redistricting. They may look at parameters, but Dr. Foley will come up with a solution; that is why we pay him the big bucks," Ms. Riegel clarified.

The Citizens Advisory Group will meet every Thursday at 7 p.m. from January 5, 2006 to February 9, 2006. The results will be made public at the board's February 20 meeting.

Lincoln School Construction Project Behind Schedule

By ANNA GITHEES
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

GARWOOD — During Tuesday night's board of education Meeting, Construction Manager Jim Philbin explained that contractors are one to two weeks behind schedule on the Lincoln School construction project.

Once completed, the new Lincoln School will house both elementary and middle school students. A new media center, cafeteria, administrative area, music room, computer lab and 11 new classrooms with additional support areas are included in the project.

Mr. Philbin said that rain in October impeded the progress of the masonry work making it impossible for the general contractor to finish the roof work, windows and doors.

The general contractor at the site explained that the window contractor did not show up at their scheduled time, which also slowed the process.

"The contractors, however, feel quite confident that they will be able to get the final inspections completed before the winter recess," said Mr. Philbin.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. William Murphy said that a potential delay, however, would not have a major affect on the children.

Mr. Philbin also said that the electric and plumbing work is on schedule and heat will be provided very soon so that the building does not freeze. There is also site work that needs to be done. The sidewalk has to be replaced on second and third avenues and the library parking lot has to be paved.

"We are anticipating pre-approval from the board to re-pave the back parking lot and put a new roof on the science lab," he said.

"The additional money to repave the parking lot and repave the roof, is it coming out of the construction account or the general account?" board member Linda Koenig inquired.

"That is an accounting matter that we normally don't control. Normal business bookkeeping will reflect where the money came from," said board member James Matheson.

POLICE BLOTTER

Westfield

Saturday, November 5, Brandon Pantano, 19, of Westfield was arrested at Rahway Avenue and Willow Grove Road and charged with the following offenses: driving while intoxicated,

underage possession of alcohol, possession of less than 50 grams of suspected marijuana, possession of a controlled dangerous substance in a motor vehicle, criminal mischief to motor vehicle, reckless driving, leaving the scene of an accident and failure to report an accident.

Pantano was charged with these offenses shortly after he allegedly struck a parked car on Scotch Plains Avenue. There were no injuries and he was released to a responsible adult.

Monday, November 7, Robert Maloney, 40, of Cranford was arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated following a motor vehicle stop at Central Avenue and Clover Street. He was released to a responsible adult.

Wednesday, November 9, Michael Caruso, 58, of Westfield was arrested and charged with criminal mischief to a motor vehicle after a witness saw him allegedly key a motor vehicle in an Elm Street municipal lot. He was released on his own recognizance.

Wednesday, November 9, Adriann Roulhac, 23, of Newark was arrested at Plainfield police headquarters on the strength of an outstanding criminal warrant out of Westfield for \$300. Roulhac was held in lieu of bail.

Friday, November 11, Frank Anthony Fiorito, 3rd, 25, of Elizabeth was arrested following a motor vehicle stop at South Avenue and Livingston Street on an outstanding Roselle Park motor vehicle warrant for \$800. He was released on his own recognizance.

Saturday, November 12, after being stopped for a motor vehicle violation at South Avenue and Boulevard, Michael Bekoe, 24, of Hillside was arrested on an outstanding motor vehicle warrant for \$500 out of Union. He was released on bail.

Saturday, November 12, George Williams, 4th, 19, of Cliffwood was arrested during a motor vehicle stop in the 1000 block of Central Avenue on an outstanding \$300 traffic warrant from Union. He was released after posting bail.

Sunday, November 13, Daniel Campion, 20, of Cranford was arrested at North Avenue and St. Paul Street and charged with driving while intoxicated. He was released to a responsible party. Edward Clinton, 20, of Cranford also was arrested and charged with possession of less than 50 grams of suspected marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia. He was released on his own recognizance.

Monday, November 7, a member of the Scotch Plains YMCA reported that her cell phone was stolen. The victim stated she left her cell phone in an unlocked locker. The phone was valued at \$200.

Wednesday, November 9, Javier Vargas, 42, of North Plainfield was arrested for shoplifting. Police were called to QuickChek after the suspect was observed by security stealing an energy drink. Vargas was processed and released.

Thursday, November 10, a resident of Sunnyfield Lane reported being the victim of identity theft. The victim stated that he received a letter from a credit union with his address on it, but another individual's name.

Friday, November 11, a Country Club

Bigosinki

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it's not "fait accompli," he did speak to opponent Mr. Leuthold about their shared experience in the tight race.

"Both Eric and I had a minute yesterday (November 10) to talk and we shared some of the same experiences. Because you go into the election process knowing what to expect and a certain end-date (November 9) and you promise your family. You know you're going to be preoccupied, but it's difficult when that period gets extended. I've had to, and I'm sure Eric had to as well, put off personal and professional obligations till November 9."

Challenger Mr. Leuthold confirmed that his team requested a recount, saying, "I feel it's perfectly reasonable in a one-vote race." While acknowledging Mr. Bigosinski's certification and stressing that his side is not requesting a contest, he said, "I'm not conceding anything."

Mr. Leuthold also mentioned his conversation with Mr. Bigosinski, saying "I had a cordial conversation with Tom down in Elizabeth. It's been a tough race. He's a great guy and it was a good, clean race. No mudslinging from what I could see. He said to me that if he were in my situation he would've done the same thing and agreed its the appropriate thing to do." Mr. Leuthold reiterated his comments from election night, talking about the painstaking process and the toll it takes on a family.

"Like I said at the Ward Mansion, I'm relieved it's done," Mr. Leuthold said. "I'd be lying if I told you it wasn't hard on my family. It's disappointing to possibly, or more likely, lose. We'll see what happens. But we can relate to each other's experience."

If he loses, he is not sure if he will return to municipal government, but didn't rule it out.

"Possibly," he said. "I don't know what Jim's (Foerst's) intentions are in two years. I enjoyed it (campaigning). But it's not a definite I'll return. I would consider it and leave the door open. I'd have to weigh it against my private life. My children would be older, so that's easier. I'm not going to say I'm coming out 'guns blazing' and I'm not saying 'no way.' I'm leaving my options open."

Boulevard resident reported that sometime overnight her vehicle was struck by another vehicle, which left the scene. The victim's car was legally parked when another vehicle struck the front bumper.

Fanwood

Tuesday, November 8, Orell Tedder, 45, of Elizabeth was arrested for outstanding warrants following a motor vehicle stop on South Avenue at 2:15 p.m.

Wednesday, November 9, Brian J. Ilg, 28, of Clark was arrested on Midway and Patterson Road at 6 a.m. after a motor vehicle stop revealed outstanding warrants.

Mountainside

Tuesday, November 8, Andrew T. Lewter, 53, of Bloomfield was stopped for a cracked windshield and unregistered motor vehicle on Route 22 West. He was arrested after it was revealed he had outstanding warrants.

Wednesday, November 9, William E. Watson, Jr. 36, of Metuchen was arrested on Route 22 East following a motor vehicle stop revealed outstanding warrants.

Thursday, November 10, Dobrovoje Brkusinin, 58, of North Haldon was arrested following a motor vehicle stop revealed outstanding warrants.

Thursday, November 10, a resident of Summit Road reported his vehicle was broken into and his owner's manual was stolen from the glove compartment. According to police, the driver's side door was damaged and both front windows were rolled down and the trunk was open. The incident is under investigation.

Sunday, November 13, Howard Gray, 47, of Greenbrook was picked up from the Somerset County Jail on an outstanding warrant and was transported back to Mountainside for processing.

Once at headquarters, police searched the suspect's belongings and found a small white rock wrapped in plastic in his coat pocket. The item is believed to be rock cocaine. The suspect was subsequently arrested and charged with drug possession. Gray is being held on \$11,350 bail.

WF Council

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welcomed home in," the mayor said. The mayor also thanked the residents for returning him to office and electing him for four years.

"I wanted to thank the residents of Westfield for coming out in very strong numbers," he said. "We had a close to a 60 percent turnout in a gubernatorial election, which is very positive. Thanks for having faith in me. I look forward to serving the residents of Westfield and the town for the next four years."

Though no one came forward to be heard, the town conducted an advertised hearing on the Westfield Community Center building for improved rainwater drainage around the building, totaling \$75,000.

Town Clerk Claire Gray explained that every year, adherent to the Union County Community Block Grant Program offered by the county, the town must submit one application, which requires a public hearing.

The town introduced on first reading an ordinance amending the town code, under the chapter of "motor vehicles and traffic." The ordinance, explained Public Safety, Transportation and Parking Committee Chairman Mark Ciarocca, would provide for a handicapped parking space on Pinegrove Avenue.

The town council also approved six single-family home demolitions.



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would have responsibility for protecting the "W" from abuse.

"The 'W' is not owned by anybody," said Mr. Winberg.

On the "W" ownership, Mayor Skibitsky said, "We didn't get into specific legalese on that." He said the meeting, which he requested, focused on enabling the two organizations to move forward "in a positive manner." He said both organizations would issue a joint statement to finalize the agreement.

"I am confident that their boards are going to approve the agreement they came up with," Mayor Skibitsky said, who also said he felt the meeting was "extremely productive."

Mr. Winberg said he believes the business community wanted the issue resolved. "I feel good about this (the agreement) because we can get moving forward," Mr. Winberg.

"I thought it (the meeting) was very productive," Mr. Gildea said. "We believe we have very good results (to resolve the dispute)." The town administrator anticipates formal approval of the agreement by the town council at its Tuesday, November 22 meeting. He said then the town can "put this chapter behind us."

Mr. Winberg's e-mail stated that prior to the agreement, the DWC sought to have the WACC destroy all existing gift cards; to allow the DWC to pay half the cost of reproducing the cards; a promise in writing that the WACC never use the "W" again; the issuance of a press release by the WACC saying, the WACC and DWC "are two separate organizations with separate goals and identities to protect." The DWC had indicated that they would drop the suit only if these conditions were met.

"I countered that the WACC wanted to use the existing Gift Cards right away, and have the lawsuit dropped immediately," Mr. Winberg said in his e-mail.

DWC Executive Director Sherry Cronin referred calls to Mr. Gildea. A call placed to Mr. Martone for comment was not returned.

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