

## DEP Ruling Likely on Final Rahway Ave. Building Plan

By JAMES HALLERAN  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Despite the town planning board's approval last Thursday night of a request by Carl and Olga Teschke to demolish two homes at 1532 and 1538 Rahway Avenue and build three, single-family homes, the project has a long way to go before construction can start.

Due to a drainage issue, officials said it is more than likely that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will have the final say on the proposed application.

The neighboring properties of residents Emanuel Carlino and George Feldbauer could be directly affected by the water drainage and are challenging approval of the application.

After the board voted in favor of the Teschke application, Mr. Carlino commented, "It is a long road. It is not over yet. Our next move is to contact the DEP and leave it up to them."

Both sides presented their expert witnesses, with David Gary, a civil engineer, arguing for the plaintiffs and Ed Bogan from Grotto Engineering Associates of Cranford representing the Teschkes. They debated the issue of water flow and if there had been a previous depression or hole on the Teschkes' property.

According to Mr. Gary, the drainage running from the northwest to the southern part of the property, as well as the depression in the area, would have an effect on existing wetlands. "I am concerned that with the wa-

ter draining from north to south it will not flow into the wetlands area, therefore creating an impact for the area. Also, because of the depression on Mr. Teschke's land (outlined in) the civil engineering reports, (it) would create a flooding problem for the area," Mr. Gary said.

Mr. Bogan countered by summarizing that the Teschkes' storm drain on the property will effectively prevent flooding.

"The drain system will be easy to maintain and the area will not generate a large amount of drainage which already exists. Also, as for the wetlands, there are about 50 acres which feed that area and, in the case, we will only be taking about an acre away (from the total wetlands)," Mr. Bogan said.

As for the debate over the depression on the property, Mr. Bogan said he believes the survey by Grotto Engineering, which found the depression, was incorrect. "I have seen faulty plans before," he told the board.

In their second time in front of the board, the Teschkes have come into compliance with a number of variances originally required for the application including tree preservation and the relocation of a street light, as well as widening of the road and driveway on the property.

"The applicant (Mr. and Mrs. Teschke) had addressed a number of issues from the original plans. They have shown good faith in addressing the variances; therefore, I am in support of the new plans," Planning Board Chairman Jay Boyle said.

Board member James Foerster, a member of the town council, added, "I see no real issues with the plans. The depression in the yard existed at one time; however, I do not think that the size of it would be an issue to the water flow. As for Mr. Carlino, I am sure that they will be heard during the DEP process."



Betsy Burgdorf for The Westfield Leader

CLINTON STUMPS FOR CORZINE...Senator and candidate for governor, Jon Corzine, shakes hands with former President Bill Clinton during last Thursday's rally at Kean University in Union.

## President Clinton Attends Rally to Support Corzine

By BETSEY BURGDOFF  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

UNION — Former President Bill Clinton united with gubernatorial candidate Senator Jon Corzine (D-NJ) last Thursday at a rally held in the Harwood Arena at Kean University in Union. The rally began the start of what Senator Corzine is calling his "40 Days to Victory" campaign.

Although the rally was to highlight Senator Corzine and his platform, Mr. Clinton commanded the podium, as well as the spotlight.

Prior to the arrival of the candidate and Mr. Clinton, the atmosphere of the arena was similar to that of a rock concert. U2 pumped through the sound system and participants were dancing in their seats.

Crowds of people wearing colorful T-shirts embellished with their union, their cause or their decree were scattered throughout the stadium. Groups chanted, while waving signs that read "Corzine for Governor."

Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-15) introduced Senator Corzine.

"Are we excited?" Senator Corzine asked, referring to the fact that Mr. Clinton was in their midst.

"I want people to know that Democrats stand for the right thing," he said. "We have to make choices that will make a difference in New Jersey."

Senator Corzine concluded his speech by saying, "The last thing I want to say

- We can change what people's expectations are about public servants. Public service is about serving you. I want to make sure the people of New Jersey know we're going to serve their needs."

Senator Corzine ended his discourse by introducing Mr. Clinton. He cited the former president's appearance as the real reason supporters attended the rally.

After a moment of thunderous applause, Mr. Clinton quickly hushed the crowd. "You have to stop that or I'll forget I'm not president anymore," he joked in his southern drawl.

He continued by saying, "I came here tonight for two reasons: I care about this state, you were good to me. And second, I not only like, I profoundly admire Jon, your next governor."

Mr. Clinton talked about Senator Corzine's plan to reduce the tax burden on the middle class and the elderly; putting a college education and buying a home within reach, and lowering the cost of health care.

"New Jersey has had tough times," Mr. Clinton said. "But if you ever needed a governor who's smart, experienced and full of great ideas - and capable of implementing them - it's Jon."

Mr. Clinton talked about how Senator Corzine fought successfully to help the families of 9/11, and how he fought to protect the environment in New Jersey, as well as the coastline. "He believes in New Jersey," Mr. Clinton said, referring to Senator Corzine. "He always puts people first."



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader

FLAGS FLYING...The Westfield High School Marching Band color guard help celebrate the dedication of the new turf and track field last Saturday at Kehler Stadium with streaming flags during the perfect autumn day.



David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader

KEHLER TURF DEDICATION...Everyone is all smiles last Saturday afternoon in Westfield at Kehler Stadium during the ribbon cutting for the new turf field and track dedication. Westfield High School coaching legend Gary Kehler, center, receives applause.

## Westfield Area 'Y' Dedicates East Broad St. Family Branch

By SUZETTE F. STALKER  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — A perfect autumn afternoon served as the backdrop Sunday for the dedication of the Westfield Area "Y"'s new East Broad Street Family Branch, located on the former site of the First Church of Christ, Scientist.

The festivities got underway with a ribbon-cutting ceremony outside the main entrance to the renovated brick building, followed by the dedication in the large multi-purpose room that once served as the church sanctuary.

Afterwards, guests were offered tours of the facility at 422 East Broad Street, which opened last month. The building will provide space for new

and expanded programs for children, adolescents, families and senior citizens. Situated opposite the Westfield Municipal Building and Mindowaskin Park, the site was purchased from the church in 2004 and the building renovated over a five-month period ending in September.

During the dedication, Board of Directors Chairman Robert Weldon, 3rd, recalled the "Y"'s long and distinguished history of serving the community since the 1920s.

Town Councilwoman and former board Chairwoman Darielle Walsh said the new branch will provide 14,000 square feet of space for "Y" programs and services. She also acknowledged the financial support from individuals, organizations and foundations, including leader level benefactors who pledged \$15,000 or more. All those contributing \$1,000 or more will be honored by having their names placed on a Wall of Recognition in the Family Branch lobby.

"Y" Chief Executive Officer Mark Elsassner said the "Y" will continue its commitment at the Family Branch "to improving the health of young people," including combating youth obesity. He called the facility "a living, breathing place where youth will learn new skills, build self-esteem and make new friends."

In addition to benefactors, the speakers at the dedication acknowledged the Christian Science Church, Westfield Town Council, State Assemblyman Jon Bramnick, staff and volunteers for their efforts. A special nod was given to Brian Bayne, who, with his father and fellow Boy Scout troop members, landscaped the Family Branch grounds as his Eagle project.

Besides the multi-purpose room, which provides space for programs for

all ages, the Family Branch houses a Pre-Teen/Teen Cardio Arcade; a conservatory with a kitchen area; a teen/senior lounge and a computer learning center.

On the ground level of the building are four preschool classrooms, equipped with bathrooms, for ages two-and-a-half to five years old. There also is an outdoor playground area.

The Pre-Teen/Teen Cardio Arcade, designed for ages 10 to 17, offers participants the opportunity to test their skills on such options as Jacobs Ladder, a treadmill climber utilizing both hands and feet; Dance Dance Revolution, a musical activity in which youngsters press panels with their feet in time to arrows on a screen, and Cybex Trazer, a virtual reality interactive game.

In tribute to the Christian Science Church, which had its spiritual home at the site for more than 80 years, the church steeple has been placed on the lawn of the new branch and will be accompanied by a permanent sign denoting the church's place in the town's history, Mr. Elsassner noted.

Dr. Gerald Glasser, a leader level benefactor with his wife, Marlene, through the Thomas Glasser Foundation, said, "The 'Y' was very important to me growing up in Westfield. I'm happy to see it expand and serve the community so well for many years."

Mr. Elsassner emphasized that "the 'Y' is here for everyone" and those experiencing hardships will not be turned away but rather given the opportunity to apply for scholarships. For more information on the "Y" and the new Family Branch, please call (908) 233-2700 or visit www.westfieldynj.org.

An open house at the family branch for the public will be held on Saturday, October 15, from 1 to 4 p.m.

## Freeholders Okay Increase For Meisel Field Project

By PAUL J. PEYTON  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

ELIZABETH — The county freeholder board last Thursday increased the cost of the reconstruction of Meisel Field in Springfield by \$120,455, for a new total of \$2,640,425.

The board approved a \$2.5 million redevelopment for the park at its August meeting. Plans call for development of a baseball field, softball field, six-lane all-weather track and combination football/soccer field and fitness circuit. Of the total amount, \$1,520,425 will come out of the county's Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation Trust Fund.

The freeholders also approved a contract to oversee the remediation of the proposed redevelopment of a 17-acre industrial site on Snyder Avenue and Stratford Drive in Berkeley Heights.

The parcel, originally proposed for 259 residential units, is being redeveloped by the county and Berkeley Heights for a senior citizen center, playing fields and a recreation area. The board approved a \$202,222 agreement with the PMK Group of Cranford to serve as construction manager for the work, which is anticipated to take about a year.

Republican Freeholder candidate Patricia Quattrocchia of Garwood questioned the expenditure. County Manager George Devaney responded that PMK was hired to oversee the work as a "protection policy" for the county, to ensure that another costly environmental remediation problem does not develop similar to what occurred at Meisel Field.

Under further questioning from Bruce Paterson of Garwood, Mr. Devaney said the cost was developed by PMK and reviewed by county Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation officials.

The board also approved a \$98,600 contract with T&M Associates of Middletown to design a new refrigeration system at Warinanco Skating Center in Roselle Park.

During the public portion of the meeting, Tony Grace of Elizabeth requested the board donate \$15,000 for the restoration of veteran footstones at Mount Olive Cemetery in Essex County. Mr. Grace is vice chairman of the Elizabeth chapter of the American Legion.

In August, Mr. Grace said over 300 of the 900 footstones had sunk into the ground, preventing Legion members from placing flags by the graves.

He said restoration costs are estimated at \$50 per stone. The Legion had raised \$46,000 as of August.

"If they (the footstones) are not replaced, they (the veterans) will be forever forgotten," Mr. Grace told the board.

Freeholder Angel Estrada noted there are 22 cemeteries in Union County. He has asked veterans groups to look into the condition of footstones at county cemeteries. He said the board would "not turn our backs" to the issue.

Mr. Paterson described the board's action on approving a \$150,000 North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) grant for a county bicycle master plan as "astronomical" for what he said amounts to "a study."

Mr. Devaney said the grant would be used to look at the overall scope of linking together 170 miles of bike

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Betsy Burgdorf for The Westfield Leader

AUSPICIOUS DEBUT...The Westfield Area "Y" kicks off the dedication of its new East Broad Street Family Branch Sunday afternoon with a ribbon-cutting ceremony outside the main entrance. Pictured in front, from left to right, are: "Y" Chief Executive Officer Mark Elsassner, Darielle Walsh, former Chairwoman of the "Y" Board of Directors, and Mayor Andy Skibitsky. Superintendent of Schools Dr. William Foley, pictured next to the mayor on the right, benefactors and representatives of the First Church of Christ, Scientist were among others on hand to celebrate this milestone in the "Y"'s history. The church formerly occupied the site of the Family Branch.

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