

# Cranford Crossing, Pointe Come to Cranford, GW

By KATHY MARQUES  
*Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times*

**Editor's Note:** This is the fifth of a five-part series on local downtowns.

**GARWOOD** - Cranford and Garwood residents have expressed mixed emotions over "McMansion-like" developments being constructed in their small towns.

In Cranford, at the intersection of South and Union Avenues is Cranford Crossing, the first major downtown development in more than 100 years. The nearly \$18-million project is a twin building upscale retail with 50 luxury condominiums and a municipally-owned 310-car parking garage. Almost two miles up the road in Garwood is The Mews and The Pointe, a combination retail and residential project. Both developments are located near train stations.

Cranford was one of eight winners of the 2005 New Jersey Future's Smart Growth Awards, honoring those who adopt growth values and design principles. Cranford Crossing is located in the center of the township's special improvement district (SID), which allows the district to have a special tax on buildings and business owners for development and marketing.

Both Garwood and Cranford were part of the Smart Growth Transit Village study in 2003, through the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. The goal was to create and maintain a thriving neighborhood that includes commercial, residential and office space within walking distance of transit.

Completion of Cranford Crossing is touted for this September and Advanced Financial Credit Union and Java's Brewing, an upscale coffee house, have signed on as tenants. Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa Salon was signed on as a tenant but has pulled out.

Cranford's District Management Corporation Executive Director Kathleen Prunty, who manages the SID, said, "It was disappointing to lose Elizabeth Arden but the decision reflected a change in corporate direction and wasn't related to Cranford's project."

Silbert Realty, the commercial broker of the Crossing, said they hope to announce more tenants around Labor Day.

Cranford Mayor Dan Aschenbach said, "This project wouldn't be appropriate in a residential neighborhood but makes perfect sense in a business district."

Charlie Baniewicz of Back to Nature Health Foods, which is located across from Cranford Crossing, is skeptical about the project, saying, "Construction is moving at a snail's pace. If they get the right tenants, I think it will be great. But who's going to park in a garage to get a cup of coffee?"

By incorporating Cranford's passenger rail station, Cranford Cross-

## Whitman Announces Support for Candidates

**AREA** - Former New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman today announced the slate of Republican candidates for the 2006 New Jersey elections supported by her political organization - It's My Party Too (IMP-PAC). IMP-PAC will support these candidates with campaign visits and contributions and will encourage its members to volunteer on behalf of these individuals.

"These candidates and incumbents are the kinds of leaders New Jersey needs - leaders who will fight for the true Republican values of fiscal restraint and local control," said former Governor Whitman. "We have selected several candidates running for local offices because we believe in building the Republican Party from the ground up - if we are to expand the party, we must elect strong candidates on all levels."

IMP-PAC's 2006 New Jersey candidates are:

Tom Kean, Jr. for Senate; Congressmen Mike Ferguson and Rodney Frelinghuysen, and Leigh-Ann Bellow for Congress; Anna Little for Monmouth County Freeholder; Ashley Hutchinson for Mercer County Freeholder; Collette Collbaugh for Mercer County Surrogate; Kim Taylor for Mercer County Freeholder; Margerie Hopwood for Mercer County Freeholder; Rich Mastrangelo for Essex County Sheriff; Rosemarie Peters for Monmouth County Surrogate and Sonya Harris for Atlantic County Clerk.

According to Heather Grizzle, the communications director for IMP-PAC, former Governor Whitman will also support the candidates for Union County Freeholder (Glenn Mortimer, Patricia Quattrocchi and Diane Barabas) if they join her organization.

To learn more about the candidates endorsed by It's My Party Too, visit www.mypartytoo.com.

To find a specific candidate, click on any state on the map on the main page.

Former Governor Whitman served as New Jersey's governor from 1994 until 2001 when she became Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency until 2003. She is now chair of the IMP-PAC.

ing is striving to attract buyers by showing the ease of living close to transportation. The parking garage will relieve some street parking congestion, yet some residents have expressed concern about security. Janice Rolsen of Westfield said, "Someone can easily walk off the train and steal a car. It's too big and who wants to live next to a train station and hear them pass all day?"

The Cranford Township Committee recently spent an additional \$400,000 on the parking deck for more directional signage, additional guard rails on the roof and new paint for the parking stripes.

Resident Wallace Clark said, "If the municipality is going to own the garage, I hope it can re-coupe at least some of the money back, or else it's a waste. I hope my taxes don't go up because of this."

Another grand scale project is The Pointe and The Mews at Garwood, touted for completion by December and located at the intersection of North Avenue and Chestnut and Streets. Millennium Homes is the developer for The Pointe, which will contain 84 residential units, 44 townhouses and 40 apartments with 140 on-site parking spaces. Silbert Realty is the builder for The Mews, the retail end of the project, with Washington Mutual being the only tenant so far signed.

At the August Garwood borough council meeting, resident and independent candidate for mayor Bruce Paterson told Mayor Dennis McCarthy, "I feel the residents of Garwood are being sold out to the highest bidder."

A teenager at the ShopRite said, "I think it's cool that our small town will have a contemporary building."

Garwood is a only three-quarter square miles in size with a population of 4,300, so space or lack of, is a major issue with residents and officials.

A parent at the Garwood Public Library said, "Our schools are overcrowded. We barely have enough room for cars on the street. That land could've been used for something more productive than this monstrosity."

A senior citizen added that "it's too big and doesn't fit the area. You see a building of this magnitude in Newark, not here."

Police Chief William Legg told *The Westfield Leader* and *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* he has not heard of any plans to change the traffic flow but will wait to see how it is once The Pointe is completed.

Millennium homes Sales Manager Bettyann Tortorello said, "Homebuyers love being able to walk to everything to browse the specialty shops and boutiques, which is only a stroll away."

## Tavern at Stage House Plans Anniversary Event

**SCOTCH PLAINS** -September marks the one-year anniversary of the opening of the Tavern at the Stage House. To celebrate, the Stage House is hosting an anniversary celebration for the local community, valued customers, and friends of the Tavern.

On Sunday, September 10, from noon to 3 p.m., there will be a free barbecue in Alan Augustine Park in the center of Scotch Plains. Tom Britt, Moshe Davedesko and Eric Hambrecht, the co-owners of the Stage House, said they are looking forward to the celebration.

"This is our way of thanking everyone for a great first year," said Mr. Britt.

He said The Tavern has been a "successful" addition to the Stage House Restaurant and Wine Bar; it offers a casual dining alternative to the Stage House Restaurant's fine dining menu.

The anniversary celebration will include free beverages and food in the



MAKING AN APPEARANCE...The Cranford Crossing development in downtown Cranford forges ahead and is taking shape for its coming role in the business district. See www.goleader.com/photos.

## Stender Condemns Attacks Against Israel

**SCOTCH PLAINS** - Assemblywoman Linda Stender (D-22, Fanwood) last week co-sponsored an Assembly Resolution that condemns the recent attacks against the State of Israel by Hezbollah forces and supports Israel's right to defend itself. AR-208 further condemns Hezbollah and Hamas "for engaging in unprovoked attacks against Israel, taking hostages, killing Israeli soldiers, and for continuing to indiscriminately target Israeli civilian populations with their rockets and missiles."

"The recent kidnapping of Israeli soldiers and escalating attacks on Israeli citizens emphasizes terrorists groups like Hezbollah and Hamas' refusal to recognize Israel's right to exist and commitment to bring about its destruction," Mrs. Stender said. "Israel has every right to defend itself against these assiduous attacks. We must do everything in our power to help Israel remove this threat from its borders and restore peace to the region."

The resolution urges the President "to use any political, diplomatic and economic sanctions available against Syrian and Iranian governments, insisting that all governments that continue to provide support to Hezbollah and Hamas share responsibility for hostage taking and attacks against Israel and should be held accountable for their actions."

The resolution calls on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) "to take action and immediately implement UNSC Resolution 1559, which requires Hezbollah to dismantle as well as the deportation of all Syrian personnel and Iranian Revolutionary Guards from Lebanon."

"Lending our support to Israel is part of this country's fight against terrorist organizations around the world. By condemning these recent attacks we reaffirm our commitment to mounting a global offensive against terrorism," Mrs. Stender said.

park. Chef Hambrecht plans on having charcoal grills barbecuing food for the crowds. There will also be live music from some of the bands that play regularly at the Tavern and a magician.

The Tavern is an authentic Colonial Barn from the 1700s. It has had a transforming history, from barn to dress shop to banquet hall. One year ago, the Stage House owners decided to open the Tavern as a restaurant. The Tavern has a menu ranging from burgers and fries to salmon filet and homemade gnocchis. The Tavern also features outside dining in the courtyard with a bar inside and out, and live entertainment from Thursday through Saturday.

"We enjoy being a central part of Scotch Plains and we look forward to being involved with the community for a long time," Mr. Britt said.

For more information regarding the anniversary party or the restaurant, call (908) 322-4224 or visit www.stagehouserestaurant.com.

# Westfield Schools Meet Yearly Progress Status

**WESTFIELD** - All nine public schools in Westfield have met the preliminary 2006 adequate yearly progress (AYP), according to an August 22 announcement from the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE).

The DOE calculated AYP based on the cycle one state assessment results and student test participation for grades three to five, six to eight and 11.

These AYP results are used to determine school improvement status for the 2006-2007 school year under the No Child Left Behind accountability requirements.

In order to meet AYP, all 40 indica-

tors in the performance benchmarks must be met by every subgroup of students, including those who are disabled or use English as a Second Language (ESL).

"We are very pleased that all nine of our schools at the elementary, intermediate and high school level have met AYP," said Westfield Superintendent of Schools William Foley. "Congratulations to our hard-working students and our dedicated teachers on this impressive achievement."

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