

## Westfield BOE Votes In Favor of \$9.4-Mil. Bond for January 23

By MEGHAN GILL  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — The board of education voted in favor of a \$9.4-million bond referendum scheduled to be presented to the public on January 23, 2007.

The bond referendum proposes the creation of an early childhood center-central kindergarten school at Lincoln School, the renovation of and addition of space to the cafeteria and library at Roosevelt Intermediate School and the partial funding of new windows at Edison Intermediate School.

The board unanimously passed the early childhood center proposal and Roosevelt renovation and expansion

resolutions.

Board members added the third resolution, concerning window replacement for Edison, at the meeting after discussion.

Superintendent William Foley said that 265 windows need to be replaced to complete the project, previously funded from the 1998 bond. This proposal carries a price tag of \$640,000.

"It was interesting today (at Edison). It was hot. The rooms in the science area are warmer there. New windows will help a little," Mr. Foley said.

The board agreed, 6-2, to allocate \$200,000 of the bond money toward the replacement of the windows.

"I'm one of the people who wanted to look at Edison to see what needs to

be done there," Board President Anne Riegel said. Board member Ann Carey told the board, "I'm in favor of fixing the windows to make the bond \$10 million."

Board member Richard Solomon, chair of the facilities committee, initially opposed the resolution. "If a car has a flat tire, you don't replace the car," he said. He later voted in favor of the resolution.

Board members Alice Hunnicut and Julia Walker voted against the window-replacement resolution. "I don't agree that fairness means equal," said Ms. Hunnicut.

"I don't disagree that the conditions at Roosevelt are not nearly what they are at Edison," said Ms. Riegel. She proposed replacing half of the windows and repairing the parking lot in the capital budget.

Edison Principal Cheryl O'Brien told Mr. Foley that her first need is the repair of the driveway and parking lot behind the building, costing around \$125,000.

Business Administrator Bob Berman said that the area was never a parking lot; it was a play area and basketball court that became a parking lot. He cited safety issues regarding this parking area.

Mr. Foley proposed that the district explore hiring the town to pave the parking area. "It is possible; the town does a lot of roadwork...we may get a better price as a result," he said.

Mr. Foley said that because of state mandates, districts cannot have a "capital reserve anymore, so we have become more dependent on bonds."

"I think we need to make choices with facilities," he said. "I understand the property tax issues. At least (the referendum) is democratic."

Amy Chin, a "concerned parent," addressed the board in opposition to the resolutions. "Most parents do not want to bus kids to the southside for 45 minutes each way (for half-day kindergarten)," she said.

Ms. Chin told the board that it would be better to add a multi-purpose room onto each school, rather than create the early childhood center.

Mr. Foley responded that adding a multipurpose room on to each building would be a "huge bond; the reason we did this is because we have a facility now. We can create space," he said.

Mr. Foley said it could cost the district around \$30 million for Mrs. Chin's proposal.

The board also added a clause to the resolutions stating "that the board of education is seeking debt service aid" for all three, based upon new information Bob Berman received earlier Monday.

When asked by *The Leader* about offsetting costs by utilizing funds from the sale of the 302 Elm Street facility, Mr. Foley said that the administration has been looking for alternate facilities. He confirmed that the building, excluding the field, was appraised at \$4 million.

The next board meeting will take place on September 26 at 8:00 p.m.

## 'One Strike' Policy OK'd For Bounced Lunch Checks

By TED RITTER  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

GARWOOD — The borough's board of education Tuesday night approved a measure aimed at addressing a problem regarding the manner in which school lunches are purchased.

Board member Gary Maher said the problem stems from parents giving their children personal checks to pay for their lunches. He said some of the checks have bounced, causing the district to lose money.

Mr. Maher explained that the new, board-approved regulation adopts a "one strike and you're out" policy, meaning a student can still buy lunch with a personal check, but if a check bounces, that student would then have to pay in cash from that point on and cover both the bad check and any bank fees.

"We need [students] to eat, but there's no such thing as a free lunch, right?" said Mr. Maher, adding that the policy change was needed to clear up a "difficult situation for the parents."

Board member Christine Guerriero said a notice about the policy would be included in the next Parent-Teacher Association newsletter.

Local resident Peggy Staba asked the school board to consider allowing



DAVID SAMSKY FOR THE WESTFIELD LEADER  
HARLEY'S ANGEL...On Sunday, thousands joined in New Jersey Rolling Thunder's "Ride for Freedom XI" from Warinanco Park in Roselle to the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Holmdel. Rolling Thunder is a volunteer group that dedicates itself to helping veterans and seeks a full accounting of POWs and MIAs. See additional photos on page 6.

## After-Hours Filming Sparks Debate Among WF Town Councilmembers

By MICHAEL J. POLLACK  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — The town council Tuesday night discussed imposing time restrictions on the filming of *Gracie*, a movie starring Elisabeth and Andrew Shue. The movie, which is to begin filming on Lawrence Avenue next week, deals with women earning the

opportunity to play competitive soccer. The council also discussed demolition-notification notices.

Elevation Filmworks location manager Ryan Smith came to the council two weeks ago and apprised them of filming details. Even though the company will film on private property where a permit isn't required, it will abide by Westfield's filming ordinance.

When Mr. Smith spoke, he approached the council with two requests — to get relief from the property maintenance code in allowing the land to become "overgrown," and requesting to film beyond 9 p.m., the latest allowable time as per the ordinance.

Town Administrator Jim Gildea said the movie's location scout collected 25 signed letters, even though individuals were not "directly in the impact zone." Mr. Gildea said he received three e-mail "concerns" about the potential noise disruption.

The council agreed to grant the property relief from the maintenance code; however, both first-ward councilmen disapproved of the company's request to film until 2 or 3 a.m., with Councilman Peter Echausse saying the request was "ridiculous."

With shooting scheduled to take place over a two-week period, the company has agreed to, according to Mr. Gildea, "consolidate" its after-hours filming from five nights to four, only film late on Thursday and Friday nights, not film on weekends and remove all trucks and equipment after shoots.

Mr. Echausse said he's received a "lot of e-mails and phone calls" and "no one's saying 'no'" but "people are dissenting to the terms of 2 to 3 a.m. because they feel that's a little bit excessive." The councilman proposed a plan in which crews finish filming at 9 p.m. between Monday and Wednesday and "get out of Dodge" by 11 p.m. and 12 a.m. on Thursday and Friday, respectively.

Fellow First Ward Councilman Sal Caruana said he's "not happy about [ending by 11 p.m.]" and "thinks that's an hour too late."

He said, "At 2 a.m., when that set wraps, every house within 500 yards is going to have kids wake up in the middle of the night. I don't really understand what the benefit is to grant permission to do this. If we allow them to film to 2 a.m., it's not only intrusive, not only disruptive, but it's imposing an undue hardship on the neighbors."

"I understand a handful of neighbors had concerns, and I understand a handful of neighbors have been paid \$2,000 not to be concerned anymore," he added.

Mr. Caruana said many people "didn't understand what they were signing." The sheet distributed by Ursa Major Films and Elevation Filmworks only asks residents to "sign below,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



DAVID B. CORBIN FOR THE WESTFIELD LEADER  
GRIDIRON GANG...The Westfield High School football team takes the field in Cranford on Friday night en route to a 27-7 victory over the Cranford Cougars. The victory was the Blue Devils' first regular-season win since November 1, 2003, when they beat East Side 33-6. See full story on page 15.

## DWC Announces Upcoming Events, Discusses New Stores

By GINA LEVINE-LEVY  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — The Downtown Westfield Corporation (DWC) Monday night discussed upcoming holiday events and approved multiple façade grants.

With October approaching, DWC Executive Director Sherry Cronin said this year's downtown Halloween Trick or Treat and costume contest will be October 29.

Board member Diane Barabas questioned whether the event should be held on or closer to the holiday so participating business owners would not receive trick or treaters twice.

Ms. Cronin said the storeowners surveyed did not seem to mind.

The DWC will host outdoor movie nights on Friday, October 13 and Saturday, October 21 pending approval from the town council. The first movie night will be at the lower lot of the South Avenue train station and the second will be at Elm Street field.

Ms. Cronin said the event is geared towards families.

Board chairman David Martone said, "I always picture these things as a throwback to your childhood." He said it gives parents a chance to curl up with their children under a blanket and enjoy a film.

While the event is new to Westfield, Ms. Cronin said neighboring towns like Cranford, Fanwood, Summit and Warren host similar events.

For the holiday season, she mentioned the possibility of hosting downtown historic trolley tours. She said holiday carolers would give an outdoor concert in one stationary location.

In other business, the board approved façade grants for signs at Learning

Express on Elm Street and Thinka Dinka on East Broad Street, both new toy stores. The board also approved a façade grant for the Pumpkins & Petunias sign. The new store, a boutique for mothers and children, is located on East Broad Street next to Thinka Dinka. Since the colors on the two stores' signs are consistent, Mr. Martone said he hopes neighboring stores will follow suit for a more uniform look.

Rock'n' Joe Coffeehouse and Bistro, expected to open in the next couple of weeks, received approval for a DWC façade grant towards its storefront.

Other stores to open soon are Hi-5 Candy, Cones & Beyond on Elm Street, Tutti Baci, offering pastries and more, on South Avenue West and Jerzey Cutz, a barbershop on South Avenue.

The Blue Tulip on Quimby Street, HSBC on Elm Street and The Paw House of Westfield on Elmer Street have opened for business.

Also, Chico's clothing store will expand into the space that formerly housed Lancaster's Hallmark Store on Elm Street. The DWC also announced that Haagen-Dazs and Blair Delmonico recently closed.

In other business, DWC will donate money for flagpoles that will surround the new World War II memorial at Memorial Plaza on North Avenue near the Lord and Taylor department store. The memorial will honor 84 Westfield veterans. Local Boy Scout Troop 73 is creating the memorial.

The DWC design committee is discussing plans to update the design for the front of the Rialto movie theater on East Broad Street, more specifically the pedestrian safety barricade.

The DWC will hold its next meeting on Monday, October 16 at 8 a.m.



BENJAMIN B. CORBIN FOR THE WESTFIELD LEADER  
CENTRAL AVENUE DEBRIS...The construction site on Central Avenue in Westfield has remained dormant for several weeks without protective fencing or progress in disposing of the debris.

PAGE INDEX					
Regional .....	2-3, 6	Education .....	11	Real Estate ....	15-24
Editorial .....	4-5	Obituary .....	12	Classifieds .....	26
Community ...	8-10	Sports .....	15-20	A&E .....	27-28



FAST ACTION...A citizen snapped a photo with his cell phone of the Union County SWAT team in action on Central Avenue in Westfield last Thursday afternoon. Unofficial reports indicated that the event was a training exercise.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14