

Westfield Council Discusses Opting For Smoke-Free Parks

By LAUREN S. BARR
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD – Several residents, along with representatives from Global Advisors Smokefree Policy (GASP), asked the Westfield Town Council at its Tuesday night meeting to make all of the town's parks smoke free.

Allen Kantz, a member of GASP and a former Westfield resident, said that his group has already appeared before the board of health and the recreation commission seeking to make all of the town's parks smoke free. However, both boards indicated that it is up to the town council.

Karen Blumenfeld, GASP's execu-

tive director, said this would be a step in preventing kids from smoking and also eliminates children's exposure to secondhand smoke.

Resident Ed Orlando said, "I definitely feel we should have an ordinance preventing smoking in all parks."

Mayor Andy Skibitsky said, "seems like a good idea" but that he would wait for the recommendations to come from the board of health and the recreation commission, and that the issue would be heard at the committee level before seeking full council approval.

Town Administrator Jim Gildea said that the Memorial Pool Com-

plex has been smoke free since the mid-1990s and that should the council choose to enact such legislation, it would be a simple ordinance change.

Also during public comment, resident Greg Kasko questioned the council as to what its alternate plans are for staffing the Westfield Fire Department should the town's grant application for additional manpower fall through. Mr. Kasko said that he asked at a previous meeting and was told that the town would get back to him.

Councilman Sam Della Fera, who also serves as Finance Committee chairman, stated that one alternative is to look at the 2013 budget and see where money could be found and another alternative would be to negotiate the contract with the firefighters' union.

When Mr. Kasko asked if the grant application means that the council believes that the fire department is understaffed, Mayor Skibitsky replied, "no."

In other business the council approved a resolution allowing the mayor to sign a new contract with the Teamsters union for 2012 through 2014.

The council also approved a resolution regarding the refunding of bonds for both the town and Memorial Pool. The bonds are being refinanced at a rate of 1.14 percent, which is down from the original rate of 4.17 percent.

Resolutions additionally were approved for the demolition of homes at 40 Mohawk Trail, 820 Dartmoor Street, 10 Wychview Drive, 21 Moss Avenue and 1021 Minisink Way.

The town council also approved the expenditure of \$4,875 as 10 percent of the cost of Hands-Free Personal Safety Escape Systems for the fire department. The total cost of the system is \$48,750, and according to Fire Chief Dan Kelly, this will give each firefighter the "capability of self deployment out of a window" in an emergency.

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Residents Decry Turf Field Proposal at Special Meeting

By FRED T. ROSSI
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD — Members of the board of education (BOE) faced a skeptical, and vocal, room of several dozen neighborhood residents on Tuesday as the board and several consultants attempted to explain its proposal to build a lighted turf athletic field behind Westfield High School (WHS).

The three-hour meeting often devolved into simultaneously shouted questions and catcalls from residents, as BOE President Richard Matesich, board member and chairwoman of its facilities committee, Jane Clancy, and WHS Athletics Supervisor Sandy Mamary attempted to speak about the \$3.3-million project itself, but also why the board had grouped the field project with a \$13-million roof-repair proposal into one bond. The public will vote on the referendum on Monday, September 24.

The plan, which architect George Duthie stressed was still "conceptual," calls for the field to be laid out essentially as it presently is, with two softball fields and a large multi-purpose field for soccer, lacrosse and field hockey overlaying the entire 210-foot by 360-foot parcel. Seven lights on 80-foot poles would be placed around three sides of the field, with three on the east side that abuts homes on Trinity Place, two along Rahway Avenue and two along the high school parking lot.

In order to facilitate drainage, the new field would be built about three feet above the present field, Mr.



COMMUNITY EVENT...The Westfield Community Band, joined by the Sons of the American Revolution and the Daughters of the American Revolution, entertain the crowd at its annual Independence Day Celebration at the gazebo in Mindowaskin Park in Westfield on July 5.

Brooks Crandall for The Westfield Leader

Westfield Zoning Board Rejects New Home on Lenape Trail

By DELL SIMEONE
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD – After a one-and-a-half-hour presentation on an application by Sonny and Tammy Adoni, owners of 745 Lenape Trail, for a new, one-family dwelling with a three-bay garage, a pool and a pool house, contrary to the land use ordinance, the Westfield Zoning Board of Adjustment denied the application.

The town ordinance allows a maximum floor area ratio of 25 percent, or 6,994 square feet. The proposed is 32.3 percent, or 9,046 square feet. The ordinance allows a maximum coverage by buildings and above-grade structures of 15 percent, or 4,000 square feet. The

proposed is 20.7 percent, or 5,797 square feet. The ordinance allows a maximum, all-improvement coverage of 30 percent, or 8,000 square feet. The proposed is 40.8 percent, or 11,409 square feet.

Architect Gabriel A. Calenda of Kenilworth detailed changes to the base and to the partial façade of the

home, which are to replace Portuguese limestone with fieldstone, which he said would necessitate the concrete foundation to be enlarged to a 14- or 15-inch base to support the heavier fieldstone.

Engineer Victor Zinagra of Cranford detailed an elaborate

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CF Board OKs Amended Two River Bank Plan

By CHARLOTTE MURTISHAW
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

CRANFORD – Medi Weightloss Clinics and Two River Community Bank came before the Cranford Zoning Board of Adjustment Monday night, each seeking board approval for their respective plans. Both met with positive rulings.

Two River Bank came before the board to procure approval of a revised site plan. The bank first gained board approval in 2005 with an expanded version of today's project, which involved two additional floors on the now one-story building, although that meant bypassing concern over the height, which required an exception from a town variance. The property is located at 245-249 North Avenue, West.

"We had envisioned banking on the first floor, mortgage offices on

the second floor, and storage space on the third," explained Two River's lawyer, Joseph Triarsi. However, economic turbulence and other factors meant the project was pushed to the back burner, and now the bank is interested in the Cranford site primarily as a branch office.

Several experts from the original project plan were called to testify regarding the changes to the original plan. Besides the elimination of four parking spaces and the reduction in scale, there have been few, mostly aesthetic, alterations to the building. The footprint and floor plan remained the same.

"We have already approved this [plan]," said board member Robert Bovasso. "If anything, what has been proposed today is better than what was proposed before."

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STROKE, STROKE...Participants race to the finish line at the Cranford Canoe Club's annual Fourth of July race.

Paul Lachenauer for The Westfield Leader

Clark Widow Is Found Murdered In Her Home

By MEGHAN A. CUNNINGHAM
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

CLARK – Longtime Clark resident Vera Pecoraro was discovered dead in her home on Rolling Hill Way around 7 p.m. on Saturday, the victim of a homicide. She would have turned 74 that day, but police suspect she was killed on Friday.

Authorities said Mrs. Pecoraro was found on a couch in her living room with her throat cut by a serrated knife that was left nearby. After the autopsy and the Union County Medical Examiner's determination late on Sunday, the prosecutor's office is now treating the case as a homicide investigation, rather than a suicide, as authorities originally believed.

At a press conference Monday afternoon in Elizabeth, Union County Prosecutor Theodore Romankow explained that although they have not yet found the killer or a motive, authorities believe Mrs. Pecoraro was targeted, and not the victim of a random attack or a robbery.

"There are a number of investigative avenues that the Homicide Task Force is pursuing," Mr. Romankow said. "We do not believe that residents in the area are in any danger as we do not believe that this is a random act."

Mrs. Pecoraro, a widow who lived alone in the quiet neighborhood, had three sons, one of whom found her in the house. After not hearing from her for a while, Anthony Pecoraro went to the house to find all the doors and windows locked, nothing ransacked or out of place, and no signs of forced entry. Two of the sons met with the prosecutor's office, while the other met with police.

Mrs. Pecoraro and her husband, Anthony Pecoraro, who passed away in 2004, founded TSS (Traffic Safety Service), a family business run out of South Plainfield. The company deals with safety products and services for road construction. Neighbors described Mrs. Pecoraro as a success-

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BORN TO TRI...Friends from Westfield and Scotch Plains relax with a cold one after completing the NYC Triathlon fundraiser last Sunday. They swam the Hudson River, biked in Manhattan and ran through Central Park in the event. The group raised \$40,000 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Pictured, left to right, are: Gary Zanfagna, Jo Kinsella, Luke Williamson, Roselle Schong, Team Captain Mark Shore, Dave Sutton, Sean O'Brien, Linda Habgood and Josie O'Brien. Missing from the photo but included in the insets are Lori Bennett and Kirsten Fallon.

Courtesy of Joanne Kinsella



HEAR YE, HEAR YE...The Westfield Town Crier, right, and members of the Sons of the American Revolution take a seat at the annual Independence Day Celebration held at the gazebo in Mindowaskin Park in Westfield on July 5.

Brooks Crandall for The Westfield Leader

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