

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."

Two River Senior Vice-President Robert Werner addressed the board briefly to close out the ap-

plication. "Cranford is an important market for our bank," he said. "We want to make sure the brand of our bank, as well as the brand of Cranford, remains strong."

Another board member, Chuck Higgins, said that he thought "the town has waited a lot of time for this lot to be developed."

Zoning board members responded positively to the application, and the new plan was approved on the conditions that a pedestrian walkway be added, and that the lights around the 24-hour ATM not exceed the federal minimum standard.

The Medi Weightloss Clinic, located at 198 North Avenue, East, applied to construct a three-foot by four-foot sign, visible from the road, to advertise the business in an exception to a town variance. The board unanimously approved that application.

GW Hears Proponents, Opponents on Complex

By **CHRISTINA M. HINKE**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

GARWOOD – The borough council heard from its auditor Tuesday during its workshop session about the amended bond ordinance summing \$3,257,000 for the athletic field complex that will be introduced at the next council meeting, to be held Tuesday, July 24. The complex would provide a baseball field, a turf field for field hockey and soccer, a basketball and bocce court, and a playground.

Last year's bid amount was rejected for legal reasons and the borough was forced to re-bid. The new bids, which were received last month, had a low bid of \$2,825,000, \$175,000 over last year's low bidder. Councilman Lou Petruzzelli said the hike in the bid is due to an increase in materials costs.

Steve Rogut, bond attorney, Warren Korecky, auditor, and

Sandy Bruns, chief financial officer, discussed the details of the amended bond. The amended bond ordinance has increased \$1,147,000 from the original bond ordinance in 2007 of \$2,110,000.

The amended bond ordinance of \$3.2 million includes \$1.1 million in Green Acres grants. In addition, the borough was approved for a Green Acres, 15-year loan of \$600,000 at a rate of 2 percent.

It is still unclear how much taxes would be raised to pay for the bond. Mr. Korecky estimated about \$50 to \$60 per \$100,000 assessed household, and said to the council he could have an exact figure by the next council meeting.

Council President Keith Sluka, Councilwoman Sara Todisco and Mayor Patricia Quattrocchi each voiced that they were in favor of

the complex. Councilman Jim Mathieu said he was not in favor.

"I think the project...adds value to the community," Mr. Sluka said.

"I am dead set against it because we can't afford it," Mr. Mathieu said. "I would love to see us change the project to something we can afford."

Ms. Todisco said that the complex would attract attention to potential homebuyers in the area.

Mr. Mathieu asked Mayor Quattrocchi for her view on the matter.

"I would be inclined, if I were in your seat, to vote yes. I would say I am 98.9 percent sure. ... I think it would add value to the community," Mayor Quattrocchi said.

Residents also had opinions for

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Probitas Verus Honos



POLICE BLOTTER

Garwood

Monday, June 25, Bertha Mc Phaul, 61, of Cranford was arrested and charged with making an improper turn and with DWI. While investigating a two-car motor vehicle crash on the 500 block of North Avenue, police determined that Mc Phaul, one of the drivers, was intoxicated. She was released with a pending court date.

Saturday, June 30, Mark B. Aguilin, 21, of Cranford was arrested following a motor vehicle stop on the 300 block of Hickory Avenue. Aguilin was determined to be intoxicated, according to police. He was charged with DWI, speeding, careless driving and failure to wear a seatbelt and was released with a pending court date.



Paul Lachenauer for *The Westfield Leader*

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

Cranford Car Show Set for July 12, Aug. 9

The remaining Cranford Car shows sponsored by The Cranford Chamber of Commerce and TD Bank of Cranford are set for Thursday, July 12, and Thursday, August 9, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

All Years, makes and models are welcome. The event is FREE for Show Cars and Public Registration starts at 5:01 p.m. The Show Car entrance is at Alden Street and North Avenue.

There will be music, free giveaways and a Hula Hoop Contest for kids. There will be Show Trophies and awards. People will vote for their favorite car at each show starting 8:30 p.m. For all information and directions, please call Bob Hoeffler (Days) at (908) 272-6114 or Bill Mackey (Cell) (908) 400-7348 or e-mail (bm171@aol.com).