

# Cranford Township Committee Discusses Town Hall Rehab

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

CRANFORD — Paul LaCorte, chairman of the board of directors of the Cranford Downtown Management Corporation, discussed phases one and two of a three-phase construction project of the municipal building at Monday's township committee workshop meeting. Phase one will be to rehab the exterior of the building and phase two is rehabbing the bathrooms.

Mr. LaCorte said the "guiding principle is to keep it simple." The exterior wood trim, which Mr. LaCorte said is rotting, will be replaced with a rot-resistant material; the cupola will be reworked

## Dietitian to Speak At Temple Event

CLARK — Temple Beth O'r/Beth Torah will host a Lunch & Learn program on Saturday, January 25, at noon following the morning Sabbath services. The featured speaker will be diet and nutrition expert Lauren Purdy, whose talk will be on "How to Eat Healthy in 2014."

A Registered Dietitian, Ms. Purdy serves as the dietitian for ShopRite of Clark. Also participating will be Cantor Steven Stern of Temple Beth O'r/Beth Torah, who will introduce the program with a survey of Jewish views on diet and health. The morning service and program will be open to the community, but reservations are required for the Kiddush lunch.

Located at 111 Valley Road in Clark, Temple Beth O'r/Beth Torah is a traditional, egalitarian congregation that welcomes all to join in their year-round programming of lectures, concerts and classes. The temple's educational programs serve pre-school-age children through adults. For more information, call (732) 381-8403, extension no. 12.

and its four finials restored, and the cupola will be lit. The entrance to the police department currently slopes toward the building and will be redone to slope away to prevent water seepage inside.

Water seepage issues on the lower level need to be addressed as well, he said. Drainage piping will be reworked. Exterior lighting will be added, but will be minimal and lit from the ground up. Rain gardens are planned for the site, but the plans have yet to be submitted, he said, and he does not want it to delay the overall project.

The committee, he said, had asked about installing a fire sprinkler system. He said it would be "expensive and disruptive" to the construction process.

Committee member Thomas Hannen, Jr. suggested having the elevator reach the third level to allow the movement of archival files there in order to free up space and get the files out of the ground level so they are not at risk to be ruined by floodwaters.

During construction, Mr. LaCorte said the computer server would be moved, and recommended it be relocated to the police department. It currently is housed in the mailroom, where asbestos tiles need to be removed. Also, he said there is a "remote chance there is asbestos in the plaster." He said there was asbestos testing completed in the lower level, and it was negative for asbestos there.

Phases one and two of the plan are being funded through insurance, Mayor Andis Kalnins said. The committee expects a final architectural proposal on Monday, February 10.

In other business, Police Chief Eric Mason announced a vacancy in the records division and asked to fill the vacancy with a starting salary of \$30,000.

Mayor Kalnins discussed the allocation of grant funds from the Kids Recreational Trust Grant Program. The Memorial Field bathrooms have yet to be rehabbed, he said. The Roosevelt Park and Sherman Park grounds are to be re-graded and resurfaced with the grant money.

Also, there was discussion about adding a playground to Sherman Field, which Mr. Hannen said would take away from field space for sports. He said other sports leagues have said there is limited space to practice as it is. "If we put playground equipment there, there are limits to what we can do there," Mr. Hannen said.

The roof above the indoor Or-

ange Avenue pool and exercise area is leaking and Mr. Hannen said that needs to be a priority.

The committee also discussed the Roads and Resurfacing five-year plan. "There is a more immediate need for pothole repairs," committee member Lisa Aduabato said.

Some resurfacing is not to start until April. "To tell people you have to wait until April and it was supposed to be done last year is unacceptable," Mr. Hannen said.

Township Administrator Terrence Wall suggested a software program that will track reported potholes and road damage and their subsequent repair.

Committee member Mary

O'Connor asked about revising the residential garbage hauling ordinance. She said that while she was campaigning, senior citizens asked to have it be allowed they get once a week pickup instead of twice a week. "It might be a help for some people to offset their costs," Ms. O'Connor said.

Residents Albert and Rachael Watson voiced their aggravation with their neighbor, who has been playing music for hours at a time at a high volume that they can hear in their own home. The couple asked the township committee to revise its noise ordinance and revise it to phrase that the noise level on one's property cannot be heard beyond the property line.

The Watsons said they have called the police regarding the matter, but that the police have not been able to force the neighbor to lower the volume because there is no law in place that the neighbor is breaking.

Mr. Watson said the neighbor is playing the music at high levels as retaliation for Ms. Watson opposing his fence plan when he went for a variance at the last zoning board meeting. The neighbor was denied a variance to build a six-foot-high, closed fence.

Mayor Kalnins said the chief of police, who was in attendance at this meeting, is looking into the matter personally.

Maureen Strazdon, chairwoman of the historic advisory board, said the board has been promised a \$2,000 grant from FEMA to reshoot its video architectural tour of Cranford, *A Cruise Through Cranford*. She said the release of funds has been held up due to the plan for elevation of some homes in the historic district. Mayor Kalnins said the committee will look into seeing if it can front the money and be reimbursed by the grant later.

## GW Council Discusses RVSA Fee, Athletic Field Delays

By **MEGAN K. SCOTT**  
Specially Written for *The Westfield Leader*

GARWOOD — At the Garwood Borough Council meeting on Tuesday night, the council discussed the Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority fee increase, the replacement of a water main on Myrtle Avenue and heard an update on the Athletic Field Complex.

The borough's payments to the Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority (RVSA) will increase by \$37,000, less than last year's \$60,000 jump but still worth about \$15 for every \$100,000 of assessed home value, according to Finance Committee Chairwoman Sara Todisco.

"I am disappointed, obviously, to hear these numbers, but at the same time I am happy that I was informed before the budget process," Ms. Todisco said. She added that she was told payment to the RVSA will flatten by 2016.

The RVSA payment only adds to other expected increases, such as

contractual obligations, an anticipated compensation increase to volunteer firefighters and first aid responders and a possible additional police officer.

"Of course I would like taxes to be as low as possible, but at the same time we have bills to pay and we have services to keep up in the borough too," Ms. Todisco said. "So we'll see how it shakes out."

Councilman Jim Mathieu, who has been outspoken on budget issues, acknowledged the strain that the news will put on town's finances, but suggested its effects are avoidable.

"It definitely makes things more difficult," Mr. Mathieu said after the meeting. "This is a very, very mild increase that we had notice of, because we have a five-year rolling average, and [RVSA representative] Stephen Greet told us last year that we're having a low-year drop off. So we knew this was coming."

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