



BUBBLES GALORE...A young boy enjoys chasing the bubbles at the 17th annual Fanny Wood Day in downtown Fanwood on Sunday.



MULTI-TASKER...Cranford Commissioner Tom Hannen Jr. shows off his moves while dancing to the music and simultaneously working the grill at the Feast of St. Michael at St. Michael Church and School in Cranford on Saturday night.



FANNY WOOD FUN...Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr, right, welcomes the crowd at the opening of the 17th annual Fanny Wood Day in downtown Fanwood on Sunday along with pictured, in front from left to right, Fanny Wood Day Committee Member David Blechinger, Co-Chairman Jason Parker, and Co-Chairman Steven Parker; in back, Fanwood Councilman Tom Kranz, Committee Member Mindy Scarlett and Borough Council President Russ Huegel.

FW Parking Permit Rate Remain Same; On Sale Soon

FANWOOD – The Office of Fanwood Police Chief Richard Trigo has announced that the 2015 parking permit rates will remain the same as 2014 for all commuters. The following is a schedule of the times parking permits will be available for purchase at the Fanwood Police Department, located at 75 North Martine Avenue North.

Fanwood Residents
Saturday, October 18, from 8 a.m. to noon; weekdays starting Monday, October 20, through Wednesday, November 19, from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday evenings October 23 and 30, November 6 and 13 from 5 to 7:30 p.m.
The cost of a yearly permit will be \$360.

Scotch Plains Residents
Saturday – November 1, from 8 a.m. to noon; weekdays starting Monday, November 3, through

Wednesday, November 19, from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday evenings November 6 and 13 from 5 to 7:30 p.m.
The cost of a yearly permit will be \$648.

All Other Municipalities
Monday, November 17, from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
The cost of a yearly permit will be \$648.

Methods of payment accepted will be check, Visa and MasterCard. No cash or American Express will be accepted.

Please bring your completed application, New Jersey driver's license and New Jersey motor vehicle registration when applying for a permit. Permit applications are available at the Fanwood Police Department and at www.fanwoodpolice.org. Fanwood residents may not purchase permits for non-residents.

GW Board Faces Challenge Over Vote on Townhouses

By BRIAN TRUSDELL
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

GARWOOD – The planning board is facing a legal challenge from two of its own members and two other residents over its decision earlier this year to approve a zoning variance that would allow nine townhomes to be built in a single-family area at the north end of Walnut Street across Fourth Avenue.

Board Attorney Donald Fraser informed the board at its monthly meeting on September 24 that an appeal of the May 28 vote had been filed in state Superior Court in Elizabeth, initiated by sitting board members Bruce Paterson and Ileen Cuccaro, along with *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* Publisher Horace Corbin and his brother, *The Times* Assistant Publisher David Corbin.

The Corbins live on Union Street near the property, which many long-time residents remember as the former home of Hidi's Deli and Five Star Catering.

"I have never seen in my years of practice (an appeal) filed by members of the very board that is the defendant," said Mr. Fraser, who, along with his firm, Perrotta, Fraser and Forrester of Clark, was retained to represent the borough in the matter.

The announcement at the end of the meeting sparked a seemingly incredulous reaction from Planning Board Chairman Steve Greet, who asked Mr. Paterson if he was, in effect, suing himself, and if he intended to resign from the body.

"If that's what it takes," Mr. Paterson replied.

But both he and Mrs. Cuccaro said that their attorney, John DeNoia of Kochanski, Baron and Galfy in Rahway, advised them that resignation was unnecessary.

"They're not looking for any damages," Mr. DeNoia said Friday by phone. "There's no real reason why anyone should resign. They have a right to their opinion, and a right to have that opinion heard by a court. I don't think there's any obligation to resign."

He did admit the oddity of board members suing the very board on which they serve.

"I would think it's a little unusual," he said. "I wouldn't go so far as to say it's unprecedented."

The basis of the appeal is that the property had been zoned for three single-family homes and that the owners, Sandro and Angela Villaraud, also named as defendants, did not show their proposal was "an inherently beneficial use," and therefore it should have been rejected.

Several years ago, the board rejected a similar proposal for the same property, and an appeal of that decision was dismissed.

"One of the criteria (for granting the variance) is that the property is not suited to be developed as zoned," Mr. DeNoia said. "There is a history with this property. Somebody got a three-house subdivision."

Mrs. Cuccaro abstained from the vote because she lives on Third Avenue within 200 feet of the Villaraud property. Mr. Paterson voted against the variance, which was approved 5-to-2. Robert Scherer also voted no.

"It was the last straw," Mrs. Cuccaro said. "They want to put in high-density housing and the rest of us are going to be stuck with it."

The townhomes proposal still needs site plan approval from the board before it could proceed, and both attorneys agreed a court ruling almost certainly was unlikely before early next year.

With the mayor having the authority to appoint members to the board and a new mayor set to be elected in November, the composition of the board could change. Mayor Pat Quattrocchi was defeated by Sal Piarulli in the Republican Primary in June; Mr. Piarulli will face off against Democratic candidate Charles Lombardo in the November General Election.

Mayor Quattrocchi also sits on the planning board but was prohibited from voting on the issue in May, along with Councilman Bill Nierstedt, because council members are not permitted to decide use

variances.

When asked to comment on the appeal, Horace Corbin referred to a letter he wrote that was published in *The Times* on June 5:

"On Wednesday, June 5, 2014, at the Garwood Planning Board meeting, I was disturbed to see that the meeting was run by the board attorney and not by the board chair. The attorney sat on the dais and directed all actions including re-framing testimony of speakers, cross-examining witnesses, dominating discussion, collaborating directly with applicant's attorney and drawing conclusions to his own choosing. He steered the outcome. He even suspended the rules of the board that calls for adjournment at 11 p.m. – whereby matters then are ordinarily continued at future meetings."

"I appreciate that planning and zoning boards require detailed legal review of applications, thus considerable attorney involvement may be required. However, for the attorney to actually run the meeting is inappropriate in my view. As with council meetings and as to how business is conducted in other towns, attorneys are hired as advisers to provide advice when requested by the officials. They do not run the meetings."

In other matters, the board voted unanimously to have H2M Associates of Parsippany conduct an "In Need of Redevelopment" Study for the largely abandoned Casale Sheet Metal and Petro Plastics properties on South Avenue.

H2M submitted the lowest bid of four, \$8,550, significantly less than Clarke, Caton, Hintz of Trenton (\$14,000); Heyer, Gruel and Associates of Red Bank (\$13,000); and Phillips, Preiss, Grygiel of Hoboken (\$11,000 to \$12,500).

Mr. Nierstedt informed the board that he had asked consultant Jill Hartman to appear at its next meeting on Wednesday, October 8, to offer advice regarding the borough's responsibility to update the "fair share housing" portion of its master plan per the mandate by the state's Council On Affordable Housing (COAH).

"The (Garwood) council has to submit it to the Council on Affordable Housing, but the planning board has to develop the meat of the plan," Mr. Nierstedt said.

Also, Sandra Sep, who owned a two-family home at 304 Center Street that was destroyed by fire in November 2012, withdrew her application for an interpretation of a land ordinance she sought to rebuild the structure as a two-family house.

The home sits in an area zoned for single-family homes, and Zoning Code Officer Victor Vinegra in May 2013 refused to issue a building permit, telling the board that his interpretation of the ordinance required Ms. Sep to have her two-family "lawfully existing" when it was destroyed.

Ms. Sep, who inherited the property in 2000, admitted she did not have a certificate of non-conforming use or a certificate of occupancy for a two-family home, but she submitted documentation that showed the property had been used, inspected and taxed by the borough as a two-family home as far back as the 1970s.

At the suggestion of Mr. Fraser, she withdrew the application in order to resubmit it, seeking a non-conforming use certificate, which seemed to have the support of several members of the board. There did not seem to be any barrier for Ms. Sep to rebuild as a single-family home.

But since the certificate of non-conforming use would not pre-date the fire, it was not clear if that alone would satisfy the board to supersede Mr. Vinegra's interpretation and permit her to rebuild as a two-family structure.

Mr. Fraser suggested the earliest Ms. Sep could resubmit the application that met all the legal requirements and be heard was at the board's Wednesday, November 12 meeting.

Michael Ince

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of courtroom safety, prisoner movement...using video surveillance more so than they have to enhance safety of officers and prisoners because sometimes you run into problems...you want to have good surveillance to make sure people are aware of what is going on," Mr. Ince said.

Should Mr. Ince be elected to the sheriff's seat, he said, "Initially, I would want to get into the post and get to know my people and the problems... I think you've got to get a good feel of what goes on around you...I don't believe in knee-jerk reactions. I think things should be thought out and well-planned."

The sheriff's department has three undersheriffs on staff whose duty is to assume the role of sheriff when the sheriff is off-duty. When asked by *The Times* if three undersheriffs are an overabundance on the payroll, Mr. Ince replied, "It might be something to look at. I think any undersheriff should be able to do the sheriff's job in his absence...I think undersheriffs as well as the sheriff should have a law enforcement background or they shouldn't be there."

There has been discussion amongst residents at Union County Freeholder meetings about merging the county police department and the sheriff's office. When asked if Union County should employ a county police de-

partment and a sheriff's office, Mr. Ince said the topic of eliminating the county police department was "worth looking at."

"I don't think it is the sheriff's decision by any means. I think the sheriff could contribute to that conversation. As far as I know...I think Union County is one of only two or three in the state to still have a county police department. It is not very common anymore in New Jersey," Mr. Ince said.

Training officers on terrorist threats and surveillance for fugitive apprehension were two programs Mr. Ince would like to delve into should he assume the sheriff's seat. Mr. Ince also said he would expand on the program Project Lifesaver, a tool for law enforcement to assist in locating lost or wandering individuals who suffer from Alzheimer's disease and related dementia or disorders such as Down syndrome and autism. He also said once he was sheriff he would look at the effectiveness and efficiencies of the programs run through the sheriff's office.

"I think Sheriff Froehlich laid a great foundation...I think he did some good things. I would try to add to those programs and possibly develop programs in the future," Mr. Ince said.

The entire interview can be viewed at goleader.com/services/video/.

Janice Kovachs

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would allow children here illegally to remain in the United States, is something which Ms. Kovach would like to see given the stamp of approval.

"I would hope if my children ever needed to seek refuge somewhere that they would be welcomed. That being said, I think our immigration process is broken. It needs to be addressed. We need to look at real reform... These people are here; these children are here...if they are working, if they are contributing to their community and society, they should have an opportunity to apply for residency or citizenship. The idea we are going to gather people and ship them back, to me is abhorring," Ms. Kovach said.

The border patrol security needs tightening, she said, without force. She said work visas for migrant workers are a way to reform immigration law.

Ms. Kovach is in favor of stiffer gun control by way of stringent background checks and taking into consideration a doctor's determination of a person's mental state.

"It is not a matter of taking away someone's right, but it is ensuring that those who should not have access to guns don't have access to guns," Ms. Kovach said.

Ms. Kovach is supportive of the Affordable Care Act, but said it is "far from perfect."

"We need to do all we can to fix it so it is the most effective it can be for residents," Ms. Kovach said.

Infrastructure changes and moving toward alternative energy sources are necessary for health and public safety, Ms. Kovach said. "The alternatives if the subsidies go away for the fossil fuel and you start to see the investment in infrastructure to move towards the alternative energy... that is when it starts to happen," Ms.

Kovach said. "But right now, because of the subsidies, the incentives aren't there. It becomes more expensive."

Jobs also will come to the state when more money is invested on rebuilding the infrastructure, which would help the economy, she said.

"I want to see more money come back into the state to help with that infrastructure," Ms. Kovach said.

The entire interview can be viewed at goleader.com/services/video/.

DWC

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held on Thursday, October 9, at 5 p.m.

Gene Jannotti, executive director of the Greater Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce, announced that the Westfield Farmers' Market will continue each Saturday, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., until October 25, at the South Avenue train station parking lot.

In other news, the board approved grants for several of the businesses located in the SID. The DWC regularly provides grants to businesses to encourage improvements made to the restaurants and shops.

The board first approved a grant for Old Havana, a Cuban restaurant that will be located at 13 Elm Street.

The board next approved a grant for RoosterSpin, a Korean fried chicken restaurant located at 251 North Avenue West.

The board also approved grants for the Towne Barber Shop, located at 29 Elm Street, and Via Nutrition, a certified holistic nutrition and health coaching practice located at 111 Hamilton Avenue.

The next DWC board of directors meeting open to the public is scheduled for Monday, November 17, at 7:30 p.m. The DWC office is located at 105 Elm Street, basement level.

SPFW Strategic Plan

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nity was great to see." She added, "I was also impressed with the high quality of discussion."

Board member Charlotte Schirmer also noted how impressed she was with the enthusiasm of the district teachers and by how dedicated they were to their students.

In other business, four resolutions were unanimously adopted by the board regarding a Week of Respect for the beginning of October, National School Lunch Week from October 13 to 17, School Violence Awareness Week from October 20 to 24, and National Principals Month for the entire month of October.

The next board of education meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 16, at 7:30 p.m., in the administration building on Evergreen Avenue and Cedar Street in Scotch Plains.

It was also noted that a Candidates' Night for school board candidates will be held on Monday, October 20, at 7:30 p.m. The location of the candidates' night has yet to be determined. According to the

Union County Clerk's website, there are three candidates vying for two open seats in Scotch Plains and one candidate for the seat in Fanwood.

Board members in Scotch Plains whose terms are up in 2014 are Douglas Layne and Warren McFall. Jeanne Cleary, from Fanwood, also has come to the close of her term and will be seeking re-election. Mr. Layne will not be running again.

According to the Union County Clerk's website, also seeking seats representing Scotch Plains are Evan Murray and Michelle Polhamus.

Correction

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Fanwood-Scotch Plains Consolidation Study Commission has announced that its Wednesday, October 8 meeting will be held at the Scotch Hills Country Club on Jerusalem Road in Scotch Plains, rather than at the board of education offices, as was reported last week. This is the meeting the commission intends to devote to updating the public on where it is in the process. All are invited. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m.



PERFECTLY CLEAR...Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School varsity soccer team co-captain, Jake Longo, clears the box during the game against Old Bridge on Monday night at Wexler Field in Scotch Plains. The Raiders won, 4-1. For more photos see page 9.

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FALL FUN...The Westfield Historical Society held its Apple Fest at the Reeve History and Cultural Resource Center on Saturday. The beautiful weather added to the festive day, which offered pumpkin painting, playing games for prizes, making bracelets, and eating a variety of baked goods.