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## Mountainside Council Reviews Traffic Study

By KATE BROWNE  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**MOUNTAINSIDE** — At Monday's work session meeting, the borough council reviewed a preliminary traffic study prepared by the consulting firm NV5. According to the principal engineer Joseph Fishinger, the source of the traffic congestion in the community can be traced to the intersection of Route 22 and New Providence Road, which is operating well beyond its capacity and causing significant backups and spillover traffic in neighboring communities.

Mr. Fishinger indicated that there were no easy fixes for the problem since there are no alternate routes for commuters who need to travel East and West on Route 22, or parents who need to drop their children off at area schools other than "peeling cars off at the Lawrence Avenue exit and have them travel through Westfield."

In addition, the volume of traffic in the area is likely going to increase as a result of the construction of high-density housing at the former Bowcraft facility and on the Barnes Tract, Mr. Fishinger said.

In response to a question from Councilman Keith Turner as to what was causing the increased vehicle volume, Mr. Fishinger pointed to an increase in the number of vehicles traveling on Route 22, which is the main connection between Route 78 and points south and the fact that the New Providence intersection is the last eastbound traffic signal for several miles. He noted that without a permanent and significant in-

frastructure improvement, such as the installation of oversized jug handles or clover leaves, the only feasible option appears to involve moving the traffic queues from one location to others in neighboring towns and reminded the council that any changes would require the approval of the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

The council asked Mr. Fishinger to consider other options and agreed to reach out to the Union County Traffic Advisory Board and neighboring communities including Westfield to solicit their thoughts on solutions.

Michael Paige, operations manager for New Jersey American Water, asked the council for permission to reconsider the borough's denial of the water company's application for a road opening permit for Pembroke Road. Mr. Paige advised that the existing water main is a 72 years old cast iron pipe which, when installed, had a six-inch diameter, but now, is so filled with sediment that it is causing discoloration of residents water. The company plans to replace the aging line with 1,600 feet of new pipe at a cost of more than half-a-million dollars. The council agreed to grant the permit after Mr. Paige confirmed that American Water was willing to pay to repave the road.

In other business, the council agreed to approve raffle requests from the Mountainside Education Foundation, Our Lady of Lourdes Church, and Holy Trinity School.

The council's next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 18.

## Architect, Real Estate Expert Testify About 750 Walnut

By CHRISTINA M. HINKE  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**CRANFORD** — The planning board heard further testimony from the architect and the real estate expert employed by Hartz Mountain Industries LLC for the rezoning application for 750 Walnut Avenue last Wednesday. Hartz is seeking to rezone the commercial property to residential.

Vice-President of Sales and Leasing, Hartz Mountain Industries, Charles Reese, who also testified earlier this year as a fact witness for Hartz Mountain on the viability of the commercial and industrial market, came back for further testimony Wednesday.

In talks regarding Hartz Mountain's marketing and advertising of the vacant commercial buildings, planning board member Bobbi Anderson said the marketing cites the property is in tree-lined suburbia and near a golf community, and asked if he was aware of Clark Commons, a strip mall with a grocery store, a fitness center and other shops and restaurants. Mr. Reese said yes. Ms. Anderson said it could be "quite attractive" to a potential lessee. When asked if it was considered to change the marketing scheme to see if it could attract buyers, Mr. Reese said, "We believe our marketing efforts are where they should be."

Also, when asked how many inquiries were seen, Mr. Reese said about three or four "serious" inquiries since 2016, when Hartz started to market the property. Later, in response, resident Rita La Brutto said, "That's pretty good. I think you are doing a bang-up job."

In response to Mr. Reese saying that Hartz has not disclosed to its potential lessees that Hartz is in the middle of an application to rezone the property, both planning board member Peter Taylor and resident and licensed broker Gerry Grillo asked if it is illegal to not disclose to a prospective tenant that there is a pending application to rezone to residential.

Mr. Grillo said, "It's a serious violation of the real-estate ethics."

PSE&G has notified Hartz that it will not renew its lease for a call center in about 21,000 square feet, and another tenant, LabCorps, also has opted not to renew, Mr. Reese said. Both leases expire next year. A trucking operation there has a lease to expire next year as well. Mr. Reese was asked if the trucking company plans to stay. "We are keeping in contact with them. Depending upon what happens with the rest of the site. There really is no change in their status right now," Mr. Reese said.

Also, PSE&G has come to Hartz to purchase land there to erect a substation to provide electricity to its customers, and Mr. Reese said he is not involved in the discussions, when asked by the board and residents.

Renderings of the proposed new driveways and the entrance into the 30.5-acre property showing the proposed apartment buildings, as well as a rendering of a ladder truck erecting a ladder to one of the five-story buildings, were provided by architect Bruce Englebaugh of Minno and Wasko.

When asked about the specifics of the ladder truck's angles of the ladder, he said he was unsure, and then said it depends if the township has this particular fire truck. His drawings depicted a ladder truck from another town for which he was involved in providing renderings, he said. He has not yet coordinated with the Cranford Fire Department, he said.

Mayor Tom Hannen, Jr. said, "It is important we know what that angle is." He said the firefighters would not place

the ladder straight up for safety reasons, and would have to place the ladder "at a particular angle to go up safely. Without the dimensions, I don't find it helpful."

The plan calls for removal of part of the current berm that runs along the length of Walnut Avenue in front of the site to make way for new entrances into the project site.

The drawings had shown a berm remaining on the southerly portion of the property at Walnut Avenue near the corner of Raritan Road, as a means to help hide the five-story building.

When asked the height and spacing of the trees depicted in a rendering to depict how they would disguise some of the buildings, Mr. Englebaugh said he did not know and guessed possibly 25 or 30 feet in height.

Angela Leary, a resident of Behnert Place, where she said the main entrance into the property would intersect, asked why a rendering of the viewpoint from the property into Behnert Place was not represented. The architect said he was not asked to provide one.

Resident Don Smith asked what date and time Mr. Englebaugh had started the design of the residential units for this project. "I don't know what date that was. Maybe 2015, 2016; I don't know. I would have to look it up," Mr. Englebaugh responded.

The board was scheduled to next meet to continue the Hartz Mountain application on Wednesday, December 5, when the applicant's engineer was expected to testify and maybe the planner. On Wednesday, December 19, two applications are to be heard, but Hartz Mountain is not slated for this meeting. The board anticipates a special meeting the week before December 19 to consider an amendment to the master plan for the housing element, Board Attorney Mark Rothman said. The board then went back to a workshop executive session.

## Bd. of Ed.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to provide them. Mr. Morrison was very positive about the financial situation of the board.

"You people can rely on the data that comes out of your business office and, for budgeting purposes, that should give you great comfort," he said. "There are places where you can't rely on it and those places are frightening."

"Every time I come here, I love to look at your health-insurance costs. You guys actually hit it out of the park a few years ago when you went to the self-insurance program. You are actually three years into this. You are still spending more than \$500,000 less in 2017-2018 than you spent in 2014-2015 with premium-based coverage, so that's amounted to millions of dollars over three years. That's impressive."

Board members paid tribute to Robert Garrison, who will leave the board at the end of the year following a three-year term.

"In the short time that you have been here, I really believe you have changed the culture of our board to cause us to be more thoughtful about the transparent nature of the work we do. Your professional experience and your willingness to share your thoughts have been invaluable," Ms. Ohlig said.

## POLICE BLOTTER

### WESTFIELD

Monday, November 19, Carlos Jimenez, 35, of Elizabeth was arrested on an outstanding warrant from the Atlantic City Court, with bail in the amount of \$2,500. Jimenez was arrested in the area of South and Central Avenues subsequent to an investigation. He was transported to police headquarters, where he was held in lieu of bail. Jimenez was later turned over to Atlantic City authorities.

Tuesday, November 20, Quson Brewster, 37, of Westfield was arrested on two outstanding warrants. One was from Westfield Municipal Court and the other was from Union County Superior Court. Brewster was arrested in the area of Central and South Avenues subsequent to an investigation. He was transported to police headquarters, where he was held. Brewster later was turned over to the Union County Sheriff's Office for commitment to the Union County jail.

Wednesday, November 21, Russell Schundler, 75, of Wolfeboro, N.H., was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct pursuant to an investigation that took place in Westfield near the NJ Transit railway. Schundler was transported to police headquarters and placed under arrest. He was released on a summons.

Wednesday, November 21, three incidents involving motor vehicle burglaries were reported at residences on Coolidge Street. One vehicle was burglarized on the 700 block, another on the 800 block, and two were at a residence on the 1000 block. In each case, the victim reported leaving the vehicle unlocked while parked in the driveway. In the incident on the 700 block, the victim stated that no apparent items were taken from the vehicle; in the case on the 800 block, the victim stated that \$30 was stolen from the vehicle. The victim in the case on the 1000 block reported that items valued at approximately more than \$200 were stolen from the two vehicles.

Wednesday, November 21, Dion Montgomery, 48, of Newark was arrested on an outstanding criminal warrant, in the amount of \$1,000, out of Westfield Municipal Court pursuant to a prisoner pickup. He also had an outstanding criminal warrant out of Union Municipal Court in the amount of \$750. He was transported to police headquarters, processed and released on his own recognizance on both warrants.

Wednesday, November 21, a burglary was reported at a residence on the 0-100 block of Kimball Circle while the homeowner was there. The resident heard a loud "bang" coming from the kitchen area. Upon inspection, the resident observed the exterior door to be open, with minor damage to the chain lock, consistent with forced entry. The victim did not hear anyone inside the residence and nothing appeared to be disturbed. No items were removed from the residence.

Monday, November 26, Lister Perry, 27, of Irvington was arrested on an outstanding warrant from Irvington Municipal Court, in the amount of \$1,000, pursuant to a motor vehicle stop. Perry was processed and posted bail.

Tuesday, November 27, a resident of the 500 block of Hillside Avenue reported being the victim of credit card fraud. The victim stated that one or more unknown suspects made several purchases online without the victim's approval. The approximate amount of the fraudulent purchases is \$2,500.

### GARWOOD

Monday, December 3, Angelo T. Spalliero, 29, of Greenville, S.C., was arrested and charged with credit card fraud, receiving stolen property, possession of a controlled dangerous substance, shoplifting, credit card theft, and burglary to motor vehicles. Police responded to a pharmacy on North Avenue on a report of an intoxicated male in the store. Officers observed a male, who was seated and slumped over in the photo section of the store. While conducting their investigation the individual showed the officers a New York State driver's license with a photo which, once examined by the officers, was not the suspect. Dispatch radioed the officers of a reported burglary to a motor vehicle and informed the officers that the burglary victim was the same individual named on the New York driver's license. The suspect was then placed under arrest and admitted that his name was actually Angelo T. Spalliero.

A search incident to the arrest found Spalliero in possession of numerous items from the victim's car as well as

items in unopened packaging but without receipts, along with numerous wax paper folds of suspected heroin and other property not belonging to the suspect. Further investigation determined that the items in packaging were stolen from the convenience store located next to the pharmacy in Garwood.

The Garwood Detective Bureau continued the investigation and identified at least two victims of burglary to vehicles in Garwood as well as several more victims of car burglaries in Cranford. Garwood Police are continuing to work with the Cranford Police Department to identify all of the victims from this string of car burglaries and return the property to the rightful owners.

Spalliero was remanded to the Union County jail pending a court appearance.

### CRANFORD

Thursday, November 29, Khayri Hudeen, 22, of Elizabeth was arrested and charged with possession of less than 50 grams of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia following a motor vehicle stop at North Avenue East and Centennial Avenue for a seatbelt violation. Hudeen was processed and provided with a municipal court appearance date. In addition, he was issued motor vehicle summonses for a seatbelt violation and possession of a controlled dangerous substance in a motor vehicle.

Friday, November 30, Catharine Strom, 37, of Cranford was arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated (DWI) following a motor vehicle stop at North Avenue East and the Garden State Parkway 137 Exchange for making an illegal U-turn. Strom was processed and provided with a municipal court appearance date. In addition, she was issued motor vehicle summonses for an illegal U-turn, careless driving, failure to observe a red traffic signal and for an unregistered vehicle.

Monday, December 3, James Molloy, 28, of Cranford was arrested and charged with possession of a hypodermic syringe following a motor vehicle stop at North Avenue East and John Street for a seatbelt violation. Molloy was processed and provided with a municipal court appearance date. In addition, he was issued a motor vehicle summons for a seatbelt violation.

### FANWOOD

Friday, November 16, a victim came to police headquarters to report her parking permit was stolen out of her motor vehicle, which was parked on the 265 block of South Avenue.

Tuesday, November 20, Christian Melendez, 25, of Elizabeth was arrested pursuant to a motor vehicle stop at North and Hetfield Avenues for a motor vehicle violation. While the officer was speaking with the driver, Melendez, he could detect a strong odor of suspected marijuana coming from the inside of the vehicle. The driver was asked to exit the vehicle while the officer did a search. The officer located the suspected marijuana and Melendez was placed under arrest. He was processed and charged with possession of marijuana and released pending his court appearance.

Tuesday, November 27, police made a motor vehicle stop at East 7th Street and Terrill Road for a motor vehicle violation. A check of the driver, Trevor Gunnell, 25, of Plainfield, showed active warrants out of Fanwood, Plainfield and Edison. Gunnell was placed under arrest, processed and turned over to the Union County Correctional Facility. A check of the passenger, Marcus Peake, Jr., 24, of Linden, showed an active warrant out of Elizabeth. Peake also was arrested, processed and released by Elizabeth Municipal Court pending a new court hearing.

Tuesday, November 27, a resident of the 20 block of Gere Place reported that an unknown person stole a delivered package from the front porch. The incident was caught on a security camera. The suspect is described as a young, thin male wearing a dark-colored hooded sweatshirt and gray sweatpants. He fled in an unknown type motor vehicle. There was no further description.

## Playground

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

programs and classes for residents of all ages being offered by the recreation department during the winter session including cartooning, sports classes and adult exercise programs.

## Westfield Planning Bd.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A master plan is defined as a "land use and infrastructure plan that sets forth local goals, objectives, and policies for community growth and redevelopment over a set period," as defined by the website ccupad.org.

"This will be a public process. (Residents should) show up to a meeting to express what you said here tonight," said Mayor Brindle in addressing the concerned residents at the hearing.

Mayor Brindle said addressing "neighborhoods vulnerable to subdivisions" will be something the planning board and the town planner will address in the "updated town master plan."

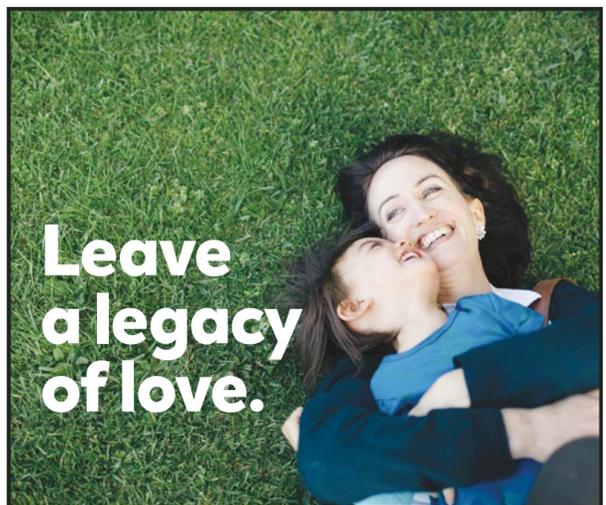
Planning Board member Michael LaPlace said Mr. Foerst suggested that the applicant does not need to prove how they have met the 13 criteria set forth in subsection 8.06G. Yet, the applicant "continued to show" how they met the criteria Mr. Simon

suggested was incomplete, affirming the land-use ordinance is "in fact substantive" to the planning board's consideration, stated Mr. LaPlace in describing why he would not support the subdivision's approval.

"Thank you for showing us how you support your neighborhood. I agree subsection 8.06G applies to this application," said planning board member Michael Ash.

Board member Danielle Walsh said until Mr. Simon's interpretation of subsection 8.06G, the application hearing appeared "as a quick one. The application was conforming." However, after reviewing the relevance of subsection 8.06G, Ms. Walsh, too, felt she could not support the application.

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