

# Garwood Planning Bd. Hears Lincoln Ave. Site Application

By **MICHAEL BONACCORSO**  
Specially Written for *The Westfield Leader*

**GARWOOD** — The planning board heard initial testimony April 25 on the application for 3 Lincoln Avenue. Business owner and property owner David Busch stated that he operates his business, General Automotive Repair, LLC, at the site. However, the applicant filing for the hardship variances was legally recognized as DBJ Holdings, LLC, the legal entity or "property owner" controlled by Mr. Busch.

The applicant's attorney, Gary Goodman, stated that the applicant recognizes that Lincoln Avenue, including the property, are "gateways to the community." Mr. Goodman said the applicant is "looking for" the planning board's "guidance" on how to make the location "attractive."

Mr. Busch stated that he purchased the property in 2014. He said he uses the space for his business, which focuses on automotive repair and truck repair. The roof on the building will be replaced and "a new HVAC" will be installed, stated Mr. Busch.

In addition, Mr. Busch stated that he will repaint the entire building and install needed windows.

The applicant will resurface the parking lot, stated Mr. Goodman. The parking lot is "triangular shaped" and undersized, stated engineer Cathy Mueller. Ms. Mueller said the applicant is willing to compromise with planning board requests to add some shrubs and plantings alongside the streetscape.

Mr. Busch said he understands the property is in a flood zone. The discussed plantings and possibility of a drainage trench beneath the surface is to reduce flooding, Mr. Busch told *The Westfield Leader*.

The plantings reduce the possibility of lights reflecting off the building, blinding drivers during rush hours and at dusk, stated planning board member Bill Nierstedt.

Mr. Busch said he was concerned too many plantings could prevent passing traffic from noticing his business.

Mr. Nierstedt said he recognized the property's irregularities. He said he is "very excited the applicant purchased it (the property) and is here to improve it."

Mr. Busch said if the property has 10 feet of easement creating room for plantings and drainage, because the property is triangular he loses "half his parking lot."

Board engineer Victor Vinegra said when board members consider a compromise between the planning board and the applicant, often five feet is needed for plantings to grow and survive.

Mr. Nierstedt said a monument

sign is compliant with borough ordinance and suggested the business owner use that sign type to advertise the business.

Mr. Busch said he has agreed "to looking into a monument-type sign" for a business sign along the streetscape.

The agreed upon plantings, drainage development and easement from the street will be discussed at the May planning board meeting as the applicant's testimony will continue.

The planning board voted on a desirable fence size for corner lots being six feet high. The vote was six board members in favor of six-foot-high fences and four board members in favor of four-foot-high fences.

No official commentary was agreed upon to be suggested to the borough council as the fence ordinance has been "tabled" (set aside by council for further review).



**HUGIN HEADQUARTERS...** Republican United States Senate candidate Bob Hugin, left, opened his campaign headquarters in Mountainside on Saturday. Also pictured are former Garwood Republican Committee Chairman John Quattrocchi of Clark, second from left, and GOP Union County Freeholder candidates Patricia Quattrocchi and Joe Sarno, right. Mrs. Quattrocchi is a former Garwood mayor and Mr. Sarno is a current Garwood councilman.

## Cranford BOE Adopts \$67.5-Mil. School Budget

By **ROBYN ORR-GIOFFRE**  
Specially Written for *The Westfield Leader*

**CRANFORD** — The board of education adopted a \$67,467,691 school budget Monday night.

Superintendent of Schools Scott Rubin, Ed.D., and Business Administrator Robert Carfagno led board members through a PowerPoint presentation that offered a breakdown of the budget during a public hearing.

Mr. Carfagno described enrollment as one important piece of the budget. Current enrollment for 2017-2018 is 3,871 while the projected 2018-2019 enrollment is expected to be 3,882 students.

"Ninety-five percent of your budget is pretty well accounted for," Mr. Carfagno told the board.

More specifically, 85 percent of the budget will go towards salaries and benefits, 5 percent will go towards out-of-district tuition costs, 2 percent will go towards transportation costs, 1 percent will go towards energy costs, another 1 percent will go towards student-related extraordinary service and another 1 percent will be for liabilities and insurance.

The budget will include security enhancements and upgrades that will put the \$187,301 increase in state aid towards establishing a new position that would, among other responsibilities, coordinate district-wide culture and climate initiatives.

Remaining funds will be used for the upgrade, enhancement and improvement of security issues district wide.

The budget also includes facility/maintenance items that involve sanding and refinishing gymnasium floors at the elementary schools and Lincoln, paving repairs at all schools, concrete repairs, classroom carpet/tile

abatement and reinstallation.

As previously reported in *The Westfield Leader*, the school budget is at a 3.37-percent increase over the 2017-2018 budget and the total tax increase on the average Cranford home will be \$202.06.

"Taxes are going up," Mr. Carfagno told the board, but noted, "we're enhancing what we currently offer."

Mr. Carfagno further commented that class size will stay the same; staffing, although some positions have been reallocated, will remain the same; students will have technology and needed supplies, and the district will meet all of its obligations, offering professional development, continuing with ongoing projects and maintaining the facilities while still providing upgrades when possible.

In other board business, Personalized Learning and 21st Century Learning Skills were showcased during the meeting, with Bloomingdale Avenue School Principal Lourdes Murphy and Media Specialist Greg D'Amato giving a PowerPoint presentation.

Mrs. Murphy commented to the board that the goals of personalized learning are to encourage and support learning initiatives and promote the development of 21st-century learning skills.

21st Century Learners, according to Mrs. Murphy, are collaborators, problem solvers, critical thinkers, communicators, self-directed learners and innovators.

These learners are civically engaged, globally aware, financially and economically literate and information and media literate.

Students involved in the program, "don't shy away from hard

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE