



LEADER IN MOROCCO...Westfield residents Janet and Bob Smith and Terry and Chris Spurlock enjoy *The Westfield Leader* while visiting Tangier, Morocco.

New Clinical Lab Approved By Cranford Planning Bd.

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

CRANFORD – A clinical laboratory is to open operations at 95 Dermody Street after the planning board approved an application for the facility, 9 to 0, last Wednesday.

The lab is located in a commercial zone and will be housed inside a current one-story warehouse facility on the site. Marina Bellow, president of Excell Clinical Lab, said the lab will operate between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. and then reopen at 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. There will be 15 to 18 people in the building during the day, and during the night shift about five to eight people working. The operation will be open Monday through Saturday, and on Saturday will close at 8 p.m. It will be closed on Sundays.

The application had a parking variance. Currently, there are 22 spaces and the applicant proposed to restripe the lot to allow for a total of 26 spaces. Parking provided will be adequate for the number of people on the site, the applicant's planner and engineer, Anthony Gallarano of Harbor Consultants, said.

Medical waste on site will be kept in special bags and in special boxes and stored in the warehouse for pickup per state regulations, Ms. Bello said. Also, a dumpster will be placed in the back of the building for regular trash and recycling.

A waiver was requested to not supply a stormwater plan because the applicant is not proposing to alter or add anything to the site plan.

The purpose of zoning is advanced and there will be no detriments to the public good or surrounding properties, Mr. Gallarano said.

Board planner Nick Dickerson brought up if bike racks and sidewalks will be provided, as there are none currently. The applicant is seeking a waiver because they are not needed.

The board has cancelled its scheduled meeting for Wednesday, December 18, and will next meet on Wednesday, January 15, when it will have its annual reorganization meeting. The seats of board members Peter Taylor, Chris Chapman and Roy Walton, and the mayoral seat, are all to expire at the end of 2019. Also, the deputy mayoral seat, which Ann Dooley occupied, will be open. She will not return as she has decided to not run for reelection to the township committee.

Ms. Dooley offered a word of thanks to her fellow planning board members at the close of the meeting. "I am thankful that these are the people that landed here at the time you landed here. It was the right time with the right group of people with the right personality and character traits to do some very difficult work," Ms. Dooley said.

Cell Tower

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100 percent is acceptable to him. Whether or not that is realistic is up to professionals in the technological sector to decide, said Mr. Hines.

Resident James Kutzer asked whether participation in the alert system is mandatory or optional for students and staff. Mr. Hines said that all students and staff are automatically enrolled in the system, but can opt-out. There also is an option for the public to opt-in to the system, if they wish to be updated. Mr. Hines did not have any data on the percentage rate

of students and staff or local residents who could have opted in.

Regarding emergency responder communication and communication amongst the security team at UCC, Mr. Hines said they use radio and walkie-talkies as their main mode of communication, which does not rely on cell phone signals.

More testimony will be heard at a special meeting of the board of adjustment on Monday, December 16, at 7:45 p.m., in the Cranford Municipal Building.



REMEMBERING PEARL HARBOR...The Color Guard fires a salute during a Pearl Harbor memorial ceremony Saturday at the Cranford VFW Post 335.

Pat DiNizio Home Is Planned for Teardown, Subdivision

By FRED T. ROSSI
Specially Written for *The Westfield Leader*

SCOTCH PLAINS – The planning board on Monday gave its approval for a developer to raze an existing single-family house, subdivide the lot into two conforming lots and then build two new houses.

The two-and-a-half-story house at 2027 Westfield Avenue, directly across from St. Bartholomew the Apostle Parish, was the home for many years of rock musician Pat DiNizio, the leader of The Smithereens who died two years ago. It's where he hosted annual Memorial Day weekend backyard concerts for fans and where he spent many hours in the mid-2000s practicing for his tryout to play minor league baseball.

William Hollows, a professional engineer and planner, told the board on Monday that the house, which was built in 1880, is in "disrepair" and "probably an eyesore to the neighborhood." The newly-drawn lot at the corner of Westfield Avenue and Montague Avenue will be 6,939 square

feet in size while the interior lot will measure 6,158 square feet. Both of the houses to be built will face Montague Avenue, with attached two-car garages.

Board Vice-Chairman Jeffrey Strauss expressed some concern about cars backing out onto Montague Avenue, which he described as a bust street. Mr. Hollows said the properties would be designed to offer ample sightlines for people entering Montague Avenue from Westfield Avenue as well as traveling on Montague Avenue towards the intersection. He also noted that the corner lot's driveway will be placed as far as possible from the intersection.

Board member Richard Fortunato raised some concerns about the corner house and how its side wall facing Westfield Avenue will appear. Attorney Stephen Hehl said steps would be taken to make that side wall more aesthetically pleasing, and board member Paulette Coronato suggested including shutters on the windows facing Westfield Avenue as well as some plantings.



HOLIDAY SHOPPING...Shoppers complete their purchases at the Village Shop located in the Mountaintop Restoration Committee's Levi Cory House, located adjacent to the Mountaintop Public Library. The shop will be open again Friday through Sunday, December 13, 14 and 15, and Friday and Saturday, December 20 and 21, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. All proceeds benefit historic restoration in Mountaintop.



GENEROUS DONATION...The Fanwood Police/P.B.A. Local 123 visited "Fanwood's Famous Christmas House" on Sunday with a generous donation for NJ Institute for Disabilities. Pictured, from left to right, are: Officer Daniel Piccola, Greg "The Christmas Guy" Roser and Officer Dan Kranz. The two officers grew up in Fanwood.

Freeholders

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He encouraged the freeholders to continue to look for land adjacent to county parks in acquiring properties, "so that we can at least extend those areas a little bit."

Mr. Nierstedt noted that the Garwood Green Team adopted Unami Park earlier this year, where they planted native species plants at the entranceway to the park from Garwood.

Garwood resident Bruce Paterson said the county's surplus is continuing to grow. He said the recent closing of the juvenile detention center has been estimated to save another \$6 million while the closing of Runnells Specialized Hospital in 2014 likely is saving the county another \$13 million.

Mr. Paterson said the county's "running fund balance" reached \$90 million last year. "You're just not budgeting properly," he told the board.

"I see a perfect case where you could have a zero tax increase," he said. "You can't hide this money any more. It's really busting out of its seams."

He said department heads in past years were given raises he estimated at 4 to 7 percent, which he called "amazing in this day and age."

Freeholder Chris Hudak said the surpluses that the county has achieved the past few years "is a sign of financial strength. Our (Aaa) bond rating is a sign of financial strength." He said this has allowed the county to take on projects like county-wide EMS that saves towns money.

Mr. Hudak also noted that Berkeley Heights last week passed a resolution to become the 14th town to join the county's 9-1-1 dispatching center. He said the county will be dispatching emergency calls for police, fire and EMS in the township.

"It truly is a good service that the county has continued to provide over the years. And it's a good thing to see multiple agencies taking advantage (of the program)," he said.



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MOOOO....At The Presbyterian Church in Westfield's Live Nativity and Petting Zoo on Sunday, community members are able to feed small animals and pet them. They also saw the costumed church members, who explained to children the importance of the Nativity.

DWC Meeting

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will be painted, stated Ms. Hanigan.

Mr. Roig operates an art studio in the famed W Hotel in Hoboken, Ms. Hanigan said. He is a Westfield resident who maintains his art business in town.

This Saturday, December 14, EXTRAVAGANZAlorious will be held at the South Avenue Train Station between 4 p.m. and 5:45 p.m.

"Wear your ugly holiday sweater and meet us by the South Avenue Train Station (Christmas) Tree for a festive afternoon of holiday cheer for

the whole family, including a 30-minute outdoor movie, *An Elf's Story*."

Councilwoman Dawn Mackey said. Ms. Mackey said The Elf on the Shelf picture book was written by Westfield resident Kenneth Waddell.

"Elf on the Shelf will be attending the holiday celebration to take photos with children," Ms. Mackey said.

The event will include a DJ, Kilwin's hot cocoa, a walk-in Snow Globe for family photos, Gingerbread Cookie Decorating and a candy-cane pull, stated Councilwoman Mackey.



SHEPHERDS KEEP WATCH...At the Live Nativity held at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield, shepherds feed and attend to the petting zoo animals of sheep, goats, a donkey, an alpaca and a calf. The yearly event featured Christmas carol singing, serving cookies and hot chocolate, and seeing the costumed church members who brought the Nativity scene to life.

Town to Hold Deer Hunt in January and February

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Debora Bresch, a resident of Westfield, said that deer hunts only cause reproductive rates of deer to increase "tremendously." She urged the council to "make sure this is an actual solution to the problem and not just killing."

Brightwood Park spans about 40 acres of land and the Conservation Center is on about 20 acres of land. Town Administrator Jim Gildea said. The county deer-management program has in the past only held hunts in county parks that have hundreds of acres of land, resident Karen Langer noted.

Ms. Neylan and Mr. Stokes both felt more research should have been done by the town.

At the end of the meeting, Councilwoman Neylan, Councilman Stokes and Councilman Frank Arena were acknowledged by resolution read by Mayor Shelley Brindle for their time serving on the town council. Ms. Neylan served 16 years for Ward 2, Mr. Arena, 12 years for Ward 1, and Mr. Stokes, four years for Ward 4. Also, members of the public came up and thanked the three council people. Ms. Neylan and Mr. Arena chose not to seek another term on council. Mr. Stokes was defeated this election year.

Mr. Stokes told the council and audience that he has "always held true to what I believe in." He urged his fellow council members to "continue to do what's best for the town, and not what's popular or what's on the party line."

Mr. Arena said, "Many towns across the communities have a vision of what they want to be...and that vision is

Westfield. We have a very special thing here and special people. As long as we put the town first and politics aside, this will continue to be one of the great towns in the land."

Councilwoman Neylan said her service to the town has "never been a sacrifice but only has been a privilege."

In other business, the town council approved an ordinance on final reading that designates 1737 Nevada Street as a historic landmark. The council also adopted the salaries for the PBA, CWA and non-union town employees.

Four grants were received by the town that include a body armor replacement fund, a Greening Union County Grant, a Kids Recreation Grant for Sycamore playground, and the Federal Bulletproof Vest Program.

With the town celebrating its 300-year anniversary next year, the council approved the hiring of a fundraiser consultant for Westfield 300, with the consultant, Solarverve LLC of Plainfield, to receive a percentage of funds that are received in the fund-raising effort. Additionally, the town is selling Westfield 300 merchandise on its website that will help fund the commemorative anniversary events.

During the conference session, Mr. Contract said the Green Team is looking into adding a second organic waste bin at the recycling center due to its popularity.

On Tuesday, January 7, at 6:30 p.m. the town will hold its annual reorganization meeting. The first council meeting of the year will take place on January 14.



HEARING CONTINUES...The Cranford Board of Adjustment continued the hearing for Verizon to place a cell tower at Union County College in Cranford. The hearing will continue this Monday, December 16.

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