

Hartz Planner: Township to See \$2.76 Million In Tax Revenue

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

CRANFORD – Updated demographic data and the costs and revenue associated with the rezoning application for 750 Walnut Avenue, where the owner, Hartz Mountain, seeks to convert commercial and industrial uses to a residential zone for 905 planned apartments, was provided Wednesday to the planning board by planner Keenan Hughes, an expert in planning hired by Hartz Mountain. He said the municipality and school district in total would see a \$2.76-million net-positive impact in tax revenue on a yearly basis as a result of the apartment complex. The municipality would see

\$660,000 in tax revenue yearly, based on Mr. Hughes' projections, while the school district would see \$2.1 million in tax revenue yearly.

In terms of the impact to the public schools, a range of 100 to 135 public-school children was projected to be moving into the 905 apartments, Mr. Hughes calculated based on two different methodologies. He took data from apartment complexes in Cranford — Riverfront at Cranford Station, Woodmont Station at Cranford, and Cranford Crossing. Those comparisons yielded 52 public-school children in phase 1 of the construction, and 110 public-school children at full build out. He also used a statewide

Rutgers study updated in November 2018 that focused on multi-family housing, he said. Mr. Hughes, in his application of the Rutgers methodology, yielded 70 at phase 1 and 135 public-school children at full build out. He said he took the data from the Rutgers study, which showed school-age children (which includes children who may not be attending public schools), and calculated out 85 percent, which is the percentage of children in the Cranford community who attend the public schools. He also noted that about 40 to 50 percent of children in multi-family developments typically are in the Kindergarten to grade 5 age range per statewide population studies.

Chris Chapman, a planning board member, asked, "if that larger population is going to that one school facility, it would have a larger impact on that one school facility?"

"There may be some other solution provided by the school district; I don't know," Mr. Hughes said. The township currently has neighborhood schools for grades K to 8 in the community, and in this area of the township that property would either be in the Walnut/Livingston Avenue School or the Hillside Avenue School district.

In comparison to Mr. Hughes' school-population impacts, a study conducted by Ross Haber Associates, which was hired by the school district, estimated 353 students would enter the school system at the project's full build out, as outlined in a report dated May 2018.

In Mr. Hughes' opinion, he said empirical evidence is the best resource to identify projections.

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NEW UCC TRUSTEES...General Edward J. Chrystal and Daryl Palmieri were sworn in as new members of the Union County College Board of Trustees at the Trustees January 22 meeting. Pictured, from left to right, are: Union County College Board of Trustees Chairman Victor M. Richel, General Chrystal, Mr. Palmieri, and Union President Margaret M. McMenamain.

Daryl Palmieri, Gen. Chrystal Join UCC Bd. of Trustees

CRANFORD – At the January 22, meeting of the Union County College Board of Trustees, Daryl Palmieri and General Edward J. Chrystal, Jr., both of Scotch Plains, were sworn in as trustees. Union County College Board of Trustees Chairman Victor M. Richel welcomed Mr. Palmieri and General Chrystal to the meeting and initiated their swearing in.

Mr. Palmieri is the interim executive superintendent of Union County Schools. In this position, he works for the New Jersey Department of Education and oversees the Union County Office of Education. The county office's responsibilities include performing onsite evaluations of school districts every three years in accordance with the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC), reviewing

and approving district budgets, and reviewing and approving district administrative contracts.

Mr. Palmieri has been a physical education teacher for 17 years and has served as head coach for the boys' basketball team at Westfield High School since 2011.

He holds a master's degree in educational administration and supervision from Kean University, and a Bachelor of Science degree from Manhattan College in physical education. At Manhattan College, he was a member of the men's basketball team and Phi Epsilon Kappa National Honors Fraternity for Physical Education.

General Chrystal is a Brigadier General for the New Jersey Army National Guard. As Brigadier General, he was responsible for the

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Courtesy of Patricia Pavlak

DEDICATED VOLUNTEER...Joseph Starkey, pictured center, was presented with a proclamation by Cranford Mayor Patrick Giblin, left, at the January 29 township committee meeting recognizing his 10 years of service to the township's library board. Mr. Starkey is a lifelong Cranford resident and chairman of the Swim Pool Advisory Board.