

This page is brought to you by:

James Ward Mansion

908-389-0014 • www.jameswardmansion.com

Final Public Comments Heard on 750 Walnut

als in that township, and she told him the "town has received no financial benefits from that project."

Mr. Zucker said the project will cause an "unmanageable burden" to schools and the police and fire departments.

Christine Esposito, of Behnert Place, said Hartz has not provided "compelling reasons to recommend this application to rezone"...and that the plan is in "stark contrast to the township's master plan."

Zoning Board of Adjustment Vice-President Jeffrey Pistol, speaking as a resident, also said he is opposed to the rezoning, and that the high-density apartment buildings go against the master plan. Mr. Pistol gave the planning board an alternative to what Hartz has proposed to develop the property.

"If you feel you can't because of the town's affordable-housing obligation...economic arguments that have been made...that the township can't go against for whatever reason, I want to suggest a possible alternative," Mr. Pistol said. He suggested the property be divided "into three parts accommodating different types of housing. One part with apartments with affordable housing...and the other two thirds divided between one third age-restricted apartments...and another third age-restricted clustered townhouses..." His proposal would provide a total of about 400 housing units, and include approximately 175 age-restricted units, providing 13 to 14 units per acre.

Resident Robert Pipchick, of Lincoln Avenue, affirmed that the master plan is against expanding multi-family developments and encourages additional age-restricted land use. Mr. Pipchick stated that the public schools are at "100 percent (capacity), from what I hear from the board of education...Will they (Hartz) build a school for us?"

Don Smith, of Oneida Place, talked about the traffic impacts of new housing developments being built throughout the county and how traffic is "growing expo-

nentially." He also discussed the impact on the school district. "Your own planners and school experts came up with 353 school kids...larger than any grade schools now," said Mr. Smith, referring to the number of school-age children estimated to be added to the district if the proposed 905 apartments are built. He said, "the volume of kids would create another school."

"I hope when you get to your bottom line on your decision that you vote no on 750," Mr. Smith said.



FUTURE LEADERS...Declan, RJ, Aiden and Christopher, pictured from left to right, hold *The Westfield Leader* on Point Pleasant Beach after touring Jenkinson's Aquarium last Wednesday with their Brookside Place Elementary School, Cranford, kindergarten classmates. They learned about sharks, seals, and other aquatic creatures and had a chance to touch a live horseshoe crab, sea urchin, and sea star.

Garwood Hears School District

ning participants.

Garwood Superintendent of Schools Teresa Quigley, Ed.D., said providing curriculum at 21st-century standards refers to providing educational standards through effective technological mediums. At a previous Garwood Board of Education meeting, she said Google Chromebooks are used by Lincoln School students as an educational tool and effective medium.

Over the next five years the "broad strategic goal categories" will guide the district leaders' policy, financial considerations, student activity and curriculum decisions, Ms. Thornton stated. "Unanticipated events can happen," she added.

Ms. Thornton said the board of education may have to make an abrupt decision regarding a facility given the district's finances.

She said the categories will allow district leaders to prioritize issues based on short-term circumstances, but not permanently disregard the long-term objectives.

"You will address the problem, then return back to the plan," Ms. Thornton said.

She said outlining goals creates priority focuses for the board of education and Lincoln School leadership to return their focus, too, after an unexpected short-term issue is addressed.

Superintendent Quigley said the goal of addressing school climate and culture protects the students' social and emotional learning environment.

"We're always looking to engage more parents, and encourage more volunteers and parent

participation," the superintendent said in addressing the community outreach and engagement goal category.

She said the district's finance and facilities goals will include board of education consideration for capital projects, school programs and curriculum funding.

"District leaders will always have to switch back and forth between goal categories to attain specific category objectives," Ms. Thornton said.

Board of Education member Maureen Scepkowski inquired about whether the district should put its goals on the district's website along with updates over time.

Ms. Thornton said the district should display its goals on the website to educate the public on the overarching focuses influencing policy and action. She said the board, annually or over several years, will want to check to make sure action is being taken to achieve specific category objectives.

An "action plan step or specific objective" within a goal category can be evaluated based on a simple determination process, Ms. Thornton explained.

"Who is involved? Was a proposed event held? Was it successful? Did an action step serve its initial purpose?" said Ms. Thornton in detailing areas the board will want to address.

Superintendent Quigley honored numerous volunteers who participated in the strategic planning meetings, providing input at the beginning with Tuesday's meeting.