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## Township Committee Hears Residents On Apartment Zoning

Township officials in Scotch Plains will go back to the drawing boards once again, to study public comment on a proposed total revision of the Scotch Plains zoning ordinance. The amended ordinance has been in the works for many years and a second public hearing last Monday yielded comment centered about garden apartments and an area near Winding Brook Way.

Sidney Graybar, 1451 Cooper Road, is a local builder who feels the community is lacking in balanced housing under the new ordinance. Graybar feels garden apartments in the B-1 area alone, and no provision for an area where townhouses could be built leaves a community with too much large-lot zoning. "Not everybody can afford an acre lot," Graybar said, "and it looks like two-thirds of the town is so zoned. Houses on an acre are too big and costly to maintain."

Such zoning isn't in keeping with the times and court cases which tend to make zoning ordinances less restrictive, the builder suggested.

Calpurnio Salomone of Azalea Court agreed with Graybar in the need for some provision for apartments. Originally the revised ordinance had provided for garden apartments in the R3-A zone, but in the initial public

hearing last spring, residents of this zone had protested and the garden apartment provision had been dropped. Salomone wanted to know why only the R3-A zone had been designated for garden apartments, and questioned whether there were any lot in that zone large enough to develop into garden apartments other than that owned by the family of Township Committeeman William Kitz. The Kitz nursery is located at the corner of Westfield Road and Westfield Avenue, fronting on three streets.

"I can't believe you gents didn't know that is the only size lot available to meet garden apartment requirements," Salomone said, when Mayor Albert Theurer denied knowledge of the total size of the Kitz property.

"Garden apartments have been withdrawn from that zone, so why bother to bring it up?" Committeeman Walter Grose asked.

## Ground Is Broken For New School Construction

The first shovelful of earth has been dug, signaling the start of the building program of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood school district.

A ground-breaking, held on Saturday morning at 9 a.m., marked the event. Members of the Board of Education were on hand to observe Board President Dr. Peter N. Britton, Jr. and Mrs. Patricia DeProspero, President of School One PTA, join forces in the "dig." Mrs. DeProspero's presence was intended to symbolize School One, which will be replaced by the new school, and also the community at large. Dr. Britton acted for all members of Boards of Education, present and past, who have been effective in working toward the new buildings.

The groundbreaking took place at the site of the new Willow Avenue elementary school, in the football field of Park Junior High School.

In addition to Dr. Britton, three other members of the present Board of Education were on hand - Vice President Richard M. Bard, John McCormack, and Charles Ferguson.

Dr. Muriel Ramsden, past president and board member, also attended. The building referendum was approved by voters at the time Mrs. Ramsden served as a board member, and her presence represented the interest and efforts of past boards in achieving the expansion goal.

John Blanche was on hand to represent the architectural firm Hamnett, Bouman, and Blanche of Trenton, architects for the several phases of the expansion program.

In addition to a new 700-pupil elementary school in Willow Avenue, voters also approved additions to four existing elementary schools and improve-



Mrs. Pat DeProspero of School One PTA and Dr. Peter N. Britton, Jr., President of the Board of Education, share a shovel.

ments and a small addition to Park Junior High School.

Since the awarding of bids earlier this month, the Board of Education has conducted several pre-job conferences with contractors, and the contractors are involved in surveys and in the moving in of some of the smaller pieces of construction equipment.

## Says Assembly Bill Would Increase Local School Tax Burden

### Board of Ed Meeting Set For Tonight

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education has announced that there will be a Special Meeting of the Board of Education at 8:00 p.m. on the cafeteria of the Terrill Junior High School this evening, September 28th. The purpose of the meeting is to receive and award or reject bids re sale of \$4,260,000 bonds of the School District.

Kitz read a statement regarding his property. Since the first public hearing there have been some snide and political remarks about possible apartments in the zone. The original recommendation for apartments there was made by a professional planner with the concept that in the older section of the town as homes deteriorated some developer might possibly purchase enough properties with old homes to accumulate an acre of land and redevelop it into a low density garden apartment, Kitz said.

He has never participated with Planning Board members in such discussion and, from a point of economics the acreage would be worth considerably more if utilized as individual building lots, Kitz pointed out.

A total of 182 residents signed a petition requesting larger buffer zones between industrial and residential zones and also seeking designation of the Kroheim property, an 800-foot lot near Winding Brook Way, Jacobs Lane, and Fairview Court, for Green Acres use. The residents, some of whom spoke at the hearing, said they understood the owner of the parcel of land, which is zoned industrial, would be willing to develop the land as townhouses or garden apartments and they added that they had been advised that the Planning Consultant had indicated that the rateable would be the same for either.

"Our homes are among the highest rateables in town and such development would destroy the neighborhood character," one homeowner said. "We ask that these lands be used for residential development."

A strip of land behind business establishments and abutting private homes in Haven Avenue should be zoned residential, according to several residents of Haven Avenue who spoke. Designating the strip, which backs up on Pasco and Vanella Buick, as residential would insure privacy for homeowners in the area, and would require notification and hearings if any action were considered.

Continued On Page 21

### Predicts Return To \$2.40 Uniform Property Tax Proposal

A bill which would implement full State funding of elementary and secondary school education, presently in final draft form in the Assembly Education Committee "would have a frightful impact upon our local school system and would drastically increase our tax burden to support education," according to Fanwood Councilman Van Dyke J. Pollitt. The bill is a substitute measure for a similar bill rejected by the Assembly last July as part of Governor Cahill's tax reform program. Pollitt served as a member of the Tax Policy Committee.

Pollitt explained that, under the provisions of the new bill, the State would provide, to every school district, an amount of money equal to the State average expenditure per weighted pupil. "Those districts that are currently spending less than the State average would be helped," Pollitt said, "but districts like ours, with expenditures considerably above the State average, would be penalized terribly."

"The bill would allow every district to spend any amount the voters wished, but it specifically excludes State sharing of the educational cost above the State average by districts like Fanwood-Scotch Plains," Pollitt said. All monies in excess of the State average would have to be raised by additional local taxation, unlike the Cahill plan which provided for State participation up to 50% of that excess. The Fanwood-Scotch Plains taxpayers would have to generate, through broad-based taxation, our share of the \$1.3 billion dollars to implement the program, plus 100% of our cost per pupil above the State average. Under the Cahill plan, the State would have provided 52% of these excess funds for Fanwood and approximately 48% of the excess funds for Scotch Plains." It was called the "local-leeway" program.

Should this bill become law, the effect will be to reduce all school systems in the State to the "lowest common denominator," according to Pollitt. "It would be extremely difficult for our Board of Education to convince the taxpayers even to maintain our status quo, much less meet increasing educational costs which would keep us above the State average," he said.

The new bill does not define the method of taxation which would be used to generate the required \$1.3 billion dollars. "With the defeat of the income tax proposal last July, I predict that the Legislature will turn to a \$2.40 uniform property tax just as soon as the Botter decision is sustained by the State Supreme Court," Pollitt said.

"Because of the tremendous effect that any plan for full State funding has upon our own local decision-making prerogatives, I hope that all of us will follow these developments in the Legislature very closely and will insist that our Legislature avoid the creation of an educational

monolith similar to New York City. In my judgment, this new bill would create that monolith," Pollitt concluded.

## Testimonial Dinner For Flo Dwyer

"Friends of Flo Dwyer," the non-partisan political organization that managed all of the Congresswoman's campaigns in past years, will sponsor a mammoth testimonial dinner and reception in her honor on October 27 at Weiland's Steak House (The Lotus Garden), Mountainside. The theme of the event will be, "Thank You, Flo."

The dinner committee is making every effort to attract people from all walks of life in their plans for the event. For example, the ticket price is \$9.85 "because that's what our costs will be and the event is not a political fund-raiser."

"Mrs. Dwyer has literally thousands of friends throughout the district representing every political persuasion. We want all of them to feel comfortable supporting this event," co-chairman Van Dyke Pollitt of Fanwood said. "It will be a great opportunity for everyone to join in a tribute to Mrs. Dwyer and to thank her for her twenty years of service." Pollitt managed Mrs. Dwyer's campaign in 1970.

Mrs. Julia Condran of Roselle, Pollitt's co-chairman for the event, said the committee invites all other groups, political and non-political that would like to join in sponsorship of the event to contact her through Republican County Headquarters in Westfield. "We have coordinated the date to fit Mrs. Dwyer's schedule and will welcome the participation of any group - large or small - that would care to co-sponsor with us," she said. In this way, the dinner will be most meaningful and a fitting tribute to Mrs. Dwyer. The printed programs will list all sponsoring organizations," she added.

Pollitt pointed out that tickets are available from Republican municipal chairmen and from "Friends of Flo Dwyer," 610 North Ave., East, Westfield.