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## County Seeks State Funds To Replace Terrill R.R. Bridge

Union County is seeking funds from the State Bureau of Local Government Aid for replacement of the Terrill Road railroad bridge as a Federal Aid Urban Project. Consequently, Union County engineer J.A. Komich wrote to Fanwood officials recently, notifying them of the application, and alerting them to the fact that the state bureau, in reviewing the application, has asked that it be amended to include curbing and widening of Terrill Road from a 40 to a 46-foot roadway between Midway and LaGrande Avenues in Plainfield and Fanwood.

"Terrill Road already has a 46-foot roadway from Route 22 to Midway, and they feel a 46-foot roadway should be extended as a proper connector to South Avenue, which is a state highway, and LaGrande Avenue, which is a county road," Komich's letter said. He noted that the proposed widening is necessary to substantiate construction of a four-lane bridge, which is necessary due to its close proximity to the signalized intersection of South Avenue. The entire project would be financed with 70 percent federal and 30 percent state aid, with Fanwood's concurrence necessary.

The bridge has been a source of concern locally for some time. Pieces of roadway have "dropped through" from time to time, necessitating closing of the bridge for repairs, which results

in occasional detours and interruptions in traffic pattern.

In other matters before the Fanwood Borough Council during their agenda session Monday night, the Council received recommendations from the Planning Board regarding parking and housing of recreational vehicles in residential areas, and on conditions under which the zoning officer can waive site plan review requirements. These two areas were among four subjects which Council referred to the Planning Board some months ago for review. The Planning Board had already forwarded results of its study of the other two areas - real estate signs and legislation which would give the zoning officer power to waive the site plan reviews. According to Councilman John Swindlehurst, Council

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## Council Members Suggest Economies In Municipal Building Construction

Last week, the Council of Fanwood heard estimates from an architect suggesting that the total cost for a new municipal building or Fanwood could run as high as \$1.3 million, considering costs of construction, design, land, and site work.

Several municipal officers had expressed the hope that the costs might be trimmed considerably. This week, the two Democratic minority members of the Council took the unusual step of writing to their fellow Council members, citing areas where they felt savings might be realized.

Councilman John Swindlehurst and Councilwoman Carol Whittington suggested several areas wherein the building costs might be trimmed. For example, the two recommended that 400 square feet of floor space be trimmed from each of the three wings of the building, reducing the total floor space by a total of 1,600 square feet. It was estimated that this move might save \$100,000.

They further suggested that \$15,000 more be saved by reconsidering an earlier decision to add 10 feet to the bays which will house the fire and rescue squad vehicles, maintaining the original proposed 60-foot bays.

The Democrats' third proposal calls for locating the entire municipal building, which will be constructed on the Slocum property on Martine Avenue, closer to the street than the architect had planned, thereby providing space and the possibility of eventually selling off some Russell Road property behind the

building location, with a potential of about \$60,000. The Democrats' final proposal suggested that borough forces be utilized to construct a detention basin at the bottom corner of the property. Using borough public works employees instead of construction gang members for preparation of the detention basin could save an additional \$20,000, according to the Democrats. They estimated that their recommendations would save about \$200,000 and would, according to Mrs. Whittington, bring the costs of the building down closer to the original estimates.

The design is reasonable, the problem is the total cost, the Democrats said. The Democratic proposal drew fire from the Republicans on the Council, not because they are attempting to save money, but because they made their recommendations without benefit of any rationale. "You have absolutely no rationale for cutting 1,600 feet from that building," Councilman Charles Coronella said. "If that building does not meet our needs, we have not gotten any bargain. It's popular to send a letter, but if you could tell us why and where to cut, your credibility would be better. You make arbitrary statements."

## School One Property For Sale But Bidders Playing Hard To Get

### Board Names Acting LaGrande Principal

Marsha Lambeck, who has been teaching sixth grade at LaGrande School, will now be acting principal of the Fanwood elementary school. Mrs. Lambeck was named to the post by the Board of Education last week. The Board of Education is engaged in a search for a permanent principal for the school.

The vote on the Lambeck appointment was 5-4. Those in opposition included Philip Labasi, Thomas J. Fallon, Frank Festa, Jr. and Vincent Shanni. The acting principalship will carry a \$16,675 salary.

Richard M. Bard of the Board of Education, said in response to questioning that the board has had no "viable, concrete discussion" of closing of LaGrande School. The possibility of the school being closed is rumored from time to time, and enrollment is down considerably there this year.

Joseph Nagy of Fanwood favors consideration of closing the school. He said the budgetary problems now facing the district mandate consideration of savings which might be realized by closing the school. He estimated it could save \$250,000 for next year.

Nagy asked Bard if he had pledged to keep the school open as long as he is president of the board. Bard claimed this "judicious," noting that there are nine votes on the board in every issue. Board member Philip Labasi is opposed to closing any elementary schools. He feels this would be a discriminatory act, to single out the elementary level for budget cuts. Labasi claimed this has been a trend in recent years - saving money at the elementary levels.

Coronella said. Coronella accused the Democrats of starting their 1976 campaign by sending the letter. He felt they should have sought a Council get-together for discussion of cutting the costs.

Councilman Robert McCartney said. "Nobody likes the price. I do not think anybody would like even an \$800,000 price, but we've gone to every department and asked that they cut back on floor space requirements. You never before mentioned that the ten additional feet requested by

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### Board Asking For Minimum Bid Of \$200,000. Availability Notices Sent To Two Hundred

'Tis the season to buy, buy, buy. 'Tis the season for extravagance. 'Tis the season for shopping. Neiman Marcus sells golden toothpicks for hundreds, matching his-and-hers mink lap robes for thousands, in the frenzied atmosphere of the pre-Christmas season. The magic wasn't there for the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education, however.

The Board tried to sell what they thought was an attraction - Old School One on Park Avenue. Tuesday, December 8 at 2 p.m. was the time set for the opening of the bids. As one approached the Board of Education offices on Plainfield Avenue at about 2 p.m., the roadway was lined with cars, and it appeared that the action might be interesting. However, inside, there were no bids to be had. The minimum for the old building had been set at \$200,000.

There had been nibbles of interest in recent months. According to Assistant Superintendent for Business Michael Klick, the administration offices had received requests for information and bidding forms from several areas. Klick said real estate brokers who deal in large developments such as mini marts and shopping centers had evidenced interest, as had several local contractors. A local real estate man was reportedly interested, as was a potential buyer who debated about using the site for a technical school.

Klick said notification had been sent out to 200 potential bidders. This included those who had expressed interest as well as likely candidates for purchase of the parcel. In addition, advertisements had been placed in many newspapers and in the Wall Street Journal.

The lack of a bidder deepens the gloom for the Board of Education and the administration, for the Board had voted last week to "borrow" from monies realized from the sale of School One to make up part of a large deficit in operating funds for the current school year. Originally, a deficit of \$315,327 was projected. The deficit came from a combination of cutbacks in state aid of \$197,138 and unanticipated jumps in utilities, legal fees, and other accounts of \$181,130. The Superintendent of Schools, Reigh Carpenter, outlined a lengthy list of reductions to erase the \$118,189 in deficits due to inflationary costs and unanticipated expenditures, leaving the Board with the \$197,000 in missing state aid in current expense.

At first, the Board voted to sponsor a referendum to seek

approval from voters for an increase in payments to the board to cover the missing \$197,000. Then the Board turned from this course of action, voting on a split vote last week to go with the Superintendent's recommendation to "borrow" the \$197,000 from monies from sale of School One. The monies from School One had been promised for several years for renovations of Park Junior High School. When discussion arose over borrowing of these monies, it had been assumed that the monies borrowed would be returned into school accounts in the budget for next year, and then directed toward the Park Junior renovations.

In the absence of buyers for School One, what are the options facing the school district for the current school year? At this point, nobody is quite sure. Richard Bard, President of the Board, was on hand at Board of Education offices for the sale that wasn't. He indicated that the Board as a whole would now have to take up this question. He said he personally regretted that the Board had not seen fit to issue "forty pink slips" to staff members. He said he did not favor elimination of staff, but the slips might have been issued on an "if necessary" basis, so that the district would have had that money-saving option open to it. Had the 60-day notices been issued, the district would have had assurances that at least this money-saving direction was available, and the Board and administration could have directed their efforts to finding other approaches within the 60-day period, hopefully coming up with another source of funds, Bard thought.

Several weeks ago, the Superintendent had mapped out his ideas on possible approaches to meeting the deficit, including suggestions for saving \$197,000 in the event that monies were not available from sale of School One. His statement read:

"If a satisfactory bid for Old School One is not forthcoming, the Superintendent recommends that the following be considered to meet the \$197,138 loss of state

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