

MANY ROAD IMPROVEMENTS APPROVED BY TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

Scotch Plains Joins Group Seeking Solution to Its Sewerage Problems

Shippen Committee Raised \$3,000 Towards Scholarship With Matching Grants From Merck Pledged; Scotch Plains, Westfield, Fanwood and Mountainside Seek to Establish Animal Shelter

By GLENN R. KAPLINSKY
Specially Written for The Times

Tuesday's meeting saw the Scotch Plains Council voting along with the Boroughs of Fanwood, South Plainfield and Watchung to retain the services of BCM Engineering of Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, which will perform engineering and evaluation services regarding litigation and mediation with a view to creation of a Regional Sewerage Authority to replace the Plainfield Joint Meeting.

Scotch Plains share of the total \$12,400 is \$2,604. BCM will advise if a reasonable settlement of the various disputes with the Plainfield Joint Meeting may be effected. The contract being of a professional nature was not subject to the Public Contracts Law and therefore not bid. Second and final reading of the measure will be August 16.

A contract was awarded to A and A Construction of Kearny for \$50,793 to build the Cushing Road sanitary sewer extension. The council passed an ordinance on second and final reading for the construction and extension of a sanitary sewer system on Cushing and Terrill Roads. Bond sales will be used to finance the construction along with a special assessment imposed upon those residents of Cushing and Terrill Roads whom the new sewer system will benefit.

Additional ordinances which passed on second and final reading and are now law include:

- An ordinance amending the property maintenance code. The ordinance was passed at the urging of Councilwoman Joan Pappen. Homeowners and businesses who in the opinion of township officials who fail to maintain their properties will be given summonses; no

warnings will be given as under the prior code provision.

Mrs. Pappen stated that offenders under the old system would receive warnings, clean-up their properties and then let their properties deteriorate. According to Mrs. Pappen offenders were few, but each offender was habitual. The ordinance will go into effect in 20 days. Four-time violators may receive up to 90 days in jail, if convicted.

- A bond ordinance authorizing curb improvements to Ridgeview Avenue as a local special assessment and the reconstruction of Ridgeview Avenue as a general improvement. Both sides of Ridgeview from Westfield Avenue to Lyde Place, a distance of approximately 800 linear feet, will be done. The township has appropriated \$62,000 toward the project.

Scotch Plains intends to issue bonds in an amount not to exceed \$59,000 to help cover the costs when the work will be completed and the amount of the special assessment is unclear at this time.

The contract must be bid before a clearer picture is obtained. Mrs. Ann Polan of 400 Ridgeview Avenue questioned officials about the cost of the special assessment. Mayor William F. McClintock, Jr. replied that while exact figures are currently unobtainable, it is estimated each homeowner will be assessed \$500 to \$700. This is payable in a lump sum or over a 10-year period at an interest rate of approximately 8 percent, he noted.

Martin Fayette of Mountain Avenue wondered why a less expensive curbing material is not being used. Councilman Robert Johnston said Belgian block curbing, while more expensive, looks better and lasts longer than the pre-formed concrete type.

Mrs. Mary Jansen, who resides on Westfield Avenue at the corner of Ridgeview, inquired as to whether the curbing would go around the corner of Westfield Avenue or not. Officials said this would have to be determined at a later date.

- The public hearing on the reducing the speed limit on Lake Avenue in both directions between Raritan Road and Fairway Court has been carried to the August 16 public meeting. The speed limit is currently 40 miles per hour. The State Department of Transportation has given approval to reduce the speed limit to 35 miles per hour. The residents of Lake Avenue, led by Mrs. and Mrs. Leonard Rappa of 109 Lake Avenue and Mrs. Sarah Jurgen of 1915 Lake Avenue, want the limit reduced to 25 miles per hour.

The group has obtained the signatures of 80 residents who also want the speed limit reduced to 25 miles per hour. Mrs. Rappa and Mrs. Jurgen want Scotch Plains to furnish the data on which the reduction to 35 miles per hour was based on.

Councilmen assured them they would furnish such information. There are no sidewalks on Lake Avenue. Mrs. Rappa urged that sidewalks be built and the speed limit be reduced or you will have a "disastrous accident."

Mrs. Jurgen claimed drivers take Lake Avenue to avoid the light at Martine Avenue and Raritan Road. "Please consider the effect the speed limit has on our lives," she said. The residents are concerned that children may be injured by a careless driver. Mrs. Jurgen alleged that Frank Climshaw, Director of the Senior Citizens Housing project, also favors the 25 miles per hour limit on Lake.

Who has jurisdiction over Lake Avenue is unclear. Prior to the Martine Avenue extension, Lake Avenue was a county road. Whether it still is a county road or has reverted to Scotch Plains is an issue that will be discovered before the August 16 council meeting.

- Applicants for the police department must be residents of Scotch Plains from the date they sit for the examination until the date of their appointment. Such an ordinance was passed on second and final reading. Earlier in the year a resolution was passed to that effect. The state of New Jersey required that the change be done by ordinance.

Fanwood and Scotch Plains will share the services of a Court Administrator effective August 1. A salary range of \$14,000 to \$42,000 is planned for the post. Councilwoman Irene Schmidt stated, "This is another example of communities sharing services."

A resolution was adopted honoring Henry Kramer, a Scotch Plains resident for the past 34 years, who has been a member of the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee and Chairman of the World War II Commemorative Committee.

Mr. Kramer was stationed in Italy during the war and worked on the military publication *Yank*. It was Mr. Kramer who first suggested that the Township of Scotch Plains form the World War II Commemorative Committee to honor those who fought for the nation. Mr. Kramer is relocating to California. Mrs. Pappen remarked that she and Mr. Kramer had "been friends for several years" and that the success of this year's Memorial Day Parade is largely due to Mr. Kramer.

She went on to say, "We will miss him."

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William A. Burke for The Times

FARM FRESH...The Scotch Plains Farmer's Market, held in the Municipal Building Parking Lot, got off to a modest beginning on Saturday, July 9, with only two farmers vending their wares. However, a nearby notice proclaimed the participation of additional farmers the following week. Still, a substantial number of customers patronized the two stalls which were selling fresh vegetables and potted flowers.

Consultant to Explore Possibilities For New Sewer Authority for Area

Fanwood Police Chief's Salary Raised by Councilmen to \$70,380 from \$67,029

By GLENN R. KAPLINSKY
Specially Written for The Times

A special meeting of the Fanwood Borough Council was held Wednesday, July 6, during which an ordinance was passed on first reading raising the salary for Chief of Police Anthony Parenti to \$70,380 from \$67,029.

The council also approved a contract to B.C.M. Engineering, Inc. of Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, for professional engineering services. B.C.M. will evaluate the Plainfield Joint Meeting sewer system.

Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Watchung and South Plainfield have jointly retained B.C.M. Engineering at a total cost of \$12,400. Fanwood's share is \$1,736. South Plainfield will pay 57 percent of the total cost, Scotch Plains 21 percent, Fanwood 14 percent and Watchung 8 percent.

Plainfield has hired its own engineer. Due to the professional nature of the contract it was not put out to bid, officials said.

B.C.M.'s report is to be completed by September 9 or 10 of this year.

B.C.M. will make a recommendation on the feasibility of replacing the Plainfield Joint Meeting with another sewer authority, borough officials said.

During the conference meeting a letter dated June 14 from Robert Shinn, Jr., Commissioner of the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Energy, regarding the clean-up of the Dean Oil site was made public.

"This site presents severe limitations for clean-up options," said Mr. Shinn in the letter. Fanwood has re-

fused to allow treated ground water to be discharged into its sanitary sewer system. Officials said trucks will be used to cart the soil away. Permits for the work will be applied for shortly.

The Township Engineer Richard Marsden, Jr. and Council President, Mrs. Maryanne Connelly, said they met with concerned residents of Helen Street on July 8. A second meeting will occur Thursday, July 14, with residents of Second Street. Helen Street will be widened and sidewalks installed on both sides of the street, officials noted. A two-block area will be affected. Residents of the area are also concerned with a long standing speeding problem in the area.

According to Mr. Marsden, the project will help residents walking to and from La Grande Park. In addition, the road will be more visible.

The work on Helen Street will not solve the speeding problem, Mr. Marsden cautioned. This can only be accomplished through strict enforcement, said Mrs. Connelly.

A resolution was expected to be included on last night's public meeting agenda opposing a Turnpike access ramp for the GAF corporation's incinerator in Linden.

Loaded trucks would exit the Turnpike at the ramp, empty their contents at the GAF facility and then proceed through the streets of the towns of Union County, the Borough Council

Lengthy Debate Marks Two Variances For Decks at Zoning Board Meeting

Resident Fears Granting of Variances for Decks Could Affect Other Areas

By SUZETTE STALKER
Specially Written for The Times

The Scotch Plains Zoning Board of Adjustment was compelled to referee a lengthy debate last Thursday during what started out as routine variance applications, when a neighbor objected to separate bids by two couples seeking to construct decks on their respective properties. The neighbor feared the proposals would set a precedent for other homeowners living in the development known as Winchester Estates.

The conflict came to light after the first applicants, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Berlant of 36 Winchester Drive, asked the board's permission to build a 37-foot-by-19.5-foot deck, which required a variance because the proposal calls for a distance of between 40 and 45 feet from the deck to the rear property line, in violation of the required minimum 50-foot setback. Mr. and Mrs. Berlant, who testified jointly, reported their neighbors supported their plans.

They were unexpectedly challenged, however, by Welles A. Sumner of 1660 Rahway Road, who lives opposite the Berlants' block. Mr. Sumner, while maintaining that he wanted to see the couple have their deck built, appealed to the board not to let the application establish a precedent for all other neighbors.

He directed most of his arguments at Muekah Patel of 38 Winchester Drive, who had been called as a witness by the Berlants. Mr. Patel, whose home had been built with an unauthorized deck attached, has a similar application pending before the board. Mr. Sumner expressed concern that board approval of the Berlants' proposal would pave the way for multiple decks in the neighborhood, some possibly built illegally, which he claimed would increase noise pollution and fire hazards from cooking grills.

In what he maintained was an effort to reach an amicable compromise, Mr. Sumner proposed to the applicants several alternatives to the deck, including a patio or leisure area on the lawn alone.

The Berlants responded that they chose the deck, which they designed based on recommendations from town construction official Robert LaCosta, because they felt it would be most ideal for the comfort and safety of themselves and their young children.

The board approved the Berlants' application, though several members expressed empathy for Mr. Sumner's

concerns regarding potential precedent setting. Mr. and Mrs. Berlant were asked to present a scaled drawing detailing the dimensions and angles of the deck, plus the distance from the house to the rear property line. A resolution confirming the board's decisions expected to be memorialized on September 1.

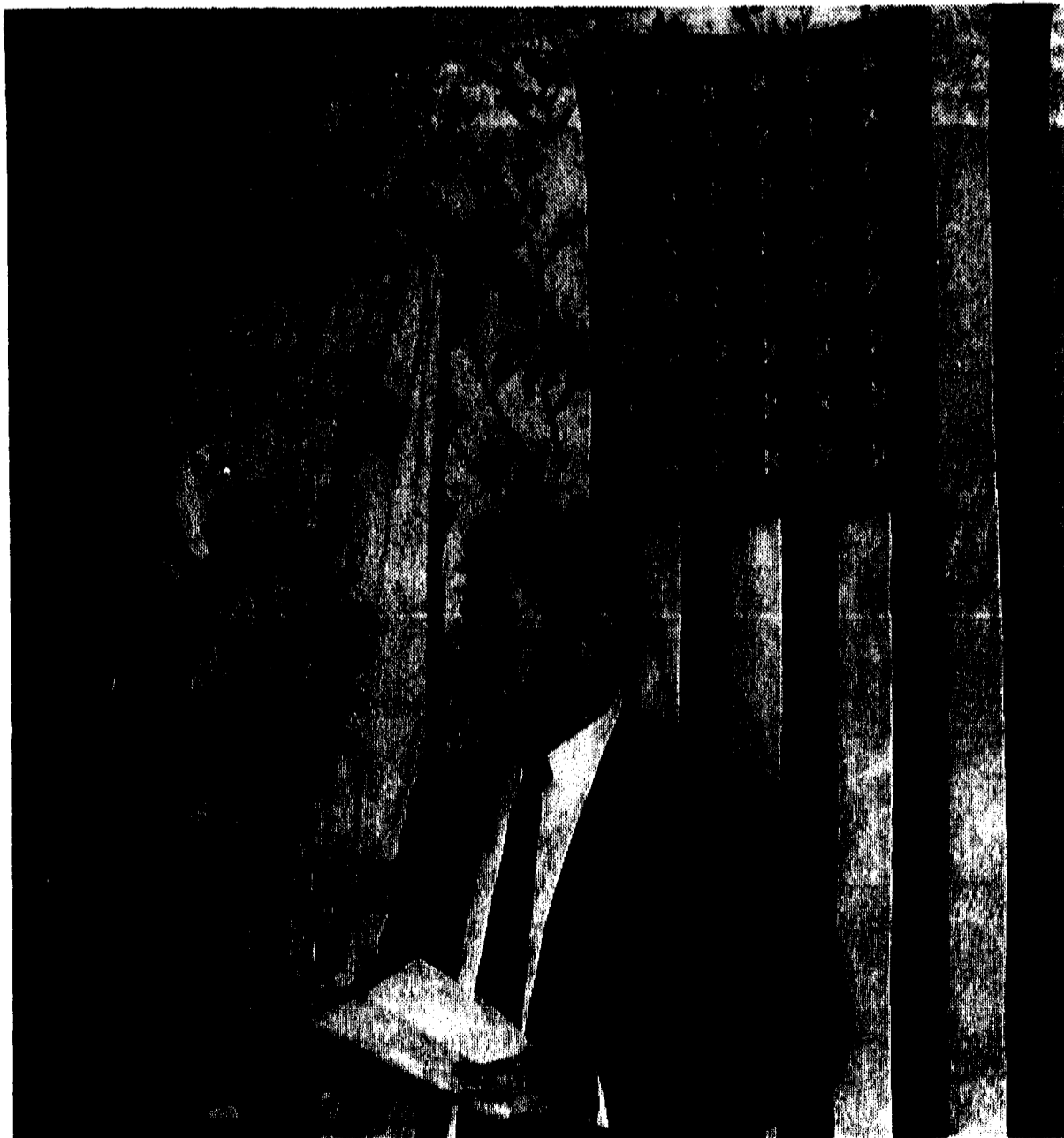
The deck debate continued with a subsequent application by Mr. and Mrs. Edward and Jastrzebski, 18 Winchester Drive, who also met with

resistance from Mr. Sumner, who briefly reiterated his concern about future developments in the neighborhood. The Jastrzebskis successfully petitioned the board for permission to build a rear deck with a 37-foot setback for the property line, in violation of the minimum 50-foot requirement.

In other matters, Timothy Mehrtens, owner of Martial Arts America, 1812-1828 East Second

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MR. PRESIDENT...Thomas M. Keiser, Jr. was inducted June 29 as the new President of the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club at a special meeting held at the Spanish Tavern Restaurant in Mountainside. Rotary District Governor, William Neuter, also inducted the new officers for the 1994-1998 year: Thomas Russo, President-Elect; Robert Geiger, Jr., Treasurer; William Pittman, Secretary; Miss Lori deMille, Sergeant-at-Arms, and Miss Lauren Birn and Mrs. Claire Snow as Board Members. Mr. Keiser is the owner and Manager of the Fanwood Memorial Home. He is a graduate of Xavier University and resides in Scotch Plains.

County-Wide Shelter For Animals Proposed

Meeting Yesterday Discussed the Wide-Ranging Proposal

By ELLEN RADIN
Specially Written for The Times

A possible county-wide animal shelter and adoption service was discussed at a July meeting of the mayors or representatives of many municipalities. Another meeting open to the general public was held yesterday, Wednesday, July 13, in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building in Westfield.

Westfield and Mountainside are leading the efforts to establish the shelter and have contacted the mayors and certain county officials to ascertain interest and to explore the possible need for and benefits of such a shelter.

According to Mrs. JoAnn Gemenden, Chief of the Bureau of Environmental Affairs for Union County, some municipalities in the county now spend as much as \$30,000 to \$40,000 a year on animal control. Westfield Councilwoman, Mrs. Margaret C. Sur, who is very active in attempts to establish the shelter, stated that Westfield now spends approximately \$36,000 a year on a contract with Garden State Kennels, a private service that removes dead animals and picks up strays.

Scotch Plains Mayor William F. McClintock, Jr. said that his town's contract with Garden State Kennels was approximately \$14,000 a year. Mayor McClintock said that Scotch Plains was "not terribly happy" with Garden State Kennels, but it was the only outfit to respond to the town's request for bids each year.

At the League of Municipalities meetings attended by county mayors each month, Mayor McClintock said, "every town is screaming" about

Garden State Kennels. Robert F. Vigilanti, Mayor of Mountainside, said, "We have not gotten service as fast as we would like" from Garden State Kennels in removing dead deer and raccoons from the roadways. Garden State Kennels could not be reached for comment.

Those interested in establishing the shelter hope that a county-wide service might cost less per town. By way of example, Mayor Vigilanti noted his borough has been able to save \$90,000 on liability insurance while increasing coverage, just by combining with other municipalities.

In addition to the financial ben-

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DEADLINES HELP PAPERS SERVE YOU

Those preparing press releases for submission to *The Westfield Leader* or *The Times* are reminded all copy should be in the hands of the Editor at 50 Elm Street, Westfield, by 4 p.m. on the Friday before the Thursday on which they wish it to appear.

Leader releases also may be mailed to Post Office Box 250, Westfield, 07091, and Times releases to Post Office Box 368, Scotch Plains, 07076, to meet the above requirements.

For events which happen the week-end prior to publication, press releases should reach the Editor by Monday of the week of publication at 10 a.m.

Obituaries will be taken until Tuesday at 5 p.m.

For events which are planned weeks or months in advance, we encourage submission of stories as early as possible prior to the event.

The above deadlines are meant to enable us to prepare your copy carefully.

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