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SCOTCH PLAINS AND FANWOOD WOULD PAY \$50,000 EACH

Tentative Agreement Reached on Repair Of Hetfield Bridge at \$150,000 Cost

Borough Council Meets With Representative of Firm Fighting Rate Hike by Elizabethtown Water Company

By GLENN R. KAPLINSKY
Specially Written for The Times

At the conclusion of the Fanwood Borough Council's February 6 conference meeting, Borough Engineer Richard Marsden announced a tentative agreement has been reached to repair the Hetfield Avenue bridge.

Scotch Plains, Fanwood and Union County will each contribute \$50,000 toward the \$150,000 costs. Scotch Plains will resurface the bridge which Mr. Marsden said was in "bad" shape.

The poor condition of the span led to a recent meeting with borough, township, county and New Jersey Transit officials.

It was decided at the meeting that the bridge is in need of stabilizing and resurfacing. New Jersey Transit officials have offered to perform tests on the bridge and draw up the plans.

Scotch Plains officials have offered to manage the project and draw up the contract. The sidewalk adjoining

the bridge will also be reconstructed.

It is hoped the work, officials said, will commence in the spring of next year and be completed within two months. The work on the structure will be performed in conjunction with the county's milling of North Avenue.

It is expected the contract will be drawn up and executed shortly. The borough will pay for its share of the material costs.

Raymond Manfra of Fanwood, Director of Public Works, will oversee the project for Fanwood along with Mr. Marsden.

Stabilizing core sample tests will be done on the bridge to see what work is needed. However, an "eye-ball" inspection by New Jersey Transit engineers revealed no major flaws, officials said.

In other business, Fanwood Councilman Bruce H. Walsh noted the borough's contract with the

Policemen's Benevolent Association expired at the end of last year and that there has been no response since October from the association to the borough's invitation to negotiate.

According to Councilman Walsh, the association is looking for a "significant" increase in salary and benefits. Councilman Louis C. Jung stated the contract with the public works union is also expiring.

The council heard a brief presentation from Donald P. Dudley, 3rd, President of Analytic Resources of Wall Township.

Mr. Dudley spoke of the coalition of municipalities that has been forming to fight the large increase requested by Elizabethtown Water Company in residential and hydrant services.

The coalition presently consists of 13 or 14 municipalities with Monroe Township being the latest addition.

Other members also include Scotch Plains, South Brunswick and Readington. This is the fourth or fifth coalition to fight increases in water rates that Mr. Dudley has been a part of.

Mr. Dudley said the other efforts have seen the water rate increase scaled back by at least 50 per cent. The coalition intends to question the water company regarding the costs associated with its new treatment plant in Franklin Township which, Mr. Dudley said, is too large.

Mr. Dudley went on to explain the rate hike procedure Elizabethtown

has to follow by law. Each of the coalition members is putting up \$4,000 to fight the hike.

Councilman Jung termed the requested rate increases as "rate shock."

A 29.6 per cent in fire hydrant rates and a 32.5 per cent increase for residential customers is being sought by the water company.

It does not appear likely that Fanwood will receive a requested grant from the state Department of Transportation, said Mr. Marsden, to provide landscaping for the north side of the Fanwood Train Station. The borough is to hear in April whether it has received the grant.

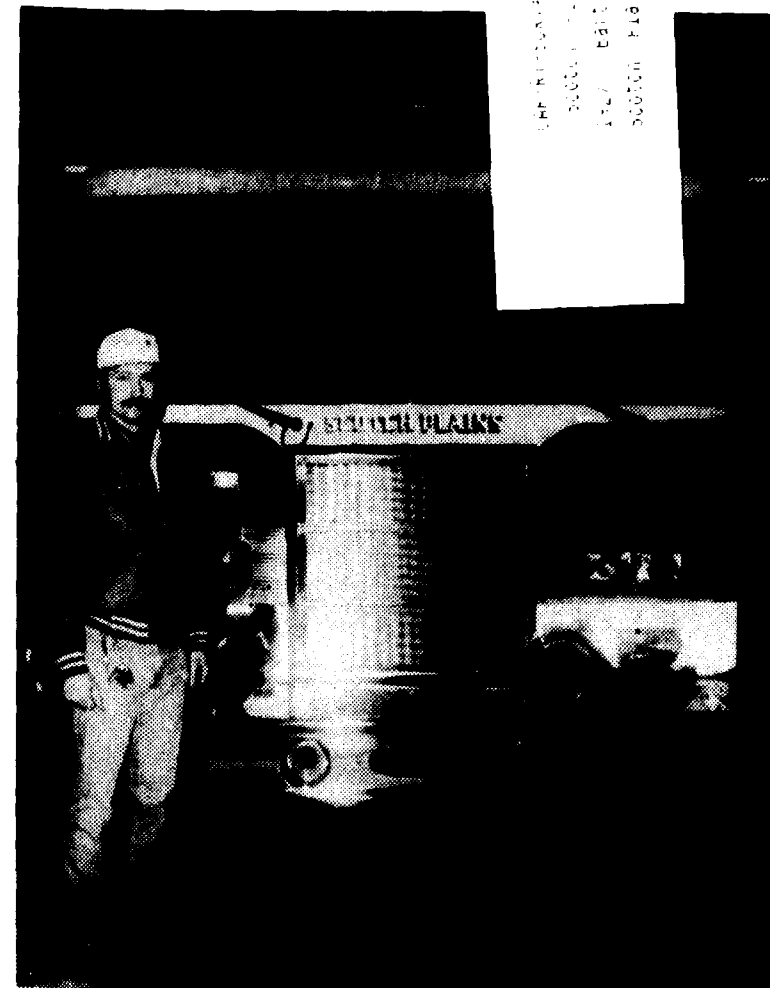
A discussion ensued over whether Fanwood should contribute \$715 to fight the new fees set by the Union County Utilities Authority for tipping charges at the county's incinerator in Rahway. Mayor J. Christian Bollwage of Elizabethtown has asked all 21 Union County municipalities for contributions of \$715 in order to fight the increase.

Mr. Walsh objected to the fee and claimed it was a burden for Fanwood to pay while Elizabeth would have no trouble paying the fee.

No action by the council was taken as the matter will be further studied.

Councilwoman, Mrs. Karen M. Schurtz, said Fanwood Library officers will hear in April, May or June whether it has received a \$7,000 grant from the state Department of Education on the library's application to

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NEWLY DELIVERED...Scotch Plains Fire Chief Jonathan P. Ellis shows off the first of two new fire engines recently delivered to the north side firehouse. The new vehicles will replace two older trucks, one of which will find a new home in Nova Scotia.

Township Board of Adjustment Postpones Vote On Jewish Community Center Proposed Expansion

Applicant Wants to Use Newly-Acquired Two-Acre Parcel for Outdoor Activities

By MICHELLE H. LAPOIDEVIN
Specially Written for The Times

During its regular meeting on February 8, the Scotch Plains Zoning Board of Adjustment decided to postpone its decision on an application proposed by the Jewish Community Center, 1361 and 1391 Martine Avenue, to utilize a newly-obtained two-acre property for outdoor activities.

The community center, which is already comprised of six acres, has been seeking a "D" variance from its conditional use to expand the property.

Steven Tripp, an attorney for the applicant, explained the acquired property would be used for the special outdoor camp activities because the activities require extra space and the center would like to keep the activities off-site from their indoor facility.

Richard Corman, Executive Director of the Jewish Community Center and who supervises the agency, its operations and staff, stated the community center is a non-profit, social service agency and is a member of four different United Way agencies. He said 80 per cent of members come from Scotch Plains, Westfield and Fanwood, while 20 per cent come from Clark, Plainfield, Mountainside,

Cranford and North Edison.

He said the center offers a wide array of program including a nursery school, a full-day Kindergarten, Scholastic Aptitude Test preparation courses, cultural arts activities, youth activities, programs for the elderly and an eight-week summer day camp, just to mention a few.

The summer day camp, which seemed to be the focal point of the application, has been established for 12 years. The camp is comprised of three units including a nursery school program of approximately 200 children, an elementary school program for ages 5 through 9 of 200 children and the Traveler's Group of 100 children. This group accommodates children in grades 3 through 9 and takes day trips through the metropolitan area.

The newly-acquired property involved in the application would contain a multi-purpose field for two groups to play kickball, soccer and ragball. The applicants said they wish to maintain the wooded area and shrubbery and construct a smaller building to house bathrooms, water fountains, an office for the camp director and storage area.

Board member, Mrs. Gail Iammatteo, approached the question of the facility expanding to an even larger membership than she states Mr. Corman guaranteed during previous testimony.

Mrs. Iammatteo referred to a previous application from 1992 in which Mr. Corman stated the center did not expect membership growth beyond 400. The community center noted to the board that present membership is 600.

Board member Raymond Hilliard expressed "serious concerns" about the amount of complaints the board has received regarding noise and the amount of traffic which he believed could cause future problems.

Mr. Corman stated, that, based on the many daily telephone calls the center has received, if the application would not be approved by the board, many members would feel forced to find other camp facilities which would accommodate their needs. He added the center could have considered renting space from another facility but decided it would be "too difficult to achieve on a consistent basis."

Daniel Ray of 1351 Martine Avenue stated he is frustrated with the expansion because he is "the neighbor next door." He added, "This whole center has just outgrown itself."

The board decided to postpone its decisions and the testimony of other important witnesses in the application to a special meeting which will take place at 7:30 on Thursday, March 7.

In other board business, the board voted by five unanimous votes to deny the application of John Lucey of 213 Mountainview Avenue to ob-

tain a temporary operational permit to maintain a home office for his home improvements business.

Mr. Lucey told the board he pos-

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New Township Ordinance Helps Firemen Dig Out in Snow Storms

Scotch Plains Council Honors Community Dispute Resolution Program Members

By GLENN R. KAPLINSKY
Specially Written for The Times

The Scotch Plains Township Council adopted an ordinance Tuesday pertaining to the fire department whereby fire department members' driveways may be plowed in the event of snow by fellow department members, using a fire department pick-up truck equipped with a plow.

No municipal or private contract-

ing equipment will be used, officials said. The action would be necessary in order for the volunteer department members to get to the fire house and respond to emergencies. The idea for the ordinance originated with Councilwoman, Mrs. Joan Papan, and is designed to promote public health, safety and welfare.

The council also adopted an ordinance appropriating the sum of

\$147,800 for the purpose of providing an irrigation system at the Scotch Hills Country Club.

The council honored six members of the Community Dispute Resolution program: David Wendel, Steven Schwartz, Bruce Kahn, Mrs. Lois Sarvetnick, Jack Lay, Jr., and Thomas O'Brien.

Mr. Wendel, Mr. Schwartz and Mrs. Sarvetnick were on hand to receive their resolutions. The six were honored for volunteering their services as trained mediators during 1994 and 1995.

The three members who attended the meeting were introduced by Scotch Plains Township Municipal Judge Joseph Perfilio.

Judge Perfilio explained the six have assisted his court in resolving disputes of various types. He said they have undergone extensive training sessions.

According to Judge Perfilio, their efforts have led to the dismissal of some 26 cases which would have been handled by the municipal court, thereby leading to a great savings in time, effort and money by the community.

"Their efforts involved great personal sacrifice of time and effort on a purely volunteer basis with no concern for personal gain," according to the resolution.

Resolutions of community service were also given to former Board of Adjustment members Jeremiah P. O'Neill, Raymond Hilliard and Martin Ostroff upon their retirement from the board.

Mr. O'Neill served 12 years on the board, Mr. Hilliard six and Mr. Ostroff eight. Mr. O'Neill is presently employed full-time with the town of Westfield as its Zoning and Construction Code official.

Mr. Hilliard is leaving Scotch Plains after having resided there for 30 years.

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Parents Encouraged To Meet Dr. Choye At Informal Coffee

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Parent-Teacher Council is planning an Educational Evening for parents on Thursday, February 29, in the Terrill Middle School Media Center at 7 p.m. for an informal coffee meeting with Dr. Carol B. Choye, Superintendent of Schools.

"This is a good opportunity to meet with the Superintendent to discuss any questions or concerns parents may have," a spokeswoman for the association said.

Immediately following the coffee, the council will sponsor a third Education Forum on Study Skills. This will run from 8 to 9:30 p.m. Parents are invited to learn about how the district is helping students develop good study skills.

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 weekend 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.

HOW TO GET THE TIMES

Just Fill in the Form
On Page 12
And Return It to Us!



EVALUATING ITS FUTURE...DECA, an association of marketing students at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, has completed its report on the revitalization of Fanwood's downtown shopping area. The report drew conclusions and recommendations on how to get borough residents to shop in their community again. The conclusions were based on questionnaires that were completed by 20 per cent of residents and merchants. Please see editorial on Page 4.

Student Marketing Group Reports On Fanwood Business Revitalization

Over 20 Per Cent of Borough Residents Respond to Survey

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School DECA Chapter, an association of marketing students, concluded its marketing research study of the Fanwood Business District by presenting its findings to the Fanwood Revitalization Committee, council members and merchants.

The students' in-depth study included questionnaires sent to all households in Fanwood and all merchants.

With an over 20 per cent response from residents, the students formulated their conclusions and recom-

mendations on how to improve the district.

"Due to the great response, DECA believes residents really want to support the business community — and would, if improvements are made," a spokesman for the group reported.

The survey showed there are two basic reasons why Fanwood businesses are not frequented more. First is a lack of variety of businesses.

Most residents do want to see an expanded district with a better variety of stores. Sixty-three per cent responded they wanted more stores, while 7 per cent said no. This response was supported by the fact that most residents do want to see the Dean Oil site developed for retail, with only 17 per cent opposed, the spokesman said.

The second, and more immediate problem of the district, according to the study, is the condition of the buildings themselves — both interior and

exterior. The majority of the residents consider most buildings to be fair or poor in general appearance. More significant for the merchants is that many residents felt that improved appearance would encourage them to patronize businesses more often.

According to DECA, this increased patronage could amount to one-third to three-quarter increase in shoppers. Residents also wanted the appearance of the district to be improved, and the consensus was that any theme be adopted and there be uniformity between Martine and South Avenues stores. Other concerns of residents include improved and attractive landscaping, especially on South Avenue, improved lighting and sidewalk areas and especially an improvement of the appearance of the parking lot behind the Martine Avenue stores.

Of the business owners who responded, they agreed with the residents in that improvements of all store interiors would result in attracting more business to Fanwood. The majority of merchants also want to see the district expanded to include more retail stores, and the development of the Dean Oil site for this purpose.

While the merchants were open to the concept of a one-time fee for improvements, there also was concern that this would result in higher rental fees. The merchants also felt there was too much red tape in acquiring approval for improvements, and there should be more group promotions.

Based on the findings of the surveys, DECA came up with 12 recommendations for the business district to implement. One of the recommendations is one of leadership that must come from the Borough Council and business owners who must be involved in the planning of goals, and in working together in joint promotional activities.

DECA recommended a new merchant's association be formed and that all business owners take an ac-

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Incumbents File For School Race

Incumbent Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education members Morris H. "Butch" Gillet of Scotch Plains and Mrs. Jessica L. Simpson of Fanwood have filed petitions for re-election to the board.

The other seat up this year is Mark W. Koster of Scotch Plains. He has yet to file his petition. District officials said no other petitions have been received as of Tuesday.

The deadline for submitting petitions is Monday, February 26, at 4 p.m. Petitions must be presented in person to the office of Assistant Superintendent of Business and Board Secretary Richard J. Marshall.