



SCOTCH

THE TIMES

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FANWOOD

OUR 37th YEAR — ISSUE NO

USPS 465300
Second Class Postage Paid at Scotch Plains, N.J.

Thursday, March 21, 1996

Published
Every Thursday

232-4407

FIFTY CENTS



MIDDLE SCHOOL WEEK... "Making a Difference in the Middle: The World Week which was kicked off at a special assembly at the Park Middle School in Scotch Plains on Monday. Pictured making introductory proclamations at the assembly are Mayor, Mrs. Maryanne S. Connelly of Fanwood, and Mayor Alan M. Augustine of Scotch Plains. Remarks were also made by school authorities, and essay winners were honored. A breakfast for guests followed in the school's cafeteria.

TAX ASSESSMENTS BOARD TO BE FORMED REGARDING NEW SEWER LINES

Township Traffic Bureau Officer to Serve On County South Avenue Study Committee

**Leaf and Gumball Pick-Up to Continue Through April 19;
Farmer's Market, Apple Blossom Permit Hearings Tuesday**

By **GLENN R. KAPLINSKY**
Specialty Writer for The Times

The Scotch Plains Township Council Tuesday meeting was conducted by DECA students, an association of marketing students from Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School. The students are part of the high school's "Youth in Government Program."

Donald Cababe, DECA advisor, was present throughout the meeting. The students and their adult counterparts are as follows:

Mayor Alan M. Augustine, Jeffrey Gander; Councilwoman, Mrs. Joan Papen, Sean McEneely; Councilwoman, Mrs. Irene T. Schmidt, An-

thony Adinolfi; Councilman William F. McClintock, Jr., Kris Kurek; Councilman, Robert E. Johnston, Courtney Pearson; Township Manager, Thomas Atkins, Ted Gicas; Township Clerk, Mrs. Barbara Riepe, Hope Valera, and Township Attorney, state Senator Donald T. DiFrancesco, Marc Jacobs.

Mayor Augustine called the meeting with the DECA students visit "one of the highlights of the year." The students will also conduct this Tuesday's public meeting.

The meeting started with each student telling the council a little about him or herself. Each council member, along with Mr. Atkins, explained their job duties with Mrs. Judith Babinski and Mrs. Julie Duncan explaining the duties of the township attorney.

Mrs. Babinski and Mrs. Duncan are assistant township attorneys, being part of Mr. DiFrancesco's office. Mr. Atkins explained the difference between the municipal governments in Scotch Plains and Fanwood.

A few weeks ago, Union County officials notified the township that they had received a \$68,000 grant from the Federal Highway Administration for a study of the South Avenue corridor.

South Avenue runs through nine municipalities in the county. The county will assemble a technical committee to gather relevant and helpful

information, it was noted. The county will be using the expertise of a consulting traffic engineering firm, Louis Berger and Associates, Inc.

Police Chief Robert Luce and Mr. Atkins have appointed Officer James Rau of the Traffic Bureau to serve on the technical committee. The purposes of the study are the development of a database on travel patterns and land use and the determination of transportation control measures that might be implemented so that appropriate levels of redevelopment might occur within the study area.

The township manager announced leaf and gumball pick-up has commenced and will continue until Friday, April 19. The program, which was to have started on March 11, was delayed due to a snow and ice storm.

Minor lawn damage caused by snow plowing will also be repaired, Mr. Atkins noted. Temporary personnel have been retained to assist in the cleanup.

Mr. Atkins also revealed the township will convene a Board of Assessments in the near future in order to confirm certain special assessments. The board will deal with two sanitary sewer special assessments and one curbing special assessment.

The sanitary sewer assessments involve a line that was put in on Cushing Road, while the second pertains to Morse Avenue.

The Cushing line services three properties on Cushing Road and one on Terrill Road. The Morse Avenue sewer services only one property, officials said.

The curbing project on Ridgeview Avenue, completed last year with accompanying roadway improvements on a portion of Westfield Avenue and East Second Street, affects a few dozen properties.

The council will hear the applications for special use permits of the Farmer's Market and the Apple Blossom Flow Shop on Tuesday, March 26.

Both applications are renewals. The Farmer's Market features the sale of farm-fresh New Jersey fruits and vegetables.

The market will be held on Saturday mornings from Saturday, June 1, to Saturday, November 30, in the parking lot of the Municipal Building on Park Avenue.

The application was filed by Raymond Pardon, President of the Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association. Mr. Pardon is the owner of Nuts 'n Plenty on Bartle Avenue.

The hours on the Farmer's Market will be 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Apple Blossom application, if approved, will permit the store, located at 381 Park Avenue, to display merchandise outside through Tuesday, December 31.

Proposed Board Policy on Religious, Cultural Beliefs Sent To Committee

Board of Education Decides Further Revisions Are Necessary

By **ELLEN RADIN**
Specialty Writer for The Times

A policy providing for "Recognition of Cultural, Ethnic and Religious Beliefs and Customs" was returned to committee by the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education at its March 14 open agenda meeting.

The board determined, after discussions and public comment, the Policy Committee should consider further revisions of its policy. The board is scheduled to vote on the policy at its Thursday, March 28, regular public meeting.

No formal written policy now exists as to observances, celebrations, or sharing of student's varying religious, cultural or ethnic traditions, school officials noted.

Conflicts have arisen, especially at holiday times, as to what type of music, artwork, or stories may be used in the public schools.

Board President, Dr. Donald E. Sheldon, called the proposed policy a "major step forward" in resolving such conflicts.

The proposed policy and its accompanying regulations are aimed at reconciling the need to stress academics with Constitutional requirements allowing for expressions of beliefs and customs, officials said. The proposed policy stated, in part, that "schools may teach about but not promote religion."

Board members Morris H. "Butch" Gillet stated many works of art, music and literature with strong academic value should not be excluded simply because they had roots in Christian traditions.

Mrs. Monica Reiss Zimmerman of Fanwood stated that there was "an issue of balance" as the proposed policy uses that term. She also pointed out the term

"temporary" was not defined in provisions allowing "temporary" displays at holiday times.

Mrs. Zimmerman asked for accountability in the policy. Board members responded the classroom teachers and school principals would be responsible for implementing the policy.

There was discussion of whether parents should be required to submit summaries of their intended presentations before coming to their children's classes to share some aspect of their heritage. Board members and the public were divided as to whether this would be too onerous a burden.

Board member Richard R. Meade pointed out that there was no practical way of dealing with a parent who then strayed from the submitted summaries into impermissible areas of religious instruction, other than having the classroom teacher stop the presentation.

The board also responded to letters from parents of students at the St. Bartholomew the Apostle School, who objected to the lack of bus transportation.

District Superintendent, Dr. Carol B. Choye, and Assistant Superintendent of Business and Board Secretary Richard J. Marshall said no bus companies had submitted bids for those routes, although three advertisements had been placed.

Dr. Choye said there was "nothing personal" intended against St. Bartholomew students. She added that parochial schools did receive government aid for nursing, books and transportation. Parents receive \$675 per child when no bus transportation is provided to students at parochial schools.

Some of the St. Bartholomew parents, Dr. Choye said, had incorrectly stated that parochial schools receive no government aid. These parents also, Dr. Choye said, had also "threatened" to put their children in the public schools.

Under board announcements, the board acknowledged receipt of correspondence. Mrs. Victoria C. Manduca of Fanwood, whose letter on the reading program was referred to executive session, objected to this treatment of her letter.

In communications with *The Times*, Mrs. Manduca stated her letter involved only publicly available documents or quotes and not any specific teacher or student. Mrs. Manduca, a candidate for the school board, stated she believed the district reading program placed too much emphasis on "whole language" and not enough on phonics.

Community Center Gains Approval for Expansion

Zoning Unit Approves Use of Newly-Acquired Parcel

By **AUDREY KAPLINSKY**
Specialty Writer for The Times

Following a lengthy discussion on March 14, the Scotch Plains Zoning Board of Adjustment granted a use variance to the Jewish Community Center of Central New Jersey, located at 1391 Martine Avenue. This variance gives permission to the center to use a newly-acquired 1.9-acre tract of land for outdoor activities.

Since the variance was approved, the center will continue its application and present a site plan to the board on Thursday, April 11.

Prior to the approval of the variance, there was testimony given by various community center representatives, as well as a site engineer and a planner. In addition, there were many questions and comments by board members as well as from the public.

Board Chairman Thomas Barth noted this meeting was a continuation of the February 8 application by the center. He also welcomed newly-appointed board member Thurman Simmons to this first board meeting.

The center's attorney, Steven J. Tripp, of the firm of Wilentz Goldman and Spitzer of Woodbridge, reviewed the information previously disseminated at the February 8 meeting.

He summarized that the center sought to move its day camp from its present location to the newly-acquired 1.9-acre site. In addition the center sought to convert an overflow parking area into permanent parking. It was noted that the entrance and exit on Martine Avenue would remain the same.

Mr. Tripp emphasized the parking area will be totally separate from the outdoor play area.

Richard Corman, Executive Director of the center, explained the Jewish Community Center is a non-profit community organization. He testified the maximum number of children in the eight-week day camp would be 150 to 200.

He noted the camp day consists of many activities including swimming, arts and crafts, music, sports, nature walks and lunch.

Mr. Corman informed the board the times the outside play area would be used would be staggered. The children would be outside in groups during the day, not all at once.

Mrs. Robin Brous, the center's Co-Camp Director, also testified before the board.

Paul Fisk, the project's Site Engineer, from the firm Fisk and Associates of Middlesex, testified before the board. He had prepared two exhibits, one showed the existing condition while the second showed the

proposed plan. Mr. Fisk informed the board the center's property originally consisted of approximately six acres. The newly-acquired adjoining property to the northwest for the center increases the total acreage to 7.9 acres.

He noted that the ordinance required a frontage of 400 feet. With the additional property, the frontage is in excess of 500 feet. In addition, the building coverage meets the ordinance requirements.

He explained the area of the center was a temporary overflow parking lot and would become a permanent parking area.

During the summer, this area was used as the outdoor day camp site with no parking permitted, it was noted.

Mr. Fisk informed the board the proposed 72-space parking area would be paved and would contain landscaping, lighting and curbing.

Mr. Fisk noted the new outdoor campsite would contain a building to service the outdoor play area, picnic benches, gathering areas as well as a six-foot-high chain-link fence with an evergreen barrier protection between five and six feet high.

Scotch Plains resident Harold Knox of Peach Court explained his property was adjacent to the center. He stated that there is a significant amount of traffic on Martine Avenue.

He said he wanted to know if there were any thoughts on the collective impact the center, the YMCA and Union County Vocational-Technical School would have on the amount of traffic.

Although a current traffic study was not done, Mr. Fisk noted there was no increase in the center's camp enrollment since last year.

Mr. Tripp emphasized the application was to transfer the day camp to a newly-acquired property. In addition, he noted the center needed more room to better handle the camp enrollment.

Ralph Tuhl of 1345 Marine Avenue informed the board there is a significant traffic problem on Martine Avenue. He explained he was a neighbor of the center and was concerned the relocation of the day camp as well as construction of permanent parking would add to the traffic buildup on Martine Avenue.

Daniel Rey of 1351 Martine Avenue informed the board he owns the property adjacent to the center's proposed new day camp site. He objected to having a day camp situated next door to his house. He expressed concern about the noise level as well as the number of children attending the camp.

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Fanwood Borough Council Introduces Municipal Budget of \$5.29 Million

Spending Represents 3.4 Per Cent or \$174,263 Increase Over Last Year

By **SUZETTE STALKER**
Specialty Writer for The Times

The Fanwood Borough Council approved a resolution last Thursday introducing its 1996 municipal budget of \$5,285,991 with a 3-3 vote broken by Mayor, Mrs. Maryanne S. Connelly. Council members earlier rejected a proposed amendment calling for reduction of tax points through use of surplus funds which opponents did not consider fiscally sound.

The tentative budget, for which the Scotch Plains-Fanwood School Board and county portions are still estimated, is expected to represent a municipal increase of 12.6 tax points. The increase for a Fanwood resident whose home is assessed at \$83,000, the average assessed valuation in the borough, can anticipate a tax increase of \$105.08, officials said. The budget is 3.4 per cent, or \$174,263, over last year.

Borough Clerk, Mrs. Eleanor McGovern, explained that the significant tax point boost reflected an increased debt service totaling \$152,000, pension payment increases which have reached \$160,000, decreased state aid and a 20 per cent increase in health insurance costs for municipal employees which is ex-

pected to total \$45,000 this year.

Councilman Andrew J. MacDonald proposed a budget amendment which would have created an increase of only 11 tax points through greater use of surplus and deferral of certain expenses such as pension payments until next year. He stated that it was a legal option for the municipality, adding that since taxpayers will face the largest increase for the school portion of the budget, "we have to do what we can to deliver a lesser amount."

Mrs. Schurtz, council liaison to the Fanwood Downtown Revitalization Committee, reported on the committee's February 29 meeting, stating the group is awaiting a final budget decision before progressing further with plans to redevelop the business district. She remarked the group is seeking to hire a planner to help formulate a realistic "implementable plan," but that it will require a "cooperative effort" among local government, residents and businesses in order to succeed.

As the Mayor's representative on the Fanwood Memorial Library Board of Trustees, Councilwoman Schurtz reported the board is currently interviewing vendors concerning technology which it eventually hopes to incorporate into its available library services.

Board members are also collecting data on hardware and software packages from other libraries in hopes of benefiting from their experience and possibly avoiding mistakes other libraries have made, she noted.

In his report on the Historic Preservation Commission, Councilman Walsh confirmed that the volunteer organization received a Union County commendation February 28 for developing last year's Historic Walking Tours. He added the group is currently in the process of updating its 1976 and 1981 surveys in an effort to establish a historic district in Fanwood.

The council announced the appointment of Fanwood Public Works Director Raymond Manfra to the Union County Solid Waste Advisory Council, and also approved one resolution and three proclamations. The resolution honored the late Dominic Saporito, Sr., a borough resident who served as both Vice President and President of the Fanwood Senior Citizens Club. Mr. Saporito died on February 26.

The first two proclamations spotlighted March as Mental Retardation Awareness Month and the week of March 3 through 9 as National Drug and Alcohol Awareness Week.

The third proclamation was presented to students Meryl Bezrutzyk, Portia Schlegel and Ryan Price from the Park Middle School on behalf of Park and Terrill Middle Schools in recognition of the importance of middle school education.

Council President Bruce H. Walsh



FOR THE AUCTION... The Friends of the Brunner Library will hold a Chinese Auction on Friday, March 22, at 7 p.m. at Brunner School on Westfield Road in Scotch Plains. Looking at some of the over 200 prizes are Mrs. Marianne Devlin, Parent-Teacher Association President; Mrs. Evelyn Shepherd, School Principal, and fifth graders Arthur King and Jacquelyn Knapp. The grand prize is a 19 inch color television. Other prizes include New York Yankee baseball tickets, New Jersey Net basketball tickets, an AT&T cordless telephone, a cruise brunch for two on Spirit Cruises and many gift certificates from local merchants. The proceeds from this event will be used to purchase new books and computer equipment for Brunner's children.

Township Association To Meet Wednesday

The Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association will hold its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 27, at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held this month at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad building on Bartle Avenue across from the Scotch Plains Library.

A presentation and demonstration will be given by the North Jersey amateur Computer Club on the Internet and its possible uses for the township and its businesses.

For more information about the association, please call either Vincent Losavio at 322-7126 or Ray Pardon at 322-7388.