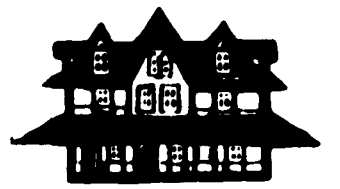




SCOTCH PLAINS

THE TIMES

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FANWOOD

OUR 37th YEAR - ISSUE NO. 17

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ON THE SCENE...All four lanes of Route No. 22 were blocked in Scotch Plains at 5 p.m., April 21, when the driver of a capped pickup struck a utility pole while traveling in the westbound lane. Power lines sagged across the highway, stalling traffic in both directions, while a toxic liquid emanating from a ruptured electrical transformer contributed to the emergency. The Scotch Plains Rescue Squad and paramedics attended to the injured. The township's fire department responded as well, and police re-directed traffic. Public Service Electric & Gas was also on the scene to deal with the damaged pole and the transformer.

OBJECTORS FEAR INCREASED NOISE FROM PLAN Scotch Plains Council Tables Ginamarie's Permit Request To Serve Food, Drinks on Patio

Hearing Slated for May 14 on Zoning Change For Plainfield Avenue & Jerusalem Road Parcel

By GLENN R. KAPLINSKY
Specially Written for The Times

The Scotch Plains Township Council, by a unanimous vote at Tuesday's public meeting, voted to table the special use permit application of Ginamarie's Restaurant until the Tuesday, May 14, public meeting.

Ginamarie's is located on East Second Street next to the CVA Pharmacy. Ginamarie's was seeking permission to serve food and beverages on an outside patio area located behind the establishment.

Live or piped-in music was to accompany the dining, officials noted.

The application was vigorously objected to by approximately one dozen residents at the adjacent condominiums located on Park Avenue as well as the proprietors of a dry cleaners which occupies the same piece of property as the restaurant.

Township Manager Thomas E. Atkins read the comments of the various township agencies regarding the application.

In these remarks, Police Chief Robert E. Luce cautioned that "excessive" noise should not occur after 10 p.m., as this time has always been considered the cut-off time for outside activities under Scotch Plains' ordinance. Noise can travel more in the evening and night hours, he warned.

Township Clerk, Mrs. Barbara Riepe, as well as the township's Legal Department, has researched the issue of drinking or selling liquor outside and has found that an expansion of premises license would be required by the State Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

The property owner must receive clearance on this application from the division, it was noted. Ginamarie's presently has a liquor license.

The Planning Board suggested that some type of barrier be installed, such as trees or plants, so that when cars are parking or moving, headlight glare won't shine on the diners.

The Engineering Department recommended that lighting levels be appropriate for safety and voiced the same concerns as to noise, as did Chief Luce.

The tax collector's office reported that all real estate taxes on the property are current.

John Sera, the owner of Ginamarie's, attempted to allay objectors' fears by stating any outdoor music would be "light, soft, jazz" and that no hard or soft rock music would be played. In addition, there would be no amplification of any music, he said.

"I am not here to disrupt the township," said Mr. Sera.

He stressed the upscale nature of his restaurant and its clientele. Council members voiced their concerns that drinks would be carried from

inside the restaurant to the outdoor patio. Mr. Sera said he would do his best to see that did not happen.

Mrs. Judith Babinski, Assistant Township Council, advised the concern that approval be made conditional as to the serving of alcohol. Namely, that no alcohol would be served unless the applicant complies with all Alcoholic Beverage Control regulations.

Alan Howell of Park Avenue, a trustee of the condominium association, spoke against the application. He termed the application "a can of worms."

Mr. Howell cited the serving of alcohol and the noise in objection to the proposal. However, he, as did most if not all the objectors, admitted he could not hear the piped-in music which is currently being played in the patio area.

One objector speculated that since the weather has been cold the windows in the condominium may have been closed with the result that people living there have been unable to hear it.

Mrs. Gertrude Goldfinger, a resident of the condominiums, spoke next.

Mrs. Goldfinger said she was concerned about "rowdy groups" eating and drinking on the patio. Mrs. Goldfinger expressed displeasure with any patio lighting as her daughter's bedroom is directly across from Ginamarie's patio.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ryan, who own the dry cleaners which occupies the same property as Ginamarie's, said their store is located only "15 or 16 yards" from the eatery.

They responded that some type of sound barriers should be installed.

Leo Howell of the condominium association said "he just wants a little quiet."

Mr. Sera attempted to calm the residents' fears in his response but to no avail. He even dropped the idea of

Fanwood Board of Adjustment Grants Use, Bulk Variances for Addition to North Avenue Home

Garage, to Replace Dilapidated Structure, Approved for Third Street Residence

By SUZETTE STALKER
Specially Written for The Times

Six new appeals, all ultimately approved, were heard April 18 by the Fanwood Board of Adjustment which also gave the green light to an application carried over from its March 21 agenda. In addition, officials memorialized four resolutions of cases which were heard last month.

The board approved a use variance and two bulk variances for Mario DiCuollo whose application to construct an addition and a deck onto his home at 266 North Avenue was postponed from last month while the board determined whether the property was located in a flood zone.

The building, which combines a two-family dwelling with office space, is considered a non-conforming use of property zoned for a single-family residence because it was built before the borough's zoning laws were enacted in the 1950s. Mr. DiCuollo is President of 266 North Company, which has been based at that address since October.

Mr. DiCuollo testified last month he and his wife plan to occupy the downstairs part of the residence while an existing tenant remains upstairs. He wants to replace a lavatory which can only be reached by going through the office of an accountant which is located in the front section of the building.

The applicant said he planned to convert the existing bathroom into a utility room and to add a half bathroom for guests and a full bathroom off the master bedroom.

Board Vice Chairwoman, Mrs. Kathleen Rice, stated that Fanwood's Historic Preservation Commission

did not anticipate the planned renovations would disturb the structure of the building. Built circa 1897, it housed the borough's first Post Office and library and also served as a Red Cross station during World War II.

Flood concerns were raised during the initial public hearing and again last week by Mrs. Margery Mazaitis of 270 North Avenue, who feared that the proposed renovations would exacerbate flooding conditions on her property, which is located almost entirely in Fanwood's flood zone.

Board Attorney, Charles H. Brandt, who said he consulted with Borough Engineer Richard Marsden on the matter, revealed that the borough map indicates that only "a very small portion" of Mr. DiCuollo's property, five or six square feet near the road, is in the flood zone. Mr. Brandt confirmed that because the section is minimal, Mr. DiCuollo is not bound by local ordinance to provide retention means for any displaced water.

Mrs. Mazaitis also expressed concern over whether there was sufficient parking availability for the mixed-use dwelling, noting a car from her neighbor's property recently struck one of her vehicles in her driveway while the driver crossed her property to avoid snow. She added that a fence covered with honeysuckle vines once distinguished the property line and provided screening but the owner, on whose side the fence stood, has since taken it down.

"I don't want to make things difficult for anyone," Mrs. Mazaitis explained, "but I also don't want my privacy or my enjoyment of my prop-

erty impacted on."

The use variance was approved with two stipulations, including that Mr. DiCuollo assume responsibility for erecting a fence along the property line and for enforcing a board requirement that all parking for the property be on paved areas. In addition to approval of the variances and the applicant's site plan, the board also granted a waiver of the 30-day memorialization period.

The Fanwood Nature Center, represented by Borough Clerk, Mrs. Eleanor McGovern, and Fanwood Environmental Commission Chairman Dean Talcott, was granted approval for eight identification and directional signs on the eight-acre wooded spread on Terrill Road. The signs, board members were told, would advertise nature education programs developed for the center under the auspice of the commission.

Neighbors of the site, however, complained the area has become neglected and strewn with litter and debris, causing potential safety hazards to visitors. Mrs. Christine Monsell of 47 Cray Terrace and her neighbor, Miss Patricia LaGanga of 51 Cray Terrace, both testified that fallen trees on the property have not been removed, that litter has accumulated and that the area has become a magnet for illegal youth activities.

"There are now three trees down. There are trees rotting back there. There is no maintenance of the area whatsoever. We have drinking, we have drugs and we have fires," Miss LaGanga remarked, adding that advertisement of the center seemed to contribute to the problem.

Mr. Talcott, who oversees the upkeep of the center's grounds, responded that the Environmental Commission can call upon the Department of Public Works for clean up

assistance if necessary and promised, as did Mrs. McGovern, to further look into the problems which were reported. He said he recently asked Fanwood police to step up their patrols of the area.

The Environmental Commission chairman stated that local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops help with their spring clean up projects and that the center were included in the borough's Clean Community Day last Saturday.

Elaborating on these ideas, board member, Miss Cynthia Swindelhurst, suggested that scout organizations and other volunteer groups be recruited to take turns cleaning up the center grounds.

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Newark Firm's Bid Recommended For Cleanup Week in Township

Mayor Augustine and Assemblyman Bagger Cited by Mayors Association

By GLENN R. KAPLINSKY
Specially Written for The Times

Scotch Plains Township Manager Thomas E. Atkins announced at Tuesday's public meeting of the Township Council that bids have been received for the Scotch Plains' residential cleanup week.

The low bidder was A. Fiore and Sons of Newark who submitted a bid of \$167,300. The firm has done the work for the last four years.

The only other bidder was Allied Disposal of Plainfield which submitted a bid of \$180,000. Mr. Atkins recommended the contract be awarded to the low bidder, A. Fiore and Sons, and the council followed his recommendation.

Councilman William F. Mc-

Clintock, Jr. said the tab comes to \$21 per household. The winning bid is \$2,900 more than A. Fiore's winning bid of last year.

Both Councilman McClintock and Mayor Alan M. Augustine stressed that the "cleanup is the envy of every municipality in the county."

Acceptance of the bid had been advised by Director of Public Property, Walter DiNizo, and Director of Solid Waste and Recycling, Mrs. Sharon Pachler.

The cleanup in District No. 1 will begin on Monday, June 3. A letter on cleanup week will be mailed to township residents the week prior to Memorial Day, Monday, May 27, officials said.

In other business, a second bid was

awarded to Mir-La Builders of Linden for the sum of \$54,000. Mir-La will construct barrier-free improvements at the Scotch Hills Country Club and the Brookside Park Counselor Shed to bring the facilities into compliance with the American's With Disabilities Act.

The vast majority of the necessary money will come from the county's Community Development Funds. Mario Barone, a local architect, was appointed by the township to study the bids.

Mr. Barone, in conjunction with Recreation Director, Mrs. Laura Sansone-Botto, advised the council to award the contract to Mir-La.

Councilwoman, Mrs. Irene T. Schmidt, delivered two special reports. She reminded everyone the Sixth Annual John Shippen Memorial Golf Tournament will be held on Tuesday, May 28, at Shackamaxon Country Club.

Tee-off time will be 12:30 p.m. There will be a barbecue lunch at 11:15 a.m. Cocktails will be served at 6 p.m. The scholarship presentation and awards dinner will start at 7 p.m.

This will be the first year for the Shippen Tournament at Shackamaxon after five years at the Scotch Hills Country Club, also located in Scotch Plains.

Mrs. Schmidt's second special report was on the success of the recent "Healthy Kids Day" held on April 13 at the Scotch Plains-Fanwood YMCA.

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Rotary, in conjunction with the Scotch Plains Health Advisory Board and the Scotch Plains Health Department, distributed information about free immunizations offered at the Health Department to Scotch Plains residents from newborns to children 5-years-of-age.

The effort by the Rotary, the Health Advisory Board and the Health Department was held to support "National Infant Immunization Week," which stresses the importance of immunizing infants and toddlers by age 2.

Those wishing further information may call the Health Department at 322-6700, officials said.

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Action Teams to Develop Key District Priorities

School Board Has Approved Revised Strategic Plan

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education recently approved a revised district Strategic Plan for 1996 through 2001.

The board action followed an earlier review by the district's Strategic Planning Team which proposed a number of modifications. Copies of these proposed modifications were available to the public prior to the board's annual decision.

In approving the Strategic Plan, the board also set priorities for the district for the 1996-1997 school year. These priorities will be used to guide many district projects in the year ahead, a spokeswoman for the district said.

As a follow-up to the board's decision, action teams are now being formed that will develop plans for implementing two key district priorities. The Summer Reading Action Team will develop summer reading incentive programs for all grade levels, study the feasibility of expanding use of district media centers during the summer and develop cooperative summer projects with municipal libraries.

The Community School Action Team will begin plans for a program of offerings that will maximize the use of district facilities and resources for all age groups during and beyond the normal school day and school year.

Any district resident who has an interest in either of these topics may request an application for action team membership from Assistant Superintendent in Charge of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Faith B. Spitz, at 232-6161, Extension No. 16.

Action teams will be formed by mid-May of this year and will work throughout the upcoming school year.



LOCAL HERO...The morning of February 16 probably started out normally for Frank Budzinski of Fanwood, fourth from right, Road Supervisor for the Union County Division of Public Works. Later that day as he was on the job supervising snow removal, Mr. Budzinski was first on the scene of a motor vehicle accident on Mountain Avenue in Berkeley Heights. A school bus which was transporting two students flipped over, trapping the occupants inside. Public Works employees are trained in "first response," the first steps to take in an emergency, a county spokeswoman said. Mr. Budzinski radioed the police for help and, ignoring the possibility of a gas tank explosion, pried the bus door open with a pick from his own jeep, thus speeding the extrication of the occupants of the bus. He was presented with a congratulatory resolution recently from the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders and a Certificate of Appreciation from the County Manager, Mrs. Ann M. Baran, right, as he was named Employee of the Month for February. Pictured, left to right are: Frank Dann of Berkeley Heights, Director of the Division of Public Works in the Department of Operational Services; Freeholder, Mrs. Linda DiGiovanni; Freeholder Chairman, Edwin H. Force; Mr. Budzinski, and Mrs. Baran.

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.