



SCOTCH PLAINS

THE TIMES

Serving Scotch Plains and Fanwood Since 1959

SCOTCH PLAINS PUBLIC LIBRARY
1927 BARTLE AVENUE
SCOTCH PLAINS, N.J. 07076



FANWOOD

OUR 37th YEAR - ISSUE NO. 24

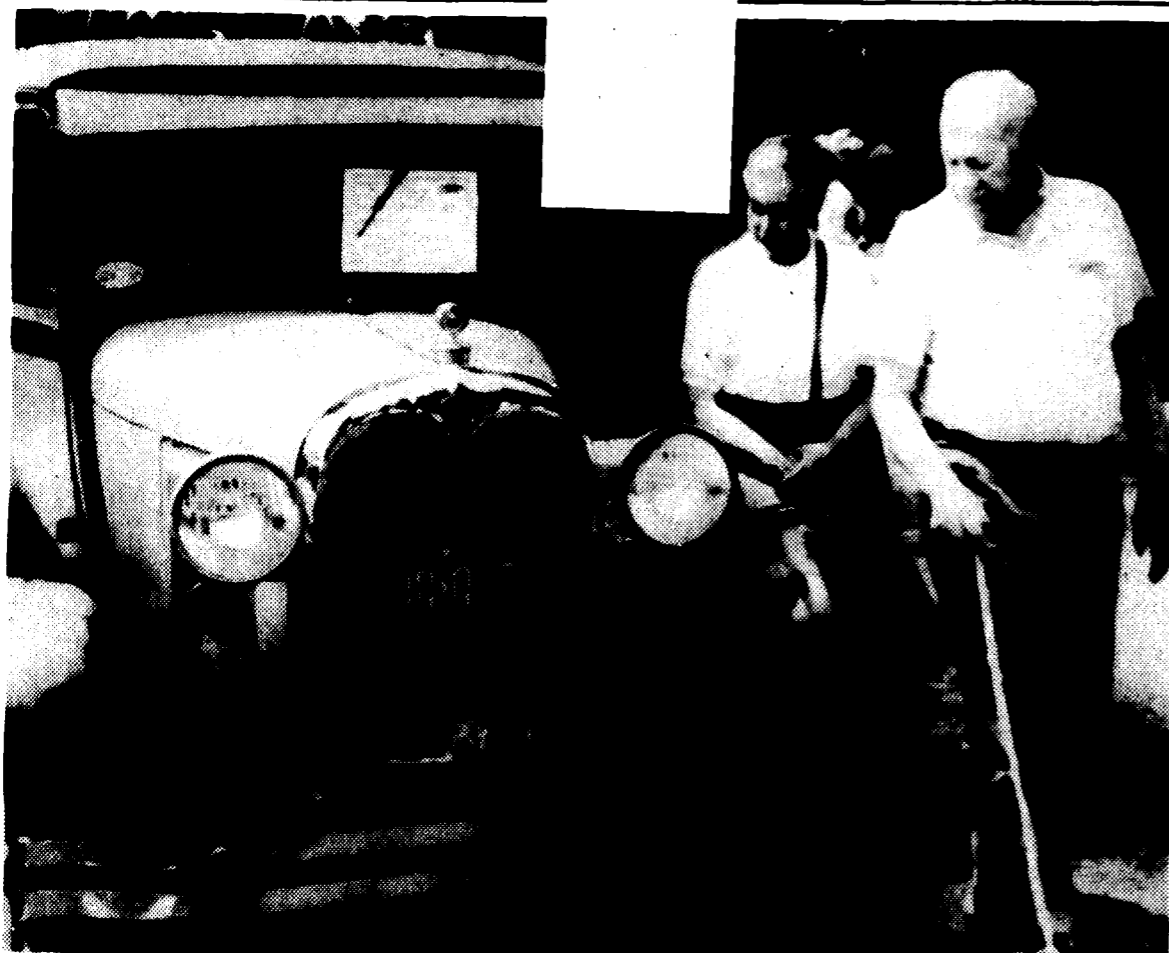
Scotch Plains, N.J.

Thursday, June 13, 1996

Published
Every Thursday

232-4407

FIFTY CENTS



GOOD OLDDAYS...The classic car display in Scotch Plains on Sunday drew visitors from far and near. This couple looks at the 1929 Model-A Ford which was all the rage when President Hoover promised one in every garage.

School Officials Say State Plan Would Result In Loss of \$310,000 In Funding to District

District Could Also Lose \$263,274 In Special Education Funds

By JESSE FRIEDMAN
Specially Written for The Times

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education met June 5 to discuss the ramifications of the state's Comprehensive Plan for Educational Improvement and Financing on the district's schools.

The theme echoed throughout the boardroom was of opposition to the plan, which, according to Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carol B. Choye, would severely hurt public education not only in the Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District, but the entire state as a whole.

The plan calls for "thorough and efficient" education throughout the state. Under the plan, schools would receive comparable funding, and extra money would not be allotted for special programs or needs.

A major focus of the plan is to make all schools equal, giving children in high poverty areas as good of an education as children in towns with higher income. This comes as a directive from a decision by a New Jersey Supreme Court Judge.

However, Dr. Choye said she believes the potential plan will hurt the state more than it will help. In a simulated report, the Scotch Plains-Fanwood district could lose \$310,000 in funding next year, a 10 percent change.

Township Residents Voice Objections to Restaurant

Lone Star Steak House & Saloon Proposed for Route No. 22

By SALLY E. BECKWITH
Specially Written for The Times

Neighborhood safety, traffic congestion, increased noise levels, glare from four neon and fluorescent signs, loss of more than 50 percent of existing large shade trees, a restaurant exit onto a residential street, and decreased property values were some of the concerns raised by homeowners immediately bordering the proposed Lone Star Steak House & Saloon on the site of the current Restaurant Ko Shing, Route No. 22 West, during the June 6 Scotch Plains Board of Adjustment meeting.

The board heard an application of the Lone Star Steak House Saloon, Inc. to renovate and expand the existing building and parking area. Drew Coulson, a representative from the Lone Star Corporation, a national chain of 168 restaurants, described the mid-priced, full-service restaurants as having a "Texas roadhouse" and "Western" theme.

Although Lone Star advertises itself as a steak house and saloon, alcoholic beverages comprise only 16 percent of its total sales, Mr. Coulson stated. The proposed restaurant would have a capacity for 259 diners, and the present parking area would be expanded to provide 138 parking spaces.

The township parking requirement is for 100 spaces. The restaurant would be open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 11 a.m. to midnight on Friday and Saturdays, although the bar would remain open until 1 a.m. to accommodate late diners on weekend evenings.

There would be full and part-time employment opportunities for approximately 134 persons.

William Kearns of Kearns, Vassallo, Guest & Kearns of Willingboro, presented James Woods,

Eric Keller and Doug Kaufman, the corporation's consultants on engineering, traffic safety and sign and lighting design. These experts further described the proposed plans and fielded questions from the board and the impacted residents in the audience.

The most directly affected residents, he said, will be those living on Harding and William Streets and Lake Park Terrace.

Due to the lateness of the hour, further discussions of the proposal and additional agenda items not addressed during the evening were postponed until the special Board of Adjustment meeting, scheduled for Thursday, June 20, at 7:30 p.m.

In other business, Ira Kraemer of 467 Grant Avenue, was granted a year's extension on his temporary operating license, as was John Lucey of 213 Mountainview Avenue. Addressing the objections of some of Lucey's neighbors, the board granted the extension on conditions that Mr. Lucey erect a six-foot high stockade fence in the rear of his property behind which his business van and pickup truck must be parked out of sight; that all construction and painting materials must be out of sight in the garage, house or van, and that no employees work or congregate on the property except for exchange of vehicles once or twice a week. Mr. Lucey agreed to all the conditions.

Zhenchun Guo of 1630 Rahway Road and Ms. Lucille Kory of 1231 Woodland Avenue, were both awarded 12-foot variances to construct decks on their properties. The variances were needed because of unusual topography, shape and size of their lots. To the amusement of those present, Mrs. Kory's variance was memorialized immediately so that her deck would be ready in time for a family fourth of July barbecue.

the state model calls for 64 teachers in a school. Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School currently employs 81 teachers, meaning 17 teachers, or 21 percent of the staff, would have to be dismissed, Dr. Spitz said. Many programs would have to be cut, including the award-winning instrumental music department, home economics and some foreign language departments, most likely French and Italian, she added.

Advanced Placement classes, which are college-level courses taught in a high school setting, are also not included in the state's model, meaning funding for the classes would no longer be provided.

In addition, a teacher from each core department, such as mathematics and English, would have to be cut, leading to an increased class size of

FORUM HELD ON IMPACT OF STATE'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Assemblyman Augustine Suggest Grandfather Clause to Allow Districts to Maintain Budgets

Proposal Would Cut High School Staff by 21 Percent; State Aid Would Be Reduced by \$236,000 by 1997-1998

By SUZETTE STALKER
Specially Written for The Times

A state proposal to reformulate funding to New Jersey school districts drew 200 people to a town-wide forum Monday sponsored by the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Parent-Teacher Association Council at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, as school, municipal and state officials discussed the plan's potential impact on existing education programs.

Governor Mrs. Christine Todd Whitman's Comprehensive Plan for Educational Improvement and Financing calls for \$10.4 billion in state aid to be channeled through an equitable funding system in compliance with a New Jersey Supreme Court

directive that the state's 30 poorest school districts be funded at an equal level with its wealthiest.

Many successful school districts, while supportive of the concept of quality education for all New Jersey children, oppose the current state proposal because they fear it will jeopardize their existing standards and curricula without significantly improving achievement levels in lower income districts.

The state's educational reform strategy is designed to provide "thorough and efficient" education based on expected attainment of high academic standards for all New Jersey students, through implementation of 56 Core Curriculum Content Standards in seven subject areas and five Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards.

The Core Curriculum Standards, adopted May 1 by the State Board of Education, covers mathematics, science, language arts and literacy, social studies, world languages, comprehensive health/physical education, the visual and performing arts and careers.

The goal of these standards, according to the State Education Department's report on the plan, is to provide "a broad set of expected educational results which will guarantee that all students in New Jersey have the knowledge and skills to become productive citizens when they graduate from any high school in the state, regardless of location or socioeconomic conditions."

Dr. Carol B. Choye, Superintendent of Schools for Scotch Plains-Fanwood school district, praised the support of state legislators who represent the 22nd Legislative District which includes the sister communities "in this fight we are in right now" to preserve both quality education and property values, which she described as "tightly linked."

The proposed funding reforms are

based on a model school district created by the state which would be applied to all New Jersey public school systems. Dr. Choye offered several arguments why the model "does not adequately reflect the education structure and standards which currently exist in the Scotch Plains-Fanwood school district."

The Superintendent compared facilities and enrollment outlined in the model with the district's schools. She noted, for example, that the model elementary school has an enrollment of 500 students, while of the five elementary schools in Scotch Plains-Fanwood, McGinn School has the largest number with 492.

Dr. Choye cited the district's tradition of "neighborhood" schools with smaller populations, which officials believe is conducive to quality education and especially important for special education students, who frequently require a more per-pupil classroom space.

She also maintained the state model does not take into account regional differences, such as cost of living and income levels, which are typically higher in northern New Jersey than they are in the southern counties. In addition, she emphasized that Scotch Plains-Fanwood encourages its teachers to pursue and compensates them for earning advanced degrees.

According to the state formula, Scotch Plains-Fanwood would be permitted to spend \$28,808,262 for "thorough and efficient" education, with a range of 5 percent above and below that figure to include variables which affect standing levels in school districts.

Spending above the state's mandated range would be considered "constitutionally not required" by the state, and would have to be approved through a public referendum, school officials said. "Excess" amounts defeated by voters would then go be-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Fanwood Council Considers Dangerous Dog Law; Liability Over Fallen Limbs Sparks Discussion

Independence Day Parade, Contact We Care Five-Kilometer Run Lead Up to Fanwood Day

By SUZETTE STALKER
Specially Written for The Times

The Fanwood Borough Council discussed a varied agenda during its caucus session last Thursday, ranging from upcoming community events to regulations for the control of dangerous dogs. Several proclamations were also read honoring distinguished residents of the borough.

Discussion of a prospective borough ordinance concerning dangerous dogs was sparked by a case from March in which two huskies escaped from their North Martine Avenue residence and ventured into Scotch Plains where they reportedly injured a dog and its owner and killed a cat.

Following a hearing in Scotch Plains Municipal Court, the dogs were impounded to Garden State Kennels in Stirling where they have been lodged for the past two months. Unless he agrees to have the animals euthanized, the dogs' owner must have a dangerous dog permit, borough officials said.

Under state law, the owner of the dogs must make certain provisions in order for the animals to be returned, which he is in the process of doing, council members reported. These requirements include installation of a padded, six-foot high fence to keep the dogs from climbing over; purchase of \$20,000 liability insurance; a sign on the property warning about the dogs, and a \$150 license fee per dog.

Council President Bruce H. Walsh observing that state regulations prohibit municipalities from banning vicious dogs or authorizing that they be humanely put to sleep, recommended a local ordinance establishing guidelines for controlling these animals be put on the council's regular agenda under public safety.

Officials discussed potential liability for harm caused by fallen limbs from borough trees, highlighted by a recent incident in which an automobile parked in a private driveway in Fanwood sustained damage from an

overhanging branch which broke off from a deteriorated tree belonging to the municipality.

The owners of the automobile have submitted a claim to the borough's insurance company seeking compensation for the \$500 deductible not covered by their insurance policy. Borough Attorney Dennis Estis's office is expected to present a report to the governing body soon regarding any legal obligations by the municipality.

The issue of liability sparked a difference of opinion among members of the council. Councilman William E. Populus, Jr. felt the borough had a responsibility to pay for the damage caused by one of its trees, particularly since residents do not have the option of cutting down borough trees to prevent damage from occurring.

Other council members, however, felt that such incidents as falling tree limbs represented a force of nature beyond the municipality's control.

"I think the issue here is whether there was any negligence on the part of the borough," remarked Councilman Andrew MacDonald. "The borough did not cause the tree to rot. We can't be liable for everything."

Councilman Louis C. Jung expressed concern that making the borough liable in this case could set a risky precedent in the event a major storm were to cause damage from downed trees and branches on a community-wide scale.

Officials approved a resolution supporting the Borough of New Providence in its objection to a recent segment of "60 Minutes" on the Columbia Broadcasting System on the New Jersey League of Municipalities. Member communities of the league have stated the program did a disservice to the organization by emphasizing after-hours social functions and sparse attendance at first-day workshops during a league convention, rather than important work the league has done.

The council reviewed a request by the Fanwood Policemen's Benevolent Association to erect a monument outside the entrance to the Police Department adjacent to Borough Hall. It was also requested that the monument be illuminated at night.

Mayor Mrs. Maryanne S. Connelly read proclamations honoring Fanwood residents Laura Coomas, Karlene Rosera and Christine Hoyet

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



SUDDEN STORM...The heavy storm that blew through the area at 4 p.m. Tuesday afternoon was particularly severe in the Shackamaxon area of Scotch Plains at the Westfield border, where some residents called it a mini-tornado. High winds and torrential downpours brought trees, branches and electrical wires down. There were widespread power outages, and many streets had to be closed owing to live wires creating a hazard. Some traffic signals were affected, and police were called in to direct rush-hour traffic.

DEADLINES HELP PAPER SERVE YOU

Those preparing press releases for submission to *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. *Times* releases also may be mailed 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.

JUN 13 1996