



SCOTCH PLAINS

Scotch Plains

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Zoning Board OK's Lone Star By 5-2 Margin

By SALLY BECKWITH
Specially Written for The Times

"We are anguished and angry," said Ms. Judy Halloway of Lake Park Terrace after the Scotch Plains Board of Adjustment's 5-2 vote to approve the Lone Star Steakhouse and Saloon's application at the June 20 special meeting of the board.

"It has been said that the north end of Scotch Plains is the township's step-child, and tonight's decision by the board proves that," she said.

Lone Star had applied to the board for site approval to develop and expand the current Ko Shing Restaurant on Route No. 22, West.

Robert Geddis of William Street voiced his concerns that a Lone Star Steakhouse and Saloon would contribute to the "creeping commercialization and degradation of the area." These comments reflected the sentiments of approximately 40 residents attending the second public hearing of Lone Star Corporation's request.

Other major concerns of residents were neighborhood safety, increased traffic, noise and bright lights, and the environmental and aesthetic impact of the removal of scores of tall shade trees to make room for expanded parking areas to accommodate 138 cars, an increase of 38 over Scotch Plains' 100 spacer requirement.

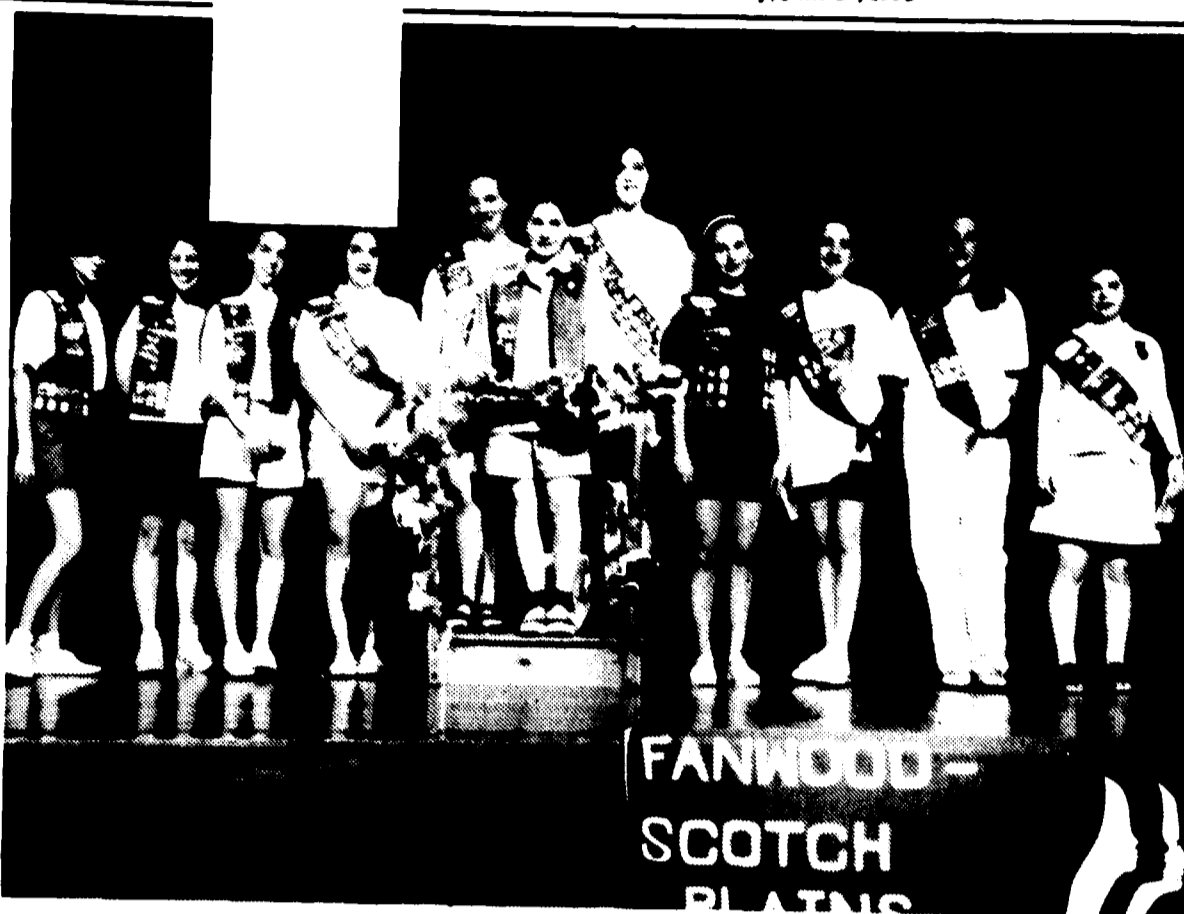
Attorney William Kearns, representing Lone Star, testified that the additional parking spaces were necessary to prevent parking overflow onto the neighboring streets of Williams, Harding and Lake Park Terrace. Mr. Kearns noted the site had housed a restaurant facility for 70 years, and that Lone Star had done everything they could to accommodate the residents of the area.

"We think we've done a pretty good job," he added.

Mr. Kearns further stated that Lone Star's proposed buffer between parking areas and residents' homes was adequate. The buffer areas would be comprised of plantings of shrubbery and moderate height pines after removal of all the shade trees on restaurant property.

The board's Site Committee, consisting of Timothy Livolsi, Mrs. Gail Iammatteo and Chairwoman Jane Lorber, recommended approval of

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HIGHEST HONOR...The Fanwood and Scotch Plains Cadette Girl Scouts are shown here being honored for receiving their Silver Awards. Pictured, left to right, are: Erin Wilkinson, Valerie Termine, Claire Cappio, Kristen Fasano, Monica Anderson, Jessica Gittleman, Colleen Sellers, Mary Milonnet, Jennifer Gartner, Meryl Bezruczyk, and Danielle Bousquet. Not pictured are Erin Watson, Janine Osbahr, Lorri Slaugh and Emily Downs.

Scotch-Fanwood High Graduates 215 Despite Loss of Electrical Power

Graduation ceremonies for the Class of 1996 at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School were held June 19, despite torrential rains during the afternoon and the loss of electrical power throughout the area, including the high school building.

The 215 graduates gathered in the school's gymnasium under temporary lights powered by the Scotch Plains Fire Department's generators to receive their diplomas and hear the words of class valedictorian, Grace Chen, and salutatorian, Charles Kiley.

Grace urged her fellow classmates to overcome their apprehension about the future, to learn as much as possible about life, the world, and themselves. She also emphasized how well the class was prepared to meet future challenges because their high school had given them opportunities to succeed and the ability to dream.

Dr. Carol B. Choye, Superintendent of Schools, compared the graduating class to Olympic athletes because of their ability to set high expectations and goals and consistently focus time, energy and effort on reaching those goals.

Calling them the "Just Do It Class," Dr. Choye noted an array of class accomplishments such as their receipt of over \$1 million in scholarships, that 183 of them will be going on to college, and their contributions to sports championships and to various student groups and programs which have received state and national recognition.

In closing her comments to the class, she quoted the yearbook message of one graduate's family: "You have learned early that as much as talent, the secret of success is constancy of purpose. Hear the sound of

the future...make it yours."

In comments following graduation, Dr. Donald E. Sheldon, Board of Education President, remarked, "It was a near miracle that the graduation came off as scheduled, given the tremendous problems."

"But the students, the parents, and all concerned were great in how they coped," Dr. Sheldon stated.

Others in attendance remarked that the whole graduation experience was just one final and dramatic lesson in dealing with real life problems as the students completed their high school careers.

The high school band led the professional and played the National Anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner," at the start of the ceremony.

Welcoming comments were provided by Dr. Terry K. Riegel, Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Principal.

PLAN FOR PARKS TO COST \$1.85 MILLION

Council Appropriates \$201,000 From State For Raritan Project

Township to Match Grant for Pond Study; New Bowcraft 'Flying Dragon' Opposed

By GLENN R. KAPLINSKY
Specially Written for The Times

Conference and public meetings at the Scotch Plains Township Council were held Tuesday. The council has voted to accept the recommendations of the recently convened Board of Assessments with respect to the following capital improvements.

- Sanitary sewer service for three homes on Cushing Road and one on Terrill Road.
- Granite block curbing for Ridgeview Avenue.
- Sanitary sewer for a small portion of Morse Avenue.

The Board of Assessments met on June 4.

The municipality and its professional staff were in constant contact with affected property owners, before, during and after the projects were completed, the council was told by township officials.

Mrs. Delores Tagliari of Ridgeview Avenue, who spoke during the public hearing, complained that since the granite curbing installation on Ridgeview she has experienced a flooding problem when it rains.

Mrs. Tagliari said she has never had the problem before.

Township Manager Thomas E. Atkins advised Mrs. Tagliari that the Township's Engineering Department will look into the matter. If necessary, he said, the contractor will have to remedy the situation.

The special assessments were then confirmed by the council and bills to the property owners will go out sometime in July, officials said.

Director of Public Properties Walter DiNizo and Director of Parks and Recreation Laura Sansone Botto appeared at the conference meeting to discuss a capital improvement plan designed to take their departments into the 21st century. The plan will run to the year 2002 and cost \$1,850,000.

The township will meet with its bond council and Director of Finance Al Steinberg about selling bonds to finance the endeavor.

During the public meetings the council introduced an ordinance appropriating the sum of \$201,000 from the New Jersey Department of Transportation in connection with improvements to Raritan Road. The work will commence in the fall. Raritan Road will be reconstructed from Rahway Road to the Edison border.

The council also approved a resolution to match a \$2,500 grant from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to fund a project entitled "Brookside Park Pond Restoration Study" with an eye toward restoring the pond to its former glory. The study, officials say, will make recommendations about the best way to achieve this goal.

A resolution was approved which calls for the sale of a retired 1975 Mack Pumper for the sum of \$1 to the Fire Department of Bomberos de Mexico, Tijuana. The council had previously sold the other 1975 retired Mack Pumper for \$1 to the Fire Department of Igonish, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. Scotch Plains purchased the truck new in 1975 for \$35,000.

It was determined that these 1975 trucks did not have any market value which could generate financial benefit for the tax payers of Scotch Plains.

The City of Tijuana has inadequate pumping equipment to respond to emergencies. The resolution stated in part that "this sale is made in the spirit of good faith as public entities should work together to foster excellent working relationships."

Also approved was a resolution extending the contract with the First Occupational Center for providing the service of collection, processing and marketing of household recyclables at this past year's contract price of \$120,000.

First Occupational performance will be monitored and evaluated six to eight months from now, Mr. Atkins said.

A resolution was approved engaging the Robert Linnett Agency of Caldwell to perform a comparative health insurance study of the State Health Benefits plan and the CIGNA plan for municipal employees.

The Linnett Agency will undertake the comparative analysis and submit their findings and conclusions within 15 business days at a cost of \$1,000.

If any additional time might be needed beyond the submission of the report, they will be compensated at the hourly rate of \$100.

A resolution was approved authorizing the acting Township Engineer Robert Pillow to sign an application for a permit to construct a sanitary sewer extension permit by Mansa, Inc. in a section of Scotch Plains connecting it to the Edison sanitary

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Fanwood Zoning Board of Adjustment Postpones Orthodontist Petition to Expand His Practice

Hearing Delayed Due to Lack of Enough Members to Hear Case; Neighbors Oppose Plan

By SUZETTE STALKER
Specially Written for The Times

Five new applications were unanimously approved last Thursday by the Fanwood Zoning Board of Adjustment, while a sixth scheduled appeal was postponed until next month. The board also memorialized four resolutions of cases which were heard on May 16.

The most anticipated application of the evening was a use variance petition by Dr. and Mrs. Francis Besson for the addition of another professional to Dr. Besson's orthodontist practice at 232 North Martine Avenue. Dr. Besson is also seeking to maintain his existing waiver on off-street parking regulations.

The controversial appeal, which brought out approximately 20 concerned residents, was ultimately postponed, however, because there were not enough board members available that evening to render the five affirmative votes which would be necessary for approval.

Of the seven board members, Vice

Chairwoman Kathleen Rice and James Watson abstained from hearing the application because they both have children who are patients of Dr. Besson. A third board member, who was absent last week, is also expected to abstain for the same reason, officials said. Board member Brenda Steinberg was absent.

Although no testimony has yet been presented before the zoning board, a petition containing the names of 10 neighbors of the orthodontist's office was submitted June 13 at the regular meeting of the Fanwood Borough Council.

At that meeting, a spokesman for the neighbors explained they were opposed to the planned addition because they feared the expected increase in on-street parking would pose a safety hazard to school children and make it more difficult for residents to enter and exit their driveways.

Dr. Besson reported that in November of 1970 he had successfully appealed for permission to have two professionals occupy his office, but that the plan was subsequently modified after he determined his neighbors would prefer he have a grass backyard rather than a parking lot which would have been required for shared office space.

A public hearing on the application is expected to be held at the board's next meeting on Thursday, July 18.

Mr. and Mrs. John Saenger of 159 Willoughby Road received approval to widen their existing driveway and to install a shed. They required a variance for the driveway because the proposed width of 16 feet was in violation of the minimum 10 feet permitted under the borough code. The present width of the driveway is 13 feet.

The couple also required variances for the shed because the proposed side-yard setback of two feet was not in compliance with the permitted 10-foot minimum distance. In addition,

the proposed size of the shed was 120 square feet, while 100 square feet is permitted.

Mr. Saenger testified that he wanted more space for the couple's two cars and to get them off the street when the borough's snowplows are in service. He added the widened driveway would also provide easier ingress and egress for their vehicles.

The applicant, who has no garage, explained the pre-manufactured shed would house a vintage 1954 Harley Davidson motorcycle and would also be used for storage of gardening tools and a snow blower. He stated this structure "exceeds or meets all building requirements" and would enhance the appearance of his property.

Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Robinson of 140 Marian Avenue were granted approval to construct a deck onto the rear of their home for leisure activities. The applicants required bulk variances for their side-yard width, proposed at 5.72 feet in violation of the permitted 15 feet, and for structure coverage. The house with the deck equals a proposed coverage of 27 percent, in violation of the 25 percent permitted under the borough code. The current structure coverage without the deck is 20.5 percent.

Mr. Robinson testified the deck would be an aesthetic improvement for the property and would cover a deteriorated, ground-level block patio. Concerning the proposed side-yard width, he explained his next-door neighbor has an independently standing garage which will shield the neighbor's view of the deck.

Roy McGowan of 230 Belvidere Avenue was awarded bulk variances to construct a storage shed on his property, which he required because the proposed side-yard width of two feet violated the permitted minimum of 10 feet and because the proposed rear-yard width of two feet was in non-compliance with the permitted four-foot minimum.

In addition, the proposed 26.8 per

cent building coverage exceeded the permitted minimum of 25 percent. The pre-constructed shed, measuring 96 square feet, will have an asphalt

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Westfield Leader and Times Sold; Mr. Corbin Becomes 10th Publisher

The Westfield Leader and The Times of Scotch Plains and Fanwood were purchased late Thursday by Watchung Communications, Inc., an independently-run holding company, from the Bauer/Montalbano partnership.

Horace R. Corbin, President of the corporation, will serve as Publisher for the long-established weekly publications. On the corporate level, he will serve as President of Watchung Communications while his wife, Mrs. Gail Corbin, will serve as Secretary for the firm.

Upon the sale of the company, Mr. Corbin became the 10th publisher of the newspaper. The late Kurt C. Bauer purchased The Leader, established in 1890, in August of 1990 from the Walter J. Lee, Jr. family which had owned the newspaper for 80 years. Mr. Lee had been Publisher from 1927 until his death in 1990. He had taken over the paper for his father, Walter, Sr., who had run the paper for 17 years.

Mr. Bauer had purchased The Times in 1993 from the Donald A. Foster family. Upon the purchase of the newspaper, established in 1959, he reformatted the tabloid into a standardized weekly. Upon Kurt Bauer's death in January his brother, Jeffrey L. Bauer, assumed the role of Publisher until his tragic death this past March.

After the sudden loss of Jeffrey Bauer, Carmelo Montalbano assumed a more active role as Publisher and Controller, while Mrs. Kathleen E. Bauer continued as Associate Publisher, providing guidance to the staff which continued to meet

the Wednesday press deadlines.

Mrs. Corbin has retained the title of General Manager for the newspaper, while her sister, Mrs. Karen M. Hinds, will be the Office Manager. Mrs. Corbin has been employed by the newspapers for the past six years.

The remainder of the staff will continue under the new ownership with Paul J. Peyton serving as Managing Editor and Mrs. Kathleen G. Norman as Marketing Director in charge of advertising sales assisted by Ms. Joanna Marsh.

"We have a stable staff that is in place and we intend to make a strong investment in them," Mr. Corbin explained.

He emphasized that the newspapers will continue to keep their local focus which, he said, has kept The Leader and The Times in business for a combined 143 years.

"The strength of these newspapers is based upon their tradition and we (the newspapers) have provided that service," Mr. Corbin noted.

The new publisher said he intends to bring an "effective technical and management structure and the tools of today" to help the newspapers successfully compete in the high-technology and information age.

Mr. Corbin said the changes in the operation of the newspapers are intended to enhance the "quality service" the newspapers have been providing their readers.

Originally from central Pennsylvania, the new publisher moved to Westfield in 1970 from Phila-

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Times Office Closed July 4

In observance of Independence Day, the offices of The Times will be closed Thursday, July 4.

Press releases and letters-to-the-editor must be received in our office, located at 50 Elm Street in Westfield, by 4 p.m. on Friday, June 28, to be published in the July 4 edition. All sports news and obituaries must be submitted by Sunday, June 30.

Releases to The Times should be mailed to: P.O. Box 368, Scotch Plains, 07076.

For events which are planned weeks or months in advance, we encourage submission of stories as early as possible prior to the event. Instructions on submission of letters can be found on Page 4.