

## **SPECIAL MEETING WITH THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2007**

Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski read the following statement of compliance:

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this special meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fair Lawn and the Fair Lawn Board of Education was published in The Record issue of September 14, 2007. Notices were also posted on the bulletin board located on the first floor of the Municipal Building and the Maurice Pine Free Public Library. Copies were mailed to The Community News and posted on the Borough of Fair Lawn Website. The notice identified the time and location of the Special Meeting.

Board President Wallace called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Weinstein, Deputy Mayors Etlar and Tedeschi, Councilmembers Baratta and Trawinski, President Wallace, Vice President Banta, Board Members Carter, Gilson, Frankel, Mancinelli, Rosenberg, Yuskaitis and Zino.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Manager Metzler, Municipal Clerk Kwasniewski, Superintendent Watson and Board Secretary Wilson.

### **DISCUSSION: INCREASING PARKING SPACES AT THE FAIR LAWN COMMUNITY CENTER**

President Wallace indicated that the Council's proposals to increase parking were previously distributed. She asked for clarification of who owns the property in option 1. Manager Metzler explained that the Borough Engineer prepared the drawings. The right-of-way is owned by the Borough of Fair Lawn. Option 2 requires the cooperation of the Board because the Board of Education owns the property that is needed to allow egress at Bellair and Burke.

Mayor Weinstein indicated that there has been a parking issue in that area and with the success of the Community Center there is even a greater issue. The Borough needs to improve circulation of the cars and to give the residents in the area relief as well as alleviating the parking problems at the High School, particularly at the football games and other events.

Mr. Rosenberg wondered how the proposals would benefit the High School. Mayor Weinstein explained that there has been an issue with the residents concerning parking on the streets. This parking lot would be another option for the students to use.

Vice President Banta indicated that a survey will be needed before the Board can make any decisions. Manager Metzler stated that if they are able to come to an agreement there are a number of things that will have to be discussed. The Engineer will have to design the parking lot taking into account turning radius, etc.

Superintendent Watson pointed out that there is a row of trees that they use for many things. He indicated that they would prefer not to lose them. Monitoring wells also have to be considered.

Mr. Mancinelli stated he was concerned that losing 30 feet restricts the use of the field for Lacrosse. If the students are going to use that lot, a walkway has to be built behind Sasso field. He would also want the trees replaced if they have to be removed. He mentioned the loss of the

visitor's bleachers. He wondered about the potential cost to the Board of Education. Manager Metzler indicated that he was not sure if the tress were in the right-of-way. He did not think the proposal impacts the fields.

Deputy Mayor Tedeschi wondered if there was any Board discussion about removing the bleachers. President Wallace stated that there was a law that there must be separate bleachers for visitors. They would have to see if that law was still on the books. She also was not sure there was a benefit to allowing the students to use that lot because it is a great distance from the High School. She could see the benefit for sports.

Mayor Weinstein stated that if some of the students park in this lot, it would help the circulation in the morning with less congestion and that would be a benefit to everyone. Councilmember Trawinski added that the Community Center has traffic problems and the residents on Kipp Street have problems. He wants to solve those problems with the least impact on the High School. He thought they need to work together to solve the problem.

Superintendent Watson indicated that dialogue is healthy. Twice the Mayor and Council came to the Board for additional property and the Board gave it to them both times. Both times he recommended that the Board work with Mr. Cosgrove and his committee. It is not easy to give up Board property. They use the trees for hydration, planning and breaks in the shade. A survey is necessary to establish where the measurement begins and how far it goes int the field and the trees. The bleachers have been talked about a number of times. He was sure that the law was still in effect but as long as there are bleachers for home and visitors they may not have to be separate. It is expensive to renovate the bleachers.

Manager Metzler stated that if the Council decided to more forward with a survey, the Borough Engineer would do a more detailed drawing that would tell whether or not the trees would have to be removed. He thought that if the trees do have to be removed, they could plant new trees on the edge of the lot.

Mr. Rosenberg did not believe that the High School students will park in that lot because they do not park on Cadmus Street now. The problem with the parking at the High School has diminished. The School Resource Officer has eased many of the problems. The benefit to the Board is providing parking for sporting events.

Ms. Frankel expressed concern about blacktopping green space. She suggested lifting the restrictions on the streets which would alleviate the parking problems for everyone. She pointed out that there has always been a parking problem.

Deputy Mayor Etler stated that the Mayor and Council's proposal is a good idea that will help the community as a whole. President Wallace believed that the Board will discuss the matter at a future date.

Vice President Banta stated that the Board and the Council have had an excellent relationship for the 15 years he has been on the Board. The Board wants to continue to help. It is a mutually beneficial idea that must be explored. He reiterated that a survey is needed so they understand what is being proposed.

Mr. Gilson mentioned that when they put in the temporary parking lot, the Council did not support them against the residents who wanted it out immediately. They have to determine how the plan would impact on the practice field.

Mayor Weinstein assured them that no one is dismissing their concerns or their responsibilities. A mutual parking issue exists. The Recreation Center is a success. The Mayor and Council came to present a concept. There are real issues on Kipp Street. If they can take more cars off the street, it benefits everyone.

Mr. Mancinelli stated that the Community Center is in a bind for parking and something has to be done. As the school year progresses, the parking situation gets worse and something should be done about that too. All of this is stressing the neighborhood. As a licensed planner, despite the fact that they would have to pave some open space, the only resolution is to get as many cars off the street and into a parking lot. The best way to control student parking is to put them into a lot. They must solve the problem to their mutual benefit and relieve the neighborhood of this stress.

Superintendent Watson thought there were other options that they would like the Borough to consider. They will need the Borough's help in getting cars off the street.

John Cosgrove, president of the 501(c)3 and president of the Athletic Committee stated that he envisions a mutually beneficial solution. He understands the parking problems on Kipp Street. He envisions it as a total complex. They have to provide parking. The High School students are not going to park at the Recreation Center. They have to do something for the people who live there, the residents who use the Center and the students at the High School. He is hoping to bring drama students during the day into the theater. Perhaps it could be part of the curriculum. If they all work together, they will find a good solution. He urged them to work together.

President Wallace opened the meeting to the public.

Arlene Rubinstein, 28 Rutgers Terrace thanked Mr. Cosgrove for his work. She stated that nothing was ever mentioned about taking Board of Education property for parking during the construction of the Recreation Center. The Board has to look out for the students first.

John Cosgrove pointed out that the Board of Education gave 65 feet of property to the Borough which gave the Recreation Center 18 more parking spaces.

Harvey Rubinstein, 28 Rutgers Terrace stated that the students use the trees to cool off. When the Recreation Center was proposed, they said there would be plenty of parking by using the Mental Health Center and the High School. He asked if there was an agreement signed. He has never seen a sign telling them to park at the Mental Health Center or the High School. He did not think another lot would solve the problems when the parents are picking up their children.

Robin Keller, 18-11 Kipp Street stated that she never had a problem until the Recreation Center was built. There are more people when there is an athletic event. There is a safety issue when the Recreation Center and an athletic event are going on at the same time. Allowing parking on both sides on Kipp Street is dangerous. There are more accidents because cars are parking on

both sides. It is not just the congestion. She asked if they considered building a parking garage of more than one story when the expansion of the High School was being done.

Mr. Mancinelli advised her that the cost to build a parking garage is exorbitant.

President Wallace stated that the Board would continue the dialogue. They will be trying to find solution to both of their problems.

Manager Metzler summarized that the following needs to be done: the area needs to be surveyed and staked, the deed must be reviewed and the impact on monitoring wells and trees must be determined. He suggested once they have the consensus to move forward he will maintain a dialogue with Superintendent Watson and once those documents are in place, he will make the documents available to the Board and schedule another meeting.

Mr. Rosenberg stated that when they survey it they need to look at the impact of traffic on Bellair Avenue getting out onto Morlot Avenue.

The consensus was to move ahead as suggested by the Manager. Another consensus was taken to look at restricting parking to one side on Kipp Street.

Mr. Mancinelli stated that once they have the information, they will make an effort to define some of the impacts and bring them to the next meeting so they can move forward on one idea.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Upon motion by Deputy Mayor Tedeschi and second by Councilmember Trawinski the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Joanne Kwasniewski, RMC/CMC/MMC  
Municipal Clerk

The undersigned have read and approve the foregoing minutes.

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Mayor Steven Weinstein

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Councilmember Jeanne Baratta

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Deputy Mayor Martin Etler

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Deputy Mayor Joseph Tedeschi

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Councilmember Ed Trawinski