



SCOTCH PLAINS

THE TIMES



FANWOOD

of

Scotch Plains – Fanwood

Special Election '98 Edition

OUR 39th YEAR—ISSUE NO. 44-98

USPS 485200
Periodical — Postage Paid at Scotch Plains, N.J.

Thursday, October 29, 1998

Published
Every Thursday

232-4407

FIFTY CENTS

Seven Candidates for Three Seats on SP Township Council Reveal Views on Issues During Forum Hosted by *The Times*

By JEANNE WHITNEY and
PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Times

All seven candidates for three Scotch Plains Township council seats agreed to sit down with *The Times* two weeks ago and answer questions on topics that all three parties had suggested to the newspaper earlier.

The Democratic, Republican and Conservative Party candidates were all asked the same eight questions over an hour.

Candidate Frank J. Festa, Jr., answered for the New Jersey Conservative Party. Democratic candidates answering were Geri Morgan Samuel, Tarquin Bromley and Franklin Donatelli.

Republican candidates answering were Councilman Robert Johnston (incumbent), Gail Iammatteo and Paulette Coronato.

What follows are the questions and a synopsis of their responses, including direct quotations, to what may very well be the issues voters will consider when they vote next Tuesday, Election Day.

The Times: Aircraft noise over residential areas has been an issue over the past 10 years. Do you see ocean routing as a solution or do you have another solution? What do you see as the council's role in this?

Mr. Festa: "None. The council has no role. What I hear when an airplane goes over is a cash register. We already lost our manufacturing base in the area. The airport was there for a long time. If you moved in knowing it was there, well, what can we do. We live in the hub."

Mrs. Samuel: "Yes. Ocean routing is definitely a solution. The council's role should be to band with the other municipal governments in the area, for a united front...to get a

solution that is acceptable to everybody in the state." She said that in her own backyard, when airplanes fly over, you can not hear the person next to you speaking.

Mr. Donatelli: "Ocean routing is the only solution."

Mr. Bromley: "Yes. And I hear it's been really well thought out. They've done their homework."

Mrs. Coronato: "Yes. If it works and is safe, I would support it. It hasn't been proved if that's the right solution."

Mrs. Iammatteo: "If it works and is safe, I would also support it. But still, we're going to have noise. We're 20 minutes from Newark (International) Airport. But the reality in the future is the changing of the planes. They will be more efficient and less noisy."

Mr. Johnston: "This council and my running mates and I would support any plan that would take the noise away, including ocean routing. The resolution needs to come from the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration). The role of local government is to support the efforts of other elected officials — at the Federal level, really. I think Scotch Plains took the lead in recognizing there was a problem, but I don't think it's anything that the local government initiative can be effective in resolving."

The Times: In the spring, *The Times* detailed a series of articles about planning boards approving housing developments that led to increases in enrollment in the township school system. In this regard, do you feel the council should have any role in this, that is, looking at open space preservation, school enrollments and township population?

Mr. Festa: If the township was really interested in open space, why

didn't they oppose the construction of the Police Academy? As a Board of Education member (one term in the 1970s,) I was very interested in the amount of students, and my big thrust was not to sell any of the old [school] buildings but to lease them.

But now we're in a bind, we need them. We need 10 acres to build an elementary school.

"This municipality has said for years, nothing other than we are a bedroom community. They have shunned all sorts of [business] construction. So, you have escalating enrollment — and bedrooms pay the taxes."

Mr. Bromley: "The council has a



Frank Festa (Conservative)

major role. It's the responsibility of the council to know what plans are here." For example, he said, the proposed "Reserve" development of 116 housing units behind a fast food restaurant on Route 22, West is "a very wrong idea."

The traffic, sewers, higher school enrollment and possible flooding will be a problem, he said.

Mrs. Samuel: "The township



Robert Johnston* (R)



Gail Iammatteo (R)



Paulette Coronato (R)



Tarquin Jay Bromley (D)

should buy the Reserve property. It sits in a flood zone." She would look at the Master Plan and update it.

Mr. Donatelli: "The runoff will be awesome. I've witnessed the flooding. The town should buy the property and keep it for open space." Traffic would be "horrendous," he said.

Mrs. Iammatteo: "Council members sit on the planning board and



Franklin Donatelli (D)

have a leadership role, and if a big development came in — we'd have a say in it. We have a lot of younger families with children moving into town. Houses are tuning over fast in the town. There are 273 open spaces in the township. We're looking to keep them open and not to overdevelop the town."

Mrs. Coronato: "We have a lot of families wanting to move in and it speaks well of our town. The council can only do so much. It's a Board of Education matter." She noted that Sterling Chase and Berwyck Chase residential developments were a compromise over state mandated high density housing in the late 1980s.

Mr. Johnston: "Developments place a burden on the infrastructure of the town and what municipalities are trying to do is cause the developer to undertake...some of the burden."



Geri Samuel (D) Incumbent*

He suggested that developers who put in exclusively senior citizen housing could get some kind of tax abatement.

The Times: Each year, council members select a mayor from among themselves who serves for one year. In your opinion, has this been an effective form of governing in the township, and why?

Mr. Festa: "No. We need an elected mayor, a strong mayor — not a bureaucrat at \$117,000 a year. Maybe a three-year term." Yes, I would run for mayor, absolutely. I've lived here 27 years. He said he got the most votes ever for one person elected to the Board of Education with the slogan, "Vote Festa, cut the budget."

Mrs. Samuel: "No. I don't think in one year you can set goals or do long-range planning and accomplish

Four Candidates for Fanwood Borough Council Prioritize Issues in Race for Two Available Seats

By SUSAN M. DYCKMAN
Specially Written for The Times

Property tax initiatives, effective communication, the business district, volunteerism and public safety top the list of issues set forth by the

year against Republican incumbent Bob Franks, is the tie-breaking vote in the event of a 3-3 split among members of the Fanwood council.

One of the open seats on the governing body is held by Councilwoman

Kathy Mitchell who previously ran for borough office in 1993. She is the Fanwood Democratic Committee Chairwoman.

Challenging the Democrats are Republicans David Trumpp, making his second bid for a council seat, and newcomer Wilfred P. Coronato.

Communication is an important consideration for both sides. Councilwoman Schurtz proposes the creation of an Internet Web site through the Fanwood Memorial Library that would contain regularly updated information such as a schedule of council meetings, Planning Board agenda and downtown sales dates.

"This would provide a tremendous service to people," she explained. "If Internet access is not in someone's house, the library has it. It's an opportunity for real communication."

Ms. Mitchell, who serves as Treasurer of the Fanwood Library, added that information such as the names of committee members and borough codes could also be included. "People would know who to call if they want to join a committee," she noted.

Mr. Trumpp does not disagree with the need for enhanced communication, but criticized the current Democratic administration for "trying to put together a Web site for the past couple years" without results.

"The Internet is a major part of a person's world, where they can get local information, information on what's going on with government," he stated. "People would want to get more involved if they knew what was going on in town," he added.

On the issue of tax relief, Mr. Trumpp stated, "We support Governor Whitman's proposal of transferring tax assessment...doing it at county government rather than at the municipal level."

"It would provide for a more concise method of evaluating property on a timely basis," he said.

The Republican candidate added that use of Federal and state grants could be a "more cost-effective method of raising dollars to use as a

matching funds source."

"It won't dip into taxpayers' pockets," he continued, "for major capital

CONTINUED ON PAGE A-6

Township Looks Over \$5 Million Expected From HUD to County

By JEANNE WHITNEY
Specially Written for The Times

The Scotch Plains Community Development Revenue Sharing Committee gathered in a public hearing at the Municipal Building early last week as part of a process to allocate as much as \$5.4 million in Federal funds throughout 19 towns in Union

Publisher's Note

This edition of *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood* has been mailed to every resident in the township and in the borough to inform voters of the issues and of the candidates for the election this Tuesday, November 3. We encourage everyone to vote.

Our towns have good government and great candidates seeking office. Half of the candidates will be serving us shortly, while the others not elected will have opportunities to run again in the future. Celebrate and thank them all.

For Scotch Plains residents, the first annual edition of *Our Town* is included within the newspaper. We enjoyed doing it and look forward to the future editions. We hope you like it.

We also use this edition to present ourselves to those of you who are not subscribers. I believe good newspapers help communities, and that's what we're trying to do. Please join us. If you're stymied for a gift idea for your neighbor this season, consider one that gives year round — a subscription to *The Times*.

Horace R. Corbin
Publisher

County for the 25th year in a row.

Friday, November 6, is the deadline for 1999 grant applications.

The anticipated millions, known as a Community Development block grant, is part of a Department of Housing and Urban Development (H.U.D.) program that ultimately returns Federal tax dollars through the county to low and moderate income residents and to municipalities for improvements and emergencies.

Last year, the county received over \$5 million from the block grant program. Scotch Plains made improvements to Green Forest Park with its portion.

Reportedly, senior citizen housing in the township has garnered \$1 million dollars over the years from Community Development grants. Resolve, a local counseling agency, has also received grants in the past.

Business Owners Quiz SP Council Candidates

By JEANNE WHITNEY
Specially Written for The Times

Seven Township Council candidates from three political parties shared a table and fielded questions from the Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association (SPBPA) last Wednesday at Brianna's Restaurant in the Towne Centre.

Democratic challengers Geri Morgan Samuel and Tarquin Bromley told business and commercial property owners they did not object to adding the name Centre Boulevard to Westfield and Plainfield Avenues and East Second Street in the township, in order to identify the same roadway with one name in the downtown. In fact, Mr. Bromley said, "I think it's a hell of a good idea. It should be strongly advocated."

The proposal for dual designation of the three streets was shot down by residents earlier this year, when busi-

ness owners brought it to the Township Council for approval.

Incumbent Republican Councilman Robert Johnston admitted, "We didn't do a very good job with the Centre Boulevard designation — in communicating," and added that the downtown "needed identity."

Paulette Coronato, one of Mr. Johnston's two running mates on the GOP ticket, said she would "revisit" the street naming proposal as a council member.

New Jersey Conservative Party candidate Frank Festa called the Municipal Building complex and adjacent fire house a "prime piece of real estate" for development. Evidently, a study of the downtown in years past suggested commercial development of both sides of Park Avenue to vitalize the district.

Mr. Festa said an informal survey

CONTINUED ON PAGE A-6



Karen M. Schurtz* (D)



Kathy Mitchell (D)



David B. Trumpp (R)



Wilfred P. Coronato (R)

candidates for Fanwood Borough Council this year.

There are two seats up for grabs, and voters' choices at the polls will determine the future composition of a governing body that has been controlled by Democrats since 1989.

Mayor Maryanne S. Connelly, a Democrat running for Congress this

Karen M. Schurtz, who is running for reelection to her second term. The other vacancy is held by Council President Bruce H. Walsh, who chose not to seek reelection after three consecutive terms on the council. Both Mrs. Schurtz and Mr. Walsh are Democrats.

Mrs. Schurtz's running mate is



Full campaign coverage starts on Page B-1

Remember **VOTE** on **November 3rd**

Seven Candidates Vie For Three Council Seats

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

anything and demonstrate leadership. Most of the towns I know of elect their mayor." She claimed that the present township charter allows for the election of a mayor, "but they've chosen not to." She said "I don't know" when asked whether she would run for mayor.

Mr. Bromley: "There is no mayor here. It has nothing to do with the governance of the town. It's silly." He said the state statute calls for a four-year term.

Mrs. Iammatteo: "I think it's very effective for our size town. We have a professional manager, not a part-time mayor — but a business administrator. Mr. (Thomas K.) Atkins must be non-partisan and serve all citizens, not a party."

Mrs. Coronato: "It's like Mr. Atkins is the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) and we're the Board of Trustees. He is responsible for the day-to-day running of the town. Each council member is accountable, she said."

Mr. Johnston: "We have the best that's available out there. [Tom Atkins] is on top of it. We feel this is the right form of government for Scotch Plains." In the committee form of government, he explained, like in Fanwood, every council member has line item responsibilities.

The Times: The importance of a viable business district has been an ongoing issue for "Downtown USA." How can the council work with the business community to foster growth in the township? For example, would you support recruiting new business into the township?

Mr. Festa: "You have to have some exotic zoning. Specific zoning, one area is offices, restaurants [and others.] More people working downtown would generate business during lunch time." He added that, "If I had my druthers, the Municipal Building never would have gone there [where it stands today.] You could have a little bazaar — a mall in that area." He said he would have put the municipal offices next door to the Department of Public Works on Westfield Avenue.

Mrs. Samuel: "I would consider a downtown development corporation" (like a special improvement district.) "But not like Westfield. I hate what's happened to Westfield."

Mr. Bromley: "Yes. The problem with downtown Scotch Plains is there's no real place to shop. There's nothing here that draws people in that asks them to linger, to stay. It's a fairly good collection of boutique stores."

He suggested hiring a development consultant and offering tax incentives. He spoke of a downtown "village quadrangle" that could be formed out of Park Avenue, East Second Street, the firehouse property and Front Street. "It doesn't work the way it is now."

Mr. Donatelli: "We want to encourage this downtown development. You have to make sure the little guys don't get knocked out of the box. We can think about tax breaks but it has to be passed on to the merchant in the store."

Mr. Johnston: "Should we go out as a municipality and recruit business? I don't think so, but us, as a council, being supportive of the business community where it's appropriate. We have a very small, business district. It's not a town

with a strong commercial or industrial base to provide any kind of tax subsidy. Scotch Plains is not about that, not at all. We're a residential community."

Mrs. Coronato: "We want to keep the small town feeling. We support the Business Association." We want to work hand-in-hand with them, she said, encouraging them where when possible.

Mrs. Iammatteo: "We continue to encourage cooperative ventures between the council and downtown business association."

The Times: Local property taxes consistently rise over the years. With respect to municipal taxes, in what ways can the council affect tax rates for township property owners? (Two-thirds of the tax bill goes to the township Board of Education, one-sixth to county government and one-sixth supports municipal government in the township.)

Mr. Festa: "Cut the number of people employed by the municipality." He said the position of township manager would be the first to go, in favor of an elected mayor. Sub-contractors could be hired for services, equipment, snow plowing, street sweeping and others, he indicated. "They call it free enterprise."

Mrs. Samuel: She said that between 1992 and 1998, township taxes have gone up 34 percent. School taxes have gone up 15 percent. County taxes have gone up 17 percent. She said ratables should be developed on Route 22 and in the downtown. She would eliminate township cars for most municipal employees and implement mileage reimbursement or lease vehicles. "We have to look at salaries and benefits packages. Small town government should be looking to streamline their operations."

Mr. Bromley: "Privatizing services. I think it's something I'd like to know about. I want to know what the numbers are." He particularly questioned the \$100,000-plus annual salary of the municipal manager and the average salaries of \$95,000-a-year for five top municipal employees.

Mr. Donatelli: "I don't think anybody needs a car to go to work." Cars cost the town \$158,000 a year, he said. He suggested a motor pool for municipal transportation, and said when a Department of Public Works (DPW) of employee needed a vehicle they draw from the pool.

Mrs. Iammatteo: "The fact that we have shared services and keep the services residents have become accustomed to — and grants too. We control only 16 percent of the tax bill, we can't control the rest of it. Volunteerism is what helps keep the taxes down." She highlighted municipal responses following the Labor Day storm.

Mrs. Coronato: The township got \$1 million in grants, she said. "That helps to keep the taxes down." She emphasized the amount of services the township provides.

Mr. Johnston: For example, he said, with 20 people in the volunteer fire department saves \$1 million a year, "that's 10 tax points." He cited a *Star-Ledger* report that showed an average township house increased in value

CONTINUED ON PAGE A-10

Business Owners Quiz SP Council Candidates

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of residents revealed to him that "the community's appearance is a big stumbling block." He proposed re-zoning in order to bring offices to the downtown and increase activity in the district.

Democrat Bromley said developing the so-called "hedge" area along Park Avenue "is a viable option," explaining that it opens up the possibility of creating "fluid commerce in the downtown."

His running mate, Franklin Donatelli, agreed, saying, "We should have conformity within the downtown. I think (the hedge area) should be developed."

Republican Coronato said her main concern about additional development along Park Avenue was whether there was adequate parking. "I don't think just adding more stores is the solution," she claimed. "I don't think the government should recruit businesses," either, she said.

The candidate cited the reclaimed area around the South Orange railroad station as a potential model for the Scotch Plains downtown. Reportedly, the South Orange community replaced sidewalks with brick and widened walks for shoppers while narrowing roadways, in order to slow automobile traffic through the downtown.

Democrat Samuel said she favored development in the downtown but did not want Scotch Plains to become "a mall without a roof, like Westfield." Over the past few years, a number of major chain stores have moved into Westfield, either filling vacancies or replacing smaller, independent stores.

"What happened in Westfield is an example of a tragedy," Mr. Bromley said. "We have to control the mix (of stores.)"

Councilman Johnston said he was not interested in a special improvement district (SID) designation in the downtown, like the towns of Westfield and Cranford. A SID collects tax dollars and generally promotes a commercial center. "I think it takes away the freedom of the business community," the candidate remarked.

Republican Gail Iammatteo pointed to state grants that the currently all-Republican council will use for improvements to municipal parking lots behind shops along East Second Street, and described the township's residential nature.

Democrat Donatelli, who said he has lived in the township for 65 years, told Association members, "The downtown is one of my biggest priorities. Without a downtown, there is no town."

He added that "protecting the downtown from flooding is one of my concerns."

Scotch Plains residents have suffered periodic flooding from stormwater runoff upstream in the Watchung Mountains and is seeking protection, in part, through hotly contested catch basins proposed for the Watchung Reservation.

Democrat Bromley recommended council members "take a good, hard look at spending now" in the township, to see whether money is being spent "wisely" and whether there are funds in the budget to improve the downtown.

Councilman Johnston responded, "I don't think it's the municipality's duty to fund the improvement of the downtown." He commended SPBPA members for "taking the initiative" in the district currently, and said he was satisfied with the

downtown mix of stores.

Democrat Bromley said that planning was imperative, in order for the township's downtown to move forward. He also hinted at tax incentives for smaller businesses.

The two-hour question-and-answer session was not open to the public. It did, however, represent one of the few opportunities for candidates to gather during this election campaign.

The Westfield Area League of Women Voters canceled a traditional debate when the local Republican and Democratic parties could not agree on a questioning format for the program.

Similar League of Women Voters debates were called off in Fanwood and Mountainside when one or both parties refused to participate.

Business Association President Ray Pardon said the SPBPA group does not publicly endorse any candidate, but that he heard "some good thoughts and ideas" from candidates during the session.

\$5 Million Expected From HUD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Current township representative to the Revenue Sharing Committee, Thomas C. Douress was also involved in the start-up of the block grant program in the early 1970s.

"I remember the first year," he said, "we came back with \$2,500 for the Cannonball House." However, this past year, the Osborn Cannonball House was refurbished \$35,000 for repair and restoration, from the same program.

The Borough of Fanwood reportedly received \$90,000 toward upkeep on a carriage house.

The Village Green at the township Municipal Building complex was also created with H.U.D. funding, according to committee members. Grants for rehabilitation of privately-owned houses are covered under the grant program as well.

Homeowners who are selected, may take a low interest rate loan of up to \$20,000 or agree to a permanent lien against the property that would return money to the program when the property is sold. In this way, funds are recycled, according to township Committee member Jack Lay.

"It's a good program," he said. Scotch Plains usually has only two or three houses awarded grants each year, he added. Selected projects must be completed within 18 months and any unspent money is returned, he pointed out.

Another township Committee member, Joseph Duff said that last year, out of approximately 45 requests for grants in the county, 40 applicants received funding. Mr. Douress added that the doling out process allowed "everybody to get a piece of the pie."

Larger Union County cities like Union and Elizabeth, with a population of over 50,000, make a separate grant request to H.U.D. while the other 19 Union County

CONTINUED IN NEXT COLUMN

Fanwood Council Candidates Prioritize Issues, Platforms

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

improvements such as sewers and sidewalks."

According to Mr. Coronato, a constitutional amendment is also under consideration in Trenton that would permit municipalities to adopt an ordinance to "allow property tax deductions of up to 50 percent to people who participate in the volunteer rescue squad and fire department."

"It would provide two-fold help," explained Mr. Coronato, "for property taxes and volunteer forces. It would provide relief for people giving back to the borough."

Mrs. Schurtz is "frustrated by the Band-Aids" that have passed as efforts at property tax relief.

We need to look at the underlying issue, which is how to fund public education," she explained. "We need to hold Trenton accountable for 'state mandate, state pay,' and not allow them to use semantics to avoid paying for state-determined curriculum," she said.

Ms. Mitchell concurred, "We need to keep pressure on Trenton to come up with alternate ways to fund schools," she said. "(Change) will only come with a concerted effort by municipalities."

The Democratic ticket also backs efforts to enhance volunteerism, which Ms. Mitchell calls "my bailiwick."

"Towns like Fanwood don't exist without volunteers. The rescue squad and fire department are running into problems," she said. "If we have to knock on doors and ask...maybe that's how we make them (citizens) understand that commitment is as much (time) as they can commit."

In discussing other priority issues, Mr. Coronato focused on Fanwood's sidewalks as a "matter of public safety."

Noting that District Nos. 1, 2, 4 and 5 are "heavily dependent on sidewalks" for children to get to school, for mothers with strollers and for commuters walking to the Fanwood Train Station, Mr. Coronato called for a "five to 10-year plan" to replace sidewalks at the borough's expense.

When asked how Fanwood would fund such a program, he said, "There are probably some grants through the county and state. If (we) plan long range, it

municipalities must divide up any block grant funds.

"It's not a political organization," Mr. Douress commented. Awards are based on need and historical worth.

Mr. Lay explained that two representatives from each town make up the county Consortium which is further divided into four sub-committees that review requests. The sub-committees are Housing, Public Improvements, Facilities and Social Services, he said. Funds are released in June or July.

More Candidate Bios On Page A-10

Fleet Bank 2x8



Karen M. Schurtz
Fanwood Borough Council Democrat

Occupation — Teacher part-time at Union Catholic High School in Scotch Plains, Religion; Fanwood Council one term

Education — B.A. in Psychology from LaSalle University, Philadelphia; M.A. in Student Personnel Services, Kean University

Experience — Chair of Land Use and Historic Preservation; Planning Board Liaison; Fire Commissioner; Senior Citizens Liaison; representative to Municipal Alliance;

Platform — Property tax initiatives; long-term budget planning; favors publishing council and Planning Board business on the Internet



Wilfred P. Coronato
Fanwood Borough Council Republican

Occupation — Civil trial attorney with the Springfield law firm of McDonough, Korn, Eichorn & Boyle

Education — Graduated magna cum laude in 1987 from Catholic University in Washington, D.C. and received his law degree from the same university in 1990

Experience — Worked for former Governor Thomas H. Kean, former Congressman Matthew P. Rinaldo, and current State Senate President Donald T. DiFrancesco

Platform — Tax relief and borough services, sidewalk repairs and development of the downtown



Katherine Mitchell
Fanwood Borough Council Democrat

Occupation — Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey, Woodbridge

Education — Registered Nurse; Fanwood resident since 1954

Experience — Fanwood Library Board member and treasurer; Fanwood Recycling Assoc., Earth Day Committee; Environmental Commission

Platform — Good fiscal management; add parking downtown; reduce traffic speeding, install new street signs; honest leadership.



David B. Trumpp
Fanwood Borough Council Republican

Occupation — Employed with the Marketing, Customer and Patron Service of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority

Education — Graduate of Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School and of Alfred University in Alfred, New York. Majored in political science

Experience — Served for seven years as Information and Referral Liaison for the United Way of Union County

Platform — Tax relief, enhanced communication, downtown development and improvements



Jon M.

Brammnick

Republican First Ward Candidate for Westfield Town Council

Seven Candidates Vie For Three Council Seats

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A-6

\$39,000 over the past five years, and taxes went up less than that, "so you made money and lived free over that time period." Crime is down in the township, he said.

The Times: It has been proposed that the town spend an estimated \$600,000 on the former Scotch Plains Zoo property? Do you think this is the best use of the lot and tax dollars, and why?

Mr. Festa: "No, it was not the best use of the lot and no, it was not the best use of the taxpayer's dollar because it was condemned, it was privately owned. It should have remained private property. They're taking a [tax] ratable off the rolls. Then our taxes go up."

Mrs. Samuel: Responded that the township only has \$100,000 of county "pocket park" funds. "We haven't heard where the rest of the money is coming from."

Mr. Bromley: "There is no use plan for the property." He pointed to the steep grade and swampy terrain. "We don't think it should be developed. I don't think it's worth trying to make a museum out of [the Frazee house] on the property. It should be left as open space." He speculated that a walking path might be planned for the open space.

Mr. Johnston: He described the terms of the sale of the zoo, saying it must stay a zoo for five years after the sale. "The township does not want to be in the zoo business. We've taken steps to condemn the property and keep it a passive park. We've been approached about a number of other deals down there. The topography down there does not really lend itself to active recreation."

Mrs. Iammatteo: "We had a task force look at the best use of the property last winter. That was what their recommendation was to council."

Mrs. Coronato: "If you're talking about open spaces, this is the perfect place to preserve open spaces." She said they did not want to demolish what they called the historic Frazee house on the property. "We would like to make [the expense] to the taxpayer, nothing."

The Times: Reportedly, the fair market price of the property will be decided by a three-member court panel, in mid-November.

The Times: Current state law requires that contracts for township projects and equipment purchases be awarded to the "lowest responsible bidder." What's your take on this policy?

Mr. Festa: "It should stay just the way it is. There's nothing wrong with that. I bid on public projects."

Mrs. Samuel: "I think it's probably a good idea that the language be taken out."

Mr. Bromley: He noted that he was a contract lawyer. The lowest bidder can often be eliminated, he said, with some research into whether the bidder

can live up to the contract. "The job of the council is to put out that information so that any person in the community can make the same decision."

Mrs. Iammatteo: "I'd love to see the state come up with a better plan — come up with a better criteria." She said from working in state government, she knows that sometimes the lowest bidder does not always fulfill the requirements.

Mr. Johnston: He described what he called the "living hell" of working with lowest bidders and said it cost the township \$1 million more to finish work on senior citizen housing corporation. He said he wants "some flexibility for municipalities" to "weed out the less than responsible bidder."

The Times: Why are you running for office and what are your qualifications?

Mr. Festa: "I am running to reduce the taxes and make government more user-friendly." He said he raised his two children in the township, spent one term on the Board of Education and is Union County Chairman of the state Conservative Party.

Mr. Bromley: "The reason I started in all this... was Park Place." (This was a proposal for expanded shopping and a Drug Fair at the Park Place diner site that was shot down by objections from residents.) He cited dwindling land use in the township as a primary concern.

Mr. Donatelli: "I'm running because of my love of the town." He said he was born and raised in the township and was a registered Republican for 40 years before running in the election as a Democrat.

Mrs. Samuel: "Scotch Plains is a great place to live and I want it to stay that way."

Mrs. Iammatteo: "Giving back to the town."

Mr. Johnston: He said he lived in the township for 33 years and volunteered a lot of time with the Jaycees, served 20 years on the planning board, 40 years in the business world in management and councilman for five years. "I think I bring an important business perspective to the council because sometimes you get tied down in the bureaucracy and forget why you were even there or where you were going."

Mrs. Iammatteo: "I bring a different perspective. I ran a business, five bridal shops, for 13 years. I've been on the Board of Adjustment for 10 years. I served on the Board of Education — it's a policy-making arena." She said it is another way of giving back to the town where she has lived for 23 years.

Mrs. Coronato: She said she lived in the township for 21 years, was a "stay-at-home mom," and has been a very active volunteer. She served on the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment in the township and was appointed to the state Board of Human Services by Governor Thomas Kean. "I will be a full-time council person," she concluded.



Robert Johnston Scotch Plains Township Council Republican

Occupation — Management with Bell Telephone, AT&T and Exxon, retired

Education — Providence Country Day School; attended Hobart College

Experience — Township Mayor 1995; Council since 1993; Planning Board 20 years; Council Liaison to Senior Housing Corporation; 33-year resident

Platform — Control government expenses while maintaining fiscal responsibility; open government; continue exploring senior citizen programs



Franklin P. Donatelli Scotch Plains Township Council Democrat

Occupation — Superintendent of maintenance and engineering at Runnells Specialized Hospital, retired; General contracting business, retired

Education — Graduate of Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School Attended Florida Southern College

Experience — Author of three children's books; United States Army veteran, Special Weapons project; life-long township resident

Platform — Efficient, open, responsive and practical government; preserve the past; plan for the future



Gail Iammatteo Scotch Plains Township Council Republican

Occupation — Deputy Executive Director of the New Jersey Real Estate Commission. Formerly owned and managed five bridal stores

Education — B.S. from Richmond College/CUNY, Staten Island; 23-year township resident

Experience — Chair township Board of Adjustment; Union County Vo-Tech School Board; Cultural Arts Committee

Platform — Open government; open space and parks; control expenses while maintaining services



Geri Morgan Samuel Scotch Plains Township Council Democrat

Occupation — Former legal assistant

Education — B.A. in Political Science, Kean University Graduate of Westfield High School

Experience — Board of Directors, New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra; Executive board, Congregation Beth Israel, Scotch Plains; President YM/YWHA, Union

Platform — Efficient, open, responsive government; preserve the past; plan for the future



Paulette Coronato Scotch Plains Township Council Republican

Occupation — Homemaker

Education — Graduate of Ursuline Academy, Bethesda, Maryland; Associate Arts, Immaculata College of Washington, D.C.; 21-year township resident

Experience — Chair State Board of Human Services; President County and state Medical Society Auxiliary; Township Planning Board; Board of Adjustment

Platform — Open government, open spaces, ball field, control expenses and maintain services, preserve residential small town character of township



Tarquin Jay Bromley Scotch Plains Township Council Democrat

Occupation — Attorney in private practice specializing in labor and employment; former New York Assistant Attorney General; former Colorado Public Defender

Education — B.A. in Political Science, Fairleigh Dickinson University; Graduate; University of Denver Law School

Experience — Coles Elementary School PTA; New Jersey and American Bar Associations; American Trial Lawyers Association; Historic Preservation Society

Platform — Efficient, open government; preserve the past; plan for the future

Scotch Plains Building Permit Fees Eliminated For the Disabled; Street Name Change Finalized

By KIMBERLY A. BROADWELL
Specially Written for The Times

The Scotch Plains Township Council adopted an ordinance Tuesday, that changes the fee schedule of a building

and housing code that has been in effect since 1978. The amendment allows that no person with a disability will be charged for a construction permit that provides accessibility to a private home. It also states that no sibling or parent of a disabled person will be charged a construction permit fee to alter a home. The public hearing is scheduled for this ordinance on Tuesday, November 10.

Another ordinance was adopted on first reading that revokes an earlier ordinance adopted on June 23 to change the name of Clifford Street to Shalom Way. The earlier ordinance was revoked when residents objected to the name change. Under the new ordinance, both street names will be used to name the street. Anyone referring to this street can use either name or both names. Also, the ordinance stated that Congregation Beth Israel is authorized to change its street address 18 Shalom Way.

In other business, the township approved an ordinance to lease Jerseyland Community Park, located along Jerusalem Road, to be used for leaf dumping and composting.

In other business, Mayor Joan Papen encouraged residents to take their children "trick or treating" on Friday night instead of Halloween. She said traffic and safety were the issues. She said on Thursday, October 29, Scotch Plains will hold a Halloween Parade, starting at 6 p.m., in the municipal lot and ending at Park Middle School's parking lot. She added that a magic show is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m., after the parade.

In other business Councilman Marks, Liaison to the Fire Department announced a new program called HELP, which stands for Help Evacuate Little People. Councilman Marks said the program will allow residents to schedule an appointment with a firefighter, who will come to a home and offer advice on how best to evacuate that specific house, where to install fire detectors and carbon monoxide detectors, how to properly make a 911 call and also look for potential hazards in the house. Residents can call Chief Jonathan Ellis or the township to schedule an appointment.

This new lease agreement will run from Sunday, November 1, of this year to April 2000.

In other business, Mayor Joan Papen read a proclamation to mark the 65th anniversary of the College Club of Scotch Plains Fanwood. First Vice-President, Carol Rizzo, accepted the proclamation creating a college club week in November.

At the beginning of Tuesday's council meeting a moment of silence was observed for Cheryl Lee, the daughter of Robert Lee, a former Scotch Plains Township police officer.

"I'd like all wood, inside and out."



"OK."

"Oh, and I want it to be really secure."



"OK."

"Maybe some sidelights."



"OK."

"You know, a different design for the panes might be better."



"OK."

Introducing the Marvin Inswing French Door. For that strange and unusual situation when a client changes their mind.

Now as clients request more, you can give them more. The list of options goes on and on. Higher performance rating? Extruded aluminum clad exterior, and all furniture-finish wood interior? OK. Visit our showroom.



Made for you.



Call (908) 241-4338
100 Faltoute Ave., Roselle Park, NJ
Mon-Fri 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM
Thursday 7:30 AM - 8:00 PM
Saturday 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Suppliers of Quality Building Materials



SALE of Antique & Estate Jewelry

- Thursday, Nov. 5 – 10AM-8PM
- Friday, Nov. 6 – 10AM-5PM
- Saturday, Nov. 7 – 10AM-5PM

Jewelry with History & Romance • Many One of a Kind
From the Fabulous to the Moderate, All Priced Below Replacement Value

martin jewelers

YOUR PERSONAL JEWELER SINCE 1945



ACCREDITED GEM LAB American Gem Society

Ellen R. Ramer, Certified Gemologist Appraiser

12 North Avenue West • Cranford, NJ 07016
908-276-6718

NOW IN OUR 53rd YEAR