

Echoes ~ Sentinel

Knit cap sale opens to benefit library • 3



Warren man nabbed in child predator sting • 2

Visit echoes-sentinel.com for election results

TIFA SITE HOUSING PROJECT

Builder would 'tweak' plans, but won't go back to drawing board

By ALEX PARKER-MAGYAR EDITOR

LONG HILL TWP. - The prospective developer of 140 homes at the Tifa site in Millington is willing to tweak some of the finishes on the planned apartment buildings, but wholesale changes to the design appear to be off the table.

Several residents as well as some Planning Board members have expressed their dislike of the design of the 14 proposed apartment buildings composed of brick and blue panel siding, as well as the uniformity of the buildings. The roughly 12-acre site is located just south of Millington Train Station on the other side of the railroad tracks.

Prism Capital Partners, the lot owner and would-be developer of the site, appeared for its ninth virtual hearing on the application before the Planning Board on Tuesday, Oct. 17. With many of the meetings lasting three hours or more, the developer, board members and the residents who regularly attend the hearings have spent roughly a full day discussing the application



Photo by Prism Capital Partners,

A concept rendering shows one of 14 three-story apartment buildings planned for the Tifa site on Division Avenue in Millington. A planned swimming pool and courtyard are pictured in the foreground.

since June.

Speaking on the designs, Board Vice President Thomas Jones said "what we're getting is not quite what we were hoping for." He said residents are unhappy with the designs, but noted they were also unhappy with designs presented in 2017 that some are now calling for the developer to return to.

"We're about to be living with these buildings forev-

er and I want to be able to know when I look over there that I'm happy with the outcome. No disrespect, but I don't like the buildings. I'd like to work with the applicant to come up with a design that helps everyone" and finds common ground between the public and the developer, he said.

Mayor Brendan Rae, who sits on the board, said he felt it was too "late in the game"

to ask the builder's architects to go back to the drawing board.

"Tweaks, sure, we can certainly be in favor of that," he said, "but anything more than that, I think we're putting ourselves in a very, very bad position."

Board member Alan Pfeil agreed, as did Township Committeeman Victor Verlezza, who added he felt the housing project would ultimately be an improvement over the warehouse buildings on the site.

Robert Fourniadis, a senior vice president for Prism Capital Partners, said he would be willing to alter the finishes on the buildings if the board offered specific recommendations, but to craft new architectural designs at this point in the process would be "crazy."

"At the end of the day I don't think there's anything we could have presented here that would have made the residents happy," he said. "It's been clear from the beginning that they don't want this project, they don't like this project."

PLEASE SEE TIFA, PAGE 6

WATCHUNG HILLS REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Board will vote on mascot change

By ALEX PARKER-MAGYAR EDITOR

WARREN TWP. - The Watchung Hills Regional High School District Board of Education is to vote at its next meeting whether move on from its Native American mascot, but the "Warriors" nickname appears likely to stay.

The proposal reflects the consensus of students and community members expressed at a public forum and meetings of a 35-member committee formed to assess the mascot and nickname, board members said at a virtual meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 27.

The school's "Warrior" mascot depicts a Native American in a headdress in profile.

Board member Janine Potter, who serves on the special committee, noted there were some who do not want to get rid of the mascot, but most felt the high school should make a change.

"The overwhelming majority seemed to want to keep the Warriors name and they felt that there were so many other positive associations not related to the Native Americans that they felt it was OK to keep," she added.

Other board members who attended either the public forum or the committee meetings came to the same conclusion.

Board Vice President Gregory Przybylski noted the Lenape nation had been contacted several years ago about the mascot, and felt it was "offensive, and not in fact a respectful tribute to the Lenape people."

"I believe that communication has occurred and we have gotten a response," he said. "I think an important thing for everyone to understand is



Watchung Hills Regional High School is considering moving on from its school logo depicting a Native American in a headdress.

the fact that the onus is on us, and not on the Lenape nation, who are offended by the mascot, to make a change."

Superintendent Elizabeth Jewett said a resolution would appear on the agenda for the board's next meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 10, to move on from the mascot. The board voted in July to suspend any new uses of the mascot in school apparel or media while the school considered the change.

Board member Barry Hunsinger, who also served on the 35-member committee, suggested the school launch a contest through its art department to choose a new design, "and get people to put in their ideas to move forward and change the mascot, but keep the name."

"I think that's a tremendous way for us to build some school spirit and get the students really involved," Jewett agreed.

In addition to creating a new mascot or logo, the school would also ultimately look to change the names of its student newspaper, "The Arrowhead," and "Lenape Yearbook."

Jewett suggested the school engage the students of the newspaper club and yearbook club in the process when it reaches that point.

COVID-19 cases continue to climb

The rate of new COVID-19 cases in Morris and Somerset Counties continued to rise from Monday, Oct. 26, to Monday, Nov. 2, as the two counties saw their highest Monday-to-Monday increases in coronavirus cases since the first week of May.

Morris County saw 529 new, confirmed COVID-19 cases in the one-week span, up from 444 new cases last week, 308 new cases the week before and 168 new cases the week before that, according to the Morris County Office of Health Management. Four new coronavirus-related

deaths were also reported in Morris County, bringing the county to a total of 9,448 cases and 694 deaths throughout the pandemic.

The Somerset County Department of Health reported 244 new cases and two new deaths, after reporting 194 new cases last week, 152 new cases the week before and 102 new cases the week before that. The county reported a total of 6,106 cases and 520 deaths Monday.

Locally, six new COVID-19 cases were reported in Long Hill, according to the Morris County of Health Management, bringing the town-

ship's total to 87 cases since the outbreak of the pandemic in March.

The Somerset County Department of Health reported six new cases in Warren and three new cases in Watchung in the one-week span. The county reports a total of 216 cases and 16 deaths in Warren and 117 cases and 15 deaths in Watchung.

The local health department serving Warren, Watchung and several neighboring towns, the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission, reported Warren's total at 218 cases Sunday, rather

than the 217 reported Monday by the county. The commission reported 116 cases in Watchung Sunday.

No new cases have been reported among the four local long-term care facilities for the 15th consecutive week. Statistics from the facilities - the Chelsea at Warren (48 cases, eight deaths), Brightview Warren Assisted Living (19 cases, five deaths), Brandywine Living at Mountain Ridge (15 cases, one death) and McAuley Hall Healthcare Center (57 cases, six deaths) - have remained unchanged for nearly four months.

Scout recognized for remote tutoring during pandemic



By NICOLE ZANCHELLI CONTRIBUTING WRITER

WATCHUNG - When in-person instruction came to an abrupt halt in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students were forced to adapt quickly to the new normal: virtual learn-

ing. But for many students, this transition was far from seamless.

Fortunately, Alexia Speeney, a borough resident and freshman at Watchung Hills Regional High School, stepped up to the plate and established her own virtual math tutoring program

this past summer, earning herself the Girl Scout Silver Award.

"I wanted to address the fact that many young children are struggling with their academics right now," Speeney said. "Because of COVID-19, students were learning virtually for a large portion of last year and

may not have learned materials as well as they would have in the classroom."

The Girl Scout Silver Award is the highest honor a cadette can achieve. To earn the Silver Award, a Girl Scout cadette must identify an issue they care about, develop a project that ad-

resses the issue, and take action to make a difference.

Passionate about education, Speeney sought out students in grades 3-5 who needed help maintaining and improving their math skills. She posted

PLEASE SEE SCOUT, PAGE 6



NEW JERSEY HILLS MEDIA GROUP ©2020
One-year subscription in Morris County: \$130.
Out-of-area subscription rates available upon request.

INSIDE

Classified	13	Obituaries	6
Crossword	5	Public Notices	12
Editorial	4	Sports	11

VOL. 13 NO. 16

CALL US

News: (908) 766-3900 ext. 226
Classifieds: (800) 624-3684
Advertising: (908) 766-3900
To subscribe: (908) 766-6960

Publication USPS 024-925

Reminder:

In these trying times, all of our newspapers are available online. Sign up at newjerseyhills.com to have up-to-the-minute breaking news alerts sent to your inbox. Breaking stories on the COVID-19 pandemic are posted free of charge on our websites every day.



SUBSCRIBE 908-766-6960