

THE WOODBRIDGE NEWS.

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Township Turns \$7 Million in Land into \$87 Million for School Improvements

The Township of Woodbridge recently purchased two parcels of property in the Avenel section of town – the 54 acre site of the former Woodbridge Developmental Center (\$5 million) and an adjacent nine-acre piece of property from Conrail (\$2 million).

Recognizing the need for warehouse space in our area, and recognizing that warehouses provide jobs and significant tax revenue without being a burden on our municipal or school budgets, we went through a competitive process to obtain a developer for the site. Sixteen responses were received and the Township is now in negotiations with the selected developer and we expect to close title to the parcels in the very near future. We also said that educational and health care uses would be appropriate with a specific ban on residential development.

The selected developer has an option to purchase the Premier Die Casting site in front of the property on Rahway Avenue. This six acre site is a perfect location for a new and larger Avenel School 4/5, which is now one of the oldest schools in the Township with limited amenities for recreational uses by students. The developer has agreed to demolish the Premier building and clean it up to educational standards and donate it to the Township as part of their financial bid package and the Township will then donate the land to the Board of Education for the school site. The developer is also in negotiations to purchase other land near the site where the Township could potentially have a health care facility which would be a tremendous benefit to residents of not just Avenel but the entirety of



Mayor John E. McCormac, Caroline Ehrlich, Executive Director, Woodbridge Redevelopment Agency and Marta Lefsky, Director, Department of Planning & Development at the Woodbridge Developmental Center site.

Woodbridge.

The Township of Woodbridge has a unique relationship with our Board of Education in that we cooperate in ways not seen anywhere in the State of New Jersey. We perform multiple tasks for the Board including custodial services, computer operations, garbage collection, snow removal, tree trimming, parking lot paving and many others. The Board allows us the use of their fields and gymnasiums and we allow them to use our Woodbridge Community Center ice rink and indoor swimming pool and other recreational facilities.

We took that relationship to a new level from 2013-2015 with the passage of four ordinances totaling nearly \$40 million which allowed us to construct turf fields (football/soccer, baseball and softball), outdoor tracks, tennis courts, gymnasium flooring, elementary school playgrounds, auditorium seating and the Theater at Woodbridge Middle School. These improvements benefit not just school children but the entire

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“Ten Towns...
One Community”

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Welcome to Woodbridge:
The Best “All American”
Town Around



For the latest Township news, go to www.twp.woodbridge.nj.us

\$87 Million for School Improvements *Continued from page 1*

Woodbridge Township community which utilize the facilities.

The Township is paying the debt service on bonds issued to finance this work through our very successful PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program which we have offered to warehouses, power plants and other entities. While many people think that PILOTs mean these companies do not pay property taxes, nothing is further from the truth. PILOTs offer a tax discount, not an abatement, of 15-20 percent off the regular tax payments. In exchange, these companies clean up brownfield sites, aesthetically improve the property and offer hundreds of jobs to our residents.

By law, the Township keeps 95 percent of the revenues collected from these properties and nothing is legally required to be shared with the Board of Education. Nonetheless, the Township has always dedicated more than 25 percent of the monies from PILOTs to the school district. The Township will realize hundreds of millions of dollars from these projects over the next 25 years and we act responsibly by helping the Board of Education improve their facilities.

In addition to the aforementioned projects, we supported a \$57 million school district referendum in 2017 which provided funding for a new Ross Street School, a major renovation to Woodbridge Middle School, a total rehabilitation of St. Cecelia's School to house the students of Kennedy



Park School 24 which is now Oak Tree Road School #29, plus a major investment in school security and new technology. The referendum passed overwhelmingly as Township residents clearly support our school district. The Township agreed to again pay the debt service on the bond issues to support this new construction and improvements. This referendum was entirely paid for by the PILOTs and not by our taxpayers.

The financial windfall from a warehouse on the Avenel site of the two parcels purchased by the Township will be enough to totally support another referendum in 2020 in the amount of \$87 million. The Township expects to receive a sizeable (but still not finalized) cash payment for the sale of the land, plus nearly \$100 million in property taxes (through the PILOT program) over the next 30 years. That's just one warehouse project which can provide enough funding to pay for principal and interest on \$87 million in school bonds which will result in an enormous boost to our school infrastructure at no cost to our property taxpayers.

The money will be used for a new School 4/5 at \$35 million (with an additional capacity of 150 students) plus major additions to other schools. Two schools that currently have separate buildings will be connected into one structure. STEM labs will be constructed in our five middle schools. Computer technology will be enhanced. Interior improvements, including air conditioning, will be replaced or added to many schools.

The most important element of

this massive undertaking, however, will be the commitment of millions of dollars to school security. Nothing is more important than the safety of our children, faculty and staff when they are on school grounds. The school district and the Woodbridge Police Department will review security procedures used nationwide to determine the "best practices" and implement those in Woodbridge.

Aid from the State of New Jersey will likely be sizeable though it is specifically unmeasurable at this time until formal plans are submitted. It is not out of the question, however, that approximately \$10 million of the \$87 million will be paid for by the State.

The warehouse will not be a burden to the residents of Avenel as all trucks leaving the site will be required to go straight to the New Jersey Turnpike at Interchange 12 in Carteret and they will not be permitted to turn right on Rahway Avenue to enter into Woodbridge.

It should be noted that our purchase of the Woodbridge Developmental Center site proved to be fortuitous because in 2017 the State of New Jersey advanced plans to house a Prison for Boys on approximately seven acres of that site. Such an action by the State would have wrecked any plans to develop the property and been a huge detriment to all that the Township has been doing in the Avenel section of the Township – including the Station Village development by the train station with the Avenel Performing Arts Center (APAC) and Curtains Restaurant, the redevelopment of

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The Best Town Around *Continued from page 8*

and the "Tommy Toolbox" programs that provide FREE home repair and fix-up services to senior and residents with disabilities Township-wide.

As part of the effort to keep Woodbridge communities free of litter and debris, we are regulating the unsolicited distribution of advertising circulars, fliers, newspaper supplements and related advertising papers by creating a Township-wide registry.

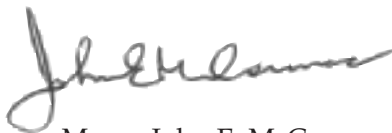
Residents can sign-up to limit the delivery of unwanted advertising flyers and circulars. The ordinance is a win-win for Township residents and homeowners tired of picking up dozens of unwanted, unsolicited and unsubscribed-to circulars and flyers that only end up as litter in the driveway, on the front yard, or in the street.

There are many other ordinances and regulations in place that Township inspectors are enforcing every day that truly impact our Quality-of-Life. There are regulations

that limit noise in our neighborhoods, ordinances that prohibit parking of trucks and oversize vehicles in residential communities and regulations that prohibit blowing grass clippings, leaves and debris into the street where wind and passing cars move it all over the neighborhood.

We enforce health requirements designed to keep the restaurants we eat at and the stores we shop in clean and safe. These are just a few of the ordinances and regulations that are in place that help make Woodbridge – and our neighborhoods and communities – better places to live and raise our families.

We're very proud of our Quality-of-Life in Woodbridge – which is why we are "The Best Town Around."



Mayor John E. McCormac

School Improvements *Continued from page 7*

multiple parcels on Route One including Mom's Diner, the Gem Motel, the Star Motel, the Woods apartments and several other unsightly structures that now are a thing of the past, plus the Greens at Avenel housing complex for residents with developmental disabilities.

There is a saying that "A community is known by its schools" and we as the officials of Woodbridge Township want to make sure that the physical infrastructure of our school system is the best it can be. We help our school district because it is the right thing to do. The whole community benefits from great schools and we do not worry about who pays for what as long as the end result is something that is good for all of

Woodbridge Township.

One warehouse can take our school district to the next level. One warehouse that will provide jobs to our residents with no noticeable impact to our community. One warehouse that will provide the revenues to impact each and every school in our district.

We paid \$7 million for land and turned it into \$87 million for our schools. We kept an unwanted development from happening. We prioritized the safety of our school children. We worked with our fellow elected and administrative officials from our Board of Education for the last six years to ensure that Woodbridge Township remains "THE BEST TOWN AROUND."

We want to hear from you...

Send us your pictures or stories for our next issue!

The Woodbridge News
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Mayor Mac Sponsors 2019 Shopping Spree Raffle

Raise Money For Your Group or Organization



WOODBRIDGE COMMUNITY CHARITY FUND
2019-HOLIDAY SHOPPING SPREE RAFFLE-2019

Woodbridge Community Charity Fund
"Holiday Shopping Spree Raffle"

First Prize: \$5,000.00
Second Prize: \$2,500.00
Third Prize: \$1,000.00

Woodbridge Township charitable 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible to purchase Community Charity Fund Raffle Tickets. Eligible Township organizations include (but are not limited to) school-sponsored PTO, art, music, theater, sports organizations, clubs, etc.; Township sports organizations and leagues; church groups; civic and community non-profit associations and organizations, and Township-registered 501(c)(3).

Minimum purchase: 100 Tickets, Individual Tickets: \$5.00

Please contact:
Tickets on sale Mon. - Fri. 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Mayor's Office, Municipal Building, 1 Main Street, 1st Floor 732-922-4015
Geraldine Mazurek (geraldine.mazurek@twp.woodbridge.nj.us)
Loretta Dowd (loretta.dowd@twp.woodbridge.nj.us)
Megan Kushpa (megan.kushpa@twp.woodbridge.nj.us)

All Raffle Tickets are due back to the Mayor's Office on Monday, Nov. 18, 2019 (No Exceptions). Tickets will not be honored after the Return Deadline.
NO REPLACEMENT OF LOST, MISPLACED OR COPIED TICKETS OR SHOPPING SPREE GIFT CARDS.

"Shopping Spree Raffle Winners" will be announced at a Public Drawing
Wed., Nov. 27, 2019 at 2:00 P.M.
Woodbridge Center Mall (Center Court)
Winner need not be present to win.

JOHN E. McCORMAC, MAYOR
3-11-2019-10/19 - License # 2019-54