

The Allendale Press

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Free Speech Gives Boro Council Rough Time

Borough Attorney John Warhol was called upon at the Borough Council meeting last week to deliver an informal lecture on the perils of public life in our democratic system of government.

It came about when William Hughes of W. Allendale Avenue rose to express what he termed a "citizen's opinion" about the affairs of the borough. In the course of his remarks he attacked the Council itself for not taking the lead in policy matters and charged that in effect the Planning Board was running the town.

He directed most of his ire at Francis Scafuro, Chairman of the Planning Board, whom he charged with.

(1) having solicited complaint letters from residents of Crescent Heights pertaining to drainage problems that had not been dealt with by the developer of the area.

(Mr. Scafuro denied this charge from the floor later.)

(2) implied that Mr. Scafuro had used his position as chairman of the Planning Board to get conforming rights to his non conforming 4-family residence on W. Allendale Avenue.

Mr. Scafuro denied this charge too and said that he was still living under a non conforming residence that he had "inherited" when he bought the house 11 years ago.

(3) said that Mr. Scafuro had, through his office, benefited himself and a "chosen few."

In a rebuttal charged with emotion, Mr. Scafuro denied this accusation also. He asked for evidence of proof of the charges to the audience. (Mr. Hughes offered none.) He said (Please Turn to Page Five)

PTA Holds Opening Meeting Wednesday

Stressing that a warm and friendly welcome awaited new members, Mrs. John Lothian, president, announced last night that the first meeting of the Allendale PTA would be held on Wednesday, September 23 at 8:15 p.m. in the public school auditorium.

Mrs. William Dixon, Chairman of Home Room mothers and Mr. George Smith, membership chairman, will be on hand at the registration desk to greet newcomers.

Plans of all Committee chairman for the coming year will be heard.

In special concern over the safety at the beginning of the school year, the Safety committee, headed by Mrs. Walter Kunisch, will present Sgt. Neil Flynn, a member of the Glen Rock Police Force. Mr. Flynn will describe the plan adopted by Glen Rock, which has been so successful, featuring inspection and licensing of

SECOND TRY FOR WATER WELLS

Water Commissioner Elwood Critchley reported that although the test wells dug on borough property south of the recreation park did not bring in a new source of water, more tests will be taken in the area.

Mr. Critchley said at the Council meeting last week that he was disappointed that the wells did not come in, but not too discouraged because the Artesian Well and Equipment Company reported with reasonable assurance that water can be found some other place in the area.

If these tests prove fruitless it may be possible to tap water on some other piece of borough property Mr. Critchley said.

Water usage in the last 3 months has been twenty five per cent greater than in the same period last year Mr. Critchley reported. Seven million gallons a month have been used and this is just about what the pumping system has been able to handle.

Police Chief Robert Wilson said that the "no sprinkling" ban was still in existence because lawns are in pretty good shape due to recent showers. If the ban were lifted, he said, the drain on the existing water supply would be too much.

The Chief said it was perfectly all right to use water to soak new shrubs, wash cars, or for any modest project, but asked residents to continue to be cautious in the use of water.

Issue Proclamation



Mayor John Tucker

Mayor John Tucker, proclaimed the week of Sept. 20th to Sept. 27 as Girl Scout Drive Week. Mrs. J. R. Foster is the chairman of the Drive. Your full cooperation and generous support is urged to bring about a successful conclusion to this drive.

WOMAN'S CLUB TO HOLD FOOD SALE

There will be a Food Sale from 10 to 12 Saturday, September 19th, in the Griffiths Insurance Agency and we are hoping for the usual enthusiastic support of the public. All items will be home-made of course. Mrs. T. H. Zane and Mrs. H. L. Bogart are co-chairmen, and the committee consists of Mrs. S. J. Hadel, Mrs. C. B. Hutchinson and Mrs. R. J. Black.

PITTIS ROAD GIVEN 6 MONTHS

Dr. Godfrey Pittis was given an extension until March 20, 1954 on his \$1500 performance bond covering the improvement of Pittis Road, by the Borough Council last week.

One of the reasons stated by Dr. Pittis for the delay encountered in completing Pittis Ave. was the option taken by the School Board on a 9 acre tract of land which borders the road. The land is being held until the voters of the town decide whether or not they wish to purchase the land as a future school site.

When it is decided, following a special election to be held in October, what the town intends to do regarding the tract, work will proceed on the improvement of Pittis Ave.

REGISTER NOW FOR NOV. ELECTION

The Borough Clerk, Charles Vollaro, will register voters at the Allendale Fire House, Saturday, September 19, between the hours of 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. and on Tuesday, September 22 between 8:00 and 9:00 p.m.

Job Suit Against Boro Thrown Out Of Court

Pat Job's suit against the Borough Council was dismissed in Superior Court in Hackensack by Judge Donald M. Waesche last Friday.

Mr. Job said he planned to appeal the case he raised against Councilmen Frank McCord and Helen

Hanson, but would not try again to take court action against the Borough Council.

Mr. Job's case against the two councilmen for what he considered "prejudicial voting" was dismissed in July. Grounds for the appeal action are not known and Mr. Job said he was awaiting word from his attorney as to how he would re open the case.

Attorney Ralph Chandless of Hackensack, represented Mr. Job in asking that the court rule on the two contentious: (1) that the court determine that the zoning ordinance (which would have rezoned Mr. Job's Inn for business) wasn't legally adopted because of the votes of Councilman Frank McCord and Councilwoman Helen Hanson. (2) that the Borough Council must reconsider the ordinance.

Judge Waesche dismissed the case on both grounds saying that the ordinance required at least four votes in order to pass. (The law requires a two-thirds majority for passage of an ordinance not approved by the Planning Board). Mr. Job received only three affirmative votes, those of Councilmen Elwood Critchley, Perry B. Conklin and John Wattles.

The judge also ruled that the court had no right to direct the borough to consider any kind of ordinance. He suggested that if Mr. Job considered his property improperly zoned, then Mr. Job should take action against the existing ordinance.

(Please turn to Page Two)

NEED MAN POWER AT REC. PARK

Volunteers are needed to help lay Cinder blocks at the Recreation Park this Saturday and Sunday for the new toilets and locker rooms which the Cerebral Palsy Horse Show committee is building. Work on the foundation of the building has gone forward under Fred Thurston but he now needs help in erecting the walls. This building will be a decided asset to the park grounds and the people of Allendale.

The work is under the direction of Mr. Fred Thurston and Mr. Stewart Archibald who has worked hard in obtaining materials from various contractors either free or at factory cost. This building will be turned over to the borough free and clear after the Horse Show on Oct. 17 and 18.

Since this is for such a worthy cause and also a decided asset to the borough, we hope a large number of volunteers will show up at 10 a. m. to help.

FIRETRUCK COSTS FULL PRICE

All hope of the borough getting a \$6000 rebate on the new firetruck from the Federal government under the civil defense program vanished when Borough Attorney John Warhol told the Council that Allendale was not eligible for help under the program.

Mr. Warhol returned the application, which had been submitted to him for study, at the Council meeting last week. He said that the firetruck did not meet specifications. Aid is given communities in critical areas that purchase equipment in addition to what they already have, he said, Allendale bought the firetruck last year to replace its old one.

Also, Mr. Warhol said, the pumping equipment did not come up to specifications.

However, he did see a possibility of the borough recovering some money for the auxiliary equipment purchased, such as hoses etc., under the State Civil Defense program.

The Council decided to apply for aid from Trenton. The Borough will be advised whether or not any cash refund is to be forthcoming when the application has been processed.

WIDENING CORNER REQUIRES \$\$\$

An emergency appropriation is being applied for by the town Council in order to get the funds to round off the corner of Franklin Turnpike and E. Allendale Avenue.

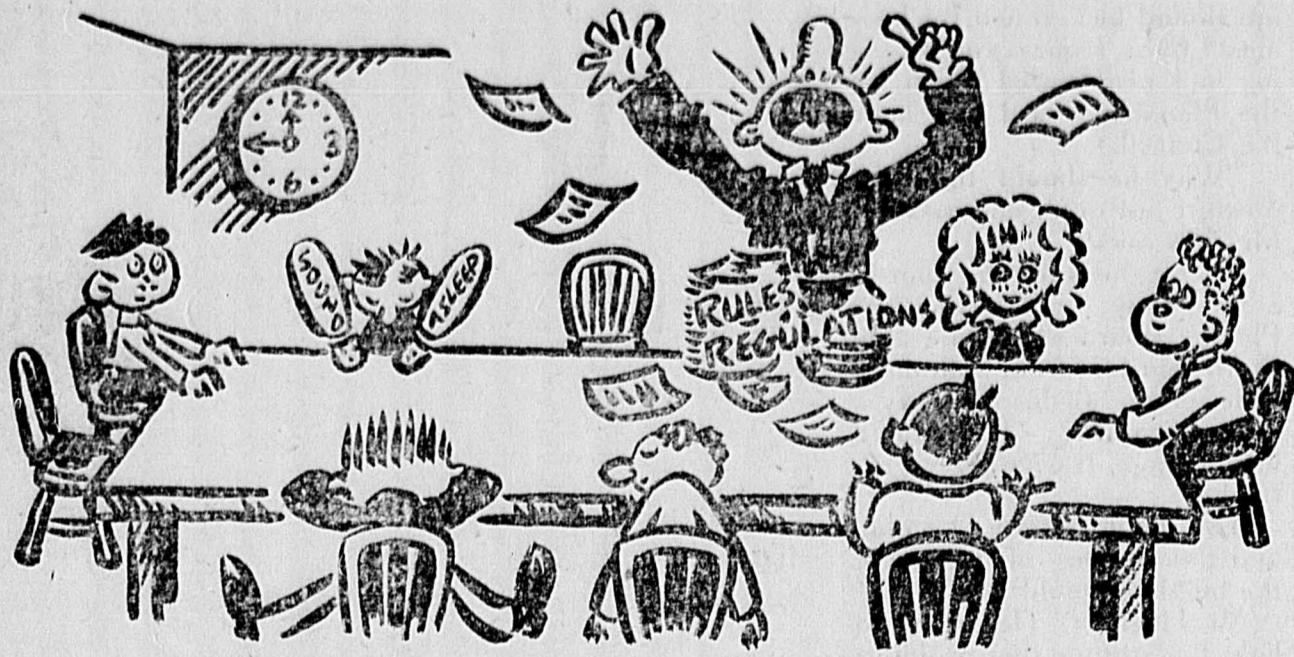
Borough engineers estimate the cost of improving the corner at \$41,000. Emergency funds are necessary if the Borough is to coordinate its construction work with that of the county, which is planning to correct the drainage problem on the corner.

The project has been stalled for many months awaiting the engineer's report which includes widening of the north west corner owned by Van-Houten and Sons Real Estate, and the south west corner by the library.

The work of the county has been held off until the borough could make clear its own plans. The Borough Council hopes that its application for emergency appropriation from the Local Government Board in Trenton, will be approved so that work can be done before cold weather sets in.

Borough Attorney John Warhol said that he would pilot the application through channels in Trenton as rapidly as possible.

KNIGHTS AROUND THE TABLE



Planning Board Confusion

The Planning Board was first established by ordinance May, 1944 and consisted of five members. In May, 1950 it was amended increasing the membership to nine. They included the following: the Mayor, ex-officio, a member of the Council to be named by that group, an official of the municipality to be appointed, and six citizens of the Borough also appointed by the Mayor.

Surrounding communities were in the throes of rapid growth so it was deemed advisable that Allendale make provisions for rules governing the improvements and the revision of the original Master Plan which had been approved during the administration of Mr. George Christopher. This original nine-man Planning Board was sired by Chairman Francis X. Scafuro during the Burnett Administration.

The citizen members of the Board were without experience or knowledge in the field of town planning. Mr. Scafuro recognized their incapacities and lack of experience and thereupon recommended professional planning consultants be employed for the purpose of drawing up a Master Plan for the community. Bagby and Pangburn of Upper Montclair, N. J. were retained as paid consultants by the Allendale Planning Board with the approval of the Mayor and Council.

January 1, 1951 saw the seating of Mayor-Elect Leslie L. Johnson on the Planning Board and he immediately collaborated with Mr. Scafuro, both in the appointment of Planning Board Members and the outline of the Master Plan. A concentrated effort was then put forth by Mayor Johnson who carried the ball and stimulated Planning Board activities. Endless meetings were privately held and decisions rendered and changed according to caprice and whim with the Planning Board members relying almost entirely on the suggestions and recommendations of the paid consultants. Wherever recommendations did not parallel some individual Planning Board or Council member's own personal desires, changes were made. However, by and large, the consultants' proposals were accepted.

In the early spring of 1951 some of the larger property owners were invited to attend a meeting to be held in the firehouse on Good Friday. Present were: Mr. Scafuro, chairman of the Allendale Planning Board, Mayor Johnson and a representative of the profes-

sional consultants. Various maps and graphs were laid out for this gathering. Plans were entirely in the embryo stage. Answers to questions raised by property owners were vague and unrealistic. It was evident considerable work was necessary before any kind of a clear picture could be presented.

Mayor Johnson, Chairman Scafuro, and the consultant were asked if another opportunity would be afforded these property holders to go over this plan when it had been whipped into better shape and before the Master Plan would be presented to the public. The request was made so that the same group present might have an opportunity to analyze its contents. These men concurred with the request. The property owners departed believing at the time the facts were presented changes could be made where they were warranted.

Later developments indicated these property owners were accorded a fast doublecross by Mayor Johnson and Planning Board Chairman Scafuro. No other meeting was ever held before the Master Plan was formally presented to the public. Always the answers to any question on planning reminded us of a form letter the boys sent home during their stay in a North Korean prison camp. Always everything was fine: There simply couldn't be any other side.

In no instance was any citizen present at the Good Friday meeting ever approached or contacted in regard to how this Master Plan might effect him individually. Nor were they ever extended the consideration of an inspection of their property.

Actually a well-meaning group of citizens serving as members of this important board — with absolutely no knowledge or experience in such vital matters as rezoning a community — ignored their fellow citizens by permitting paid consultants to map off sections of Allendale with red and blue lines representative of new areas to be rezoned with absolutely no thought given as to whom it might harm, the topography of the ground or what the property-owner may have had in mind for his holdings.

In midsummer of 1951 out came the Master Plan in its present book form, accompanied by a beautiful story, pictures, graphs and plenty of fanfare. The public was invited to attend meetings where the comprehensive plan was to be gone over page by page by

the public so that Planning Board members could be advised of desirable changes as evidenced by discussion of the issues and the objections presented.

Up until this time the taxpayers and property owners were asleep. The Planning Board presented the Plan. The public purchased these books and took them home for study.

At the first public meeting, the delicate bubble burst. True facts became apparent. Questions remained unanswered for its acceptance. The Mayor and Board members — backed up by the consultants — were unable to produce satisfactory reasons for many of their actions in connection with the Master Plan. Citizens were browbeaten and curtailed in their quest for information. Answers were ambiguous, as it became apparent the Planning Board members did not know the answers themselves. They had simply relied on the paid consultants who had produced a plan for a local Planning Board who did not themselves know what was in it or the reason for its production.

The meeting adjourned after Chairman Scafuro's personal public statement that the entire plan, paragraph by paragraph would be discussed.

As the summer wore on, continued meetings simply brought out more defects in the plan, some fantastic, some ludicrous, and others showing a complete lack of understanding of the situation. It became evident the members of the Planning Board, the consultants and some members of the Boro Council had already made up their minds to push for adoption of the Master Plan in spite of opposition or its consequences.

At the final meeting held by the Planning Board in the Grammar School on Brookside Ave., in the midst of a question an answer period, Mr. Scafuro turned to Mayor Johnson, who nodded his head in acquiescence. BANG WENT THE GAVEL. Mr. Scafuro declared the meeting closed, stated they had heard enough thereby repudiating his promise made to the citizens. The public had laboriously struggled page by page up to number 22. This was the end of the road. Subsequent pages numbered 22 through 39 were left for the birds.

On many occasions the Planning Board held special meetings. Only members knew where or when such meetings were to be held. A few revisions were made to meet specific problems which had caused

considerable criticism. Then a special meeting was held and the Master Plan was approved by the Allendale Planning Board under the astute guidance of Mayor Johnson, Councilwoman Hanson and Chairman Francis X. Scafuro.

Releases entirely for public consumption claimed the Master Plan was to be but a guide in the deliberations of the Planning Board. Actually it is being used as the Law of the community rather than a yardstick, as was its original intent.

The Republican Story

Francis X. Scafuro — a holdover on the Allendale Planning Board who realized the many powers our state legislators had granted to planning boards and a man fully in accord with the Master Plan's utopian dream — made and put together the rules and regulations that resulted in the utter demoralization of building in our community.

Because it was essential to have a man with a ruthless capacity to carry out the dictates of the political machine and its planning board, into the limelight stepped Wehner Baarek — formally the building inspector, privately he acted as the hatchet man for this aggregation.

In succeeding bulletins we shall take each of these men in his official capacity and show you just how they worked for and manipulated the Johnson Scheme. Indeed so successfully that in just two short years they absolutely ruled the community and succeeded in throwing it into political turmoil and confusion from which they are still endeavoring to extricate themselves and their political organization.

Suddenly our "Town Fathers" had apparently been pressured on the subject of zoning legislation. Zoning laws were to be fastened on to the people regardless of their wishes in the matter.

A new zoning ordinance had already been prepared. Yet when it came up for final passage, public sentiment was at such a fever pitch the Mayor and Council were forced to withhold passage in order that some modifications — however small — could be made to save face and allay some of the objections.

Many flaws were apparent. The People were aroused. It was most interesting to note that at a public session of the Council, the Mayor stated, "Everyone shall have the right to be heard" and he didn't care on what they spoke even including — "How onions are grown in Bermuda."

Mr. Johnson this time kept his word. It was evident from the first the pattern was set. The Mayor had already told us what to expect. Let them talk themselves out and then push the ordinance through. That was their plan. This rezoning was to be jammed down the throats of the people of the community simply because the members of the Council and Planning Board wanted it that way.

We believe the Mayor and Council seriously erred in this action by not carrying out the ascertainable mandate of the people.

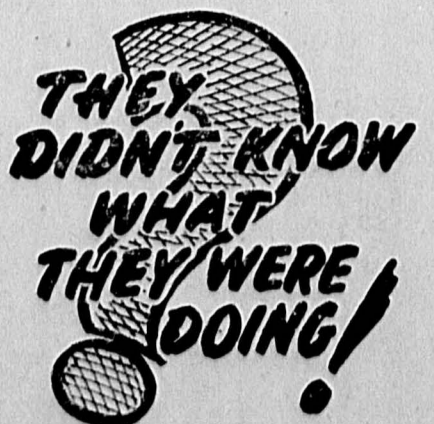
On one occasion when asked by a citizen how his individual problem should be handled and solved Boss Johnson replied, "Why, that's your problem". The cost of reprinting the Zoning Ordinance exceeded \$200, and the feeling is abroad in our community that never, since its founding, has a scheme of this kind been so arrogantly attempted.

(To be Continued)

THE CITIZENS COMMITTEE with the help of other interested individuals was able through aggressive action to compel either the deletion or the change in 29 separate items in the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. All of these corrections were for the benefit of the small individual home and property-owner who would otherwise have been burdened with stringent restrictions detrimental to their best interests.

Do you know the Planning Board rezoned a plot directly adjacent to the Erie railroad fronting on Orchard Street as class A residential.

The lot has a railroad siding running into the property. Public discussion corrected this Faux Pas.



Paid for by The Citizens Committee