



## Fanwood's Downtown Redevelopment Plan Moves Forward With Public's Participation

The Fanwood Downtown Advisory Committee will be holding its first of several public "Town Hall" meetings on Thursday, September 30th beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the 1st. Presbyterian Church on Martine Avenue in Fanwood. It is anticipated that these public meetings will provide additional input to formulate a final report and recommendations to be submitted to the Mayor and Council, before year-end, regarding the future development of the six-acre parcel referred to as the "downtown."

The committee was started in the spring of this year, by Mayor Colleen Mahr to gather and disseminate information to residents, business and property owners regarding the future development of the site. The nine-member Committee consists of a bipartisan group of Fanwood constituents including residents, members of the Fanwood Business and Professional Association, the Borough Planning Board, property and business owners. Joe Higgins, a licensed planner and former member of the Planning Board and current member of the Borough Council, is the Committee Chair.

The Committee's first meeting was held on April 29th and they have met twice a month since that time.

In addition to the volunteer committee, the Mayor and Council hired Schoor DePalma Consultants, in early June, to assist in the facilitation of this process.

Their fees are covered by a \$50,000 "Smart Future Grant" Fanwood was able to obtain through the NJ Department of Community Affairs.

The Committee's primary objective is, "to gather public comment and encourage community participation regarding the existing downtown redevelopment plan and formulate a community consensus regarding possible revisions or modification to that plan." Mr. Higgins stated that the Committee has and will continue to use every avenue possible (public meetings, surveys, visits with merchants, etc.) to receive public input.

The Committee has, to date:

- Used a booth at the June 27th Fanwood Street Fair to provide information and receive comments in written survey regarding issues of safety, image, general shopping habits and shopping preferences as it relates to the downtown. More than 100 surveys were filled out by Borough residents.
- Held two meetings in July with property owners within the redevelopment area to obtain their feedback regarding the existing



### A Message From Mayor Colleen Mahr

The Summer of 2004 is winding to a close - our children are back in school with many bright days of learning ahead of them while the rest of us settle into the coming Fall. I hope that all of you had a restful and relaxing break and are ready for the exciting activities going on in Fanwood for the remaining part of the year. My husband, Geordy and I and our son, Liam welcomed our newest family addition, Daniel George Mahr on August 27th, and we are thrilled to be raising both of our sons in such a fantastic, warm community.

As summer turns into fall, come familiar Fanwood events and some new ones. On September 12th our local Police Benevolent Association, Fanwood Fire and Rescue Squads sponsored our 2nd annual "Kid's Day." There was plenty of activity for everyone to enjoy including child car seat checks, finger printing and health and safety information.

The Fanwood Downtown Advisory Committee has also been busy working over the summer. Meeting with our downtown Business and Land Owners has proven to be very productive. A "town hall meeting" for residents to voice their opinion and hear about the outcome of those meetings will be held on Thursday, September 30th at 1st Presbyterian Church on Martine Avenue starting at 7:30 pm. We invite all residents to come and have a voice in what YOUR downtown will look like! For more information on the Advisory Committee please see the article inside this edition.

Sunday, October 3rd will bring us the 9th annual Fanny Wood Day. We will have plenty of live entertainment ranging from Jazz to Folk music and Irish Dancing by Deidre Shay. There will be plenty of contests and the recognition of our own "Fanny Wood" one of Fanwood's longest residents. There will be kids' rides and a variety of unique vendors to satisfy everyone's palette. I look forward to seeing many of you there!

Later in the month the Recreation Department will be holding their annual Halloween Parade starting at the Fanwood Library and ending

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## Fanwood Loves To Recycle Because Recycling Has Helped Save The Planet... and A Lot of Money

Fanwood has had a Recycling Center on North Avenue for 17 years. In all that time, the entire cost of the operation has been met solely by selling the recyclable materials brought in to the Center. No tax dollars are needed or contributed. The funds collected allow 20 individual non-profit organizations who are all members of the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Recycling Association to receive \$250 for each Saturday worked (\$13,000 per year) for a grand total of \$221,000!

The Recycling Center helps in other ways too. When the Kiwanis hold their annual Luminary sale, they get their paper bags from the Center. Because the Center accepts books for recycling, a Fanwood resident requested that those in good condition appropriate for fifth-graders be saved so that they could be donated to a poverty-stricken school (not in Fanwood.) Now those children have books to take home to read. The same school has joined the Campbell Soup "Labels for Education" program. The volunteers working at the Center take the labels off the cans and save them for the school.

Even the Municipal and County law-enforcement agencies have gotten into the act. When they had no place to assign low risk, minor offenders for "Community Service," the Center was approved for people on probation, welfare, or sentenced for minor infractions to serve their time recycling. Now, instead of jail, these people contribute 250 man-hours each month to the Center, close to 3000 hours per year.

Last, but not least, is the education of our children. The Center conducts many tours for students during which they are introduced to environmental efforts and the reasons recycling is important.

Fanwood has been a recycling leader long before recycling was made mandatory. No matter how inconvenient it may be for our citizens to pack their cars and trucks with discarded paper and bottles and cans and drive it over to North Avenue, our borough



**FANWOOD COUNCILMAN MICHAEL BRENNAN... passes the torch, or in this case the Fanwood Borough Code Book, to incoming Councilman Joseph Higgins. Councilman Brennan stepped down from the Council due to increasing responsibilities at his full time job.**

has consistently recycled a larger percentage of its solid waste than most New Jersey communities.

With genial cooperation, and an eagerness to contribute to a healthier environment, Fanwood residents will, no doubt, be supporting the Recycling Center for the next 17 years to come.

### Grants Awarded in 2004

- \$500 to the Fanwood Fire Dept for a carbon monoxide sensor
- \$500 to the Fanwood Rescue Squad for a defibrillator
- \$500 to the Fanwood Police for new electronic equipment
- \$950 to the Fanwood DPW for a new mower, tires and battery
- \$2,000 for new flags and mountings for downtown Fanwood
- \$500 to the Scotch Plains Fire Department
- \$500 to the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad

## Your New Representative Councilman Joseph Higgins

Joseph Higgins was elected to the Fanwood Borough Council at a special meeting held on August 3rd, following the unexpected resignation of Councilman Michael Brennan who was completing his first term on the council. Mr. Brennan, in his letter of resignation cited "additional responsibilities at work" and the challenges "to perform my duties as a member of the council to the degree that I demand of myself and that the people of Fanwood deserve," as the reasons for his sudden departure.

Mayor Mahr, regretted the loss of Councilman Brennan stating that "Michael's, vast experience and insight of the community have been extremely valuable during his time on the council. He will be missed."

Mr. Higgins is no stranger to the issues facing the borough. An active member of the community, during the past year he served on both the Borough Planning Board and as the Chair of the Fanwood Downtown Advisory Group. Mayor Mahr stated that "Joe's demonstrated leadership and ability to get the job done, made him an excellent selection to serve on the Borough Council."

A licensed land use planner, Mr. Higgins is currently employed with the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation having retired from New Jersey Transit after thirty-two years. A graduate of Rutgers University he possesses both an MBA and a Master's degree in City and Regional Planning. Involved in athletics for most of his life he played baseball for Rutgers University and the Union County Men's Baseball League. He is a member of the Union County Baseball Hall of Fame.

Married, he is the father of two, a daughter, Tara, a TV Producer and a son, Joseph, Jr. a Scotch Plains - Fanwood History teacher.

# Fanny Wood Day - Sunday, October 3 - Noon to 5:00P.M.

Whether you're famous for poems or pies, beards or bustles, there's a contest for you at the 9th Annual Fanny Wood Day.

The Fanny Wood Day program has been expanded to include more opportunities to be a winner this year. Complete details are available at [www.VisitFanwood.com/fannywood](http://www.VisitFanwood.com/fannywood).

- If you've lived in Fanwood a long time, consider entering the Ms. Fanny Wood contest. The prize will go to the woman who has lived the longest in Fanwood and is willing to represent Fanny Wood at the festivities. For the younger crowd, there's the Miss Fanny Wood contest
- If your fancy turns to fruit laden pies, the ever-popular pie contest is back again this year
- New this year is a beard-growing contest for the men in the area – whether they sport a seasoned beard or new growth.

## Redevelopment Moves Forward

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redevelopment plan. Also discussed was rehabilitation and construction plans for each property.

- Representatives went door-to-door in early August visiting the merchants to obtain their concerns and future business plans.

More details on the Committee's work and the results of the surveys can be heard at the September 30th meeting. Mayor Mahr strongly encourages those who are concerned or have comments to attend at least one of the meetings that will be scheduled. Future meetings will be publicized well in advance.

For those interested in reviewing the existing redevelopment plan it can be located at the Borough's website [VisitFanwood.com](http://VisitFanwood.com).

If you have any questions or comments regarding the existing redevelopment plan or the work of the Committee, you can e-mail Mr. Higgins at: [joegapper@comcast.net](mailto:joegapper@comcast.net).

## A Message From The Mayor

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at LaGrande Park where prizes will be awarded to our costumed participants. A great tradition that seems to grow in size every year!

I would like to send a friendly civic reminder out to all our residents to remember to vote on November 2nd - if you need to register or will be unable to get to the polls on election day, please drop by Borough Hall to complete the appropriate forms. Voter registrations are due by October 1, 2004 and absentee ballots must be mailed no later than October 26th.

And let's not forget December with our annual arrival of Santa at the Fanwood Train Station followed by delivery of Christmas Toys to your front door by Fanwood's Fire Department.

For detailed information about all of these events and other upcoming activities, stay informed by logging on to our web site at [www.visitfanwood.com](http://www.visitfanwood.com) or our own TV35.

## Meet Your Borough Council: Councilwoman Donna Dolce



I am pleased and humbled that the citizens of Fanwood have given me the privilege and honor of serving the community as their Councilwoman. I learned, as a young child, that giving back to the community was the greatest gift that we could give. I have spent a lifetime in community service both professionally, working locally and nationally for the Girl Scouts, the YWCA and currently for the United Way; and as a volunteer. But it is the lessons learned as a Girl Scout that echo in my mind to do what I can "to leave a place better than I found it" and "to do a good turn daily."

My service to Fanwood started out in response to a call for volunteers to assist in the development of a Community Strategic Plan. I served for a three year period, first, to develop the process, than formulating the plan and finally leading the assessment of progress.

The strategic plan was written by the people of Fanwood, through a series of surveys, opinion polls and informal forums. The context of the plan is what moves me to ensure that Fanwood's future is built on its foundation.

The redevelopment of the downtown is of utmost importance; however, a community is built, not only on "bricks and mortar" but, by the many people that make up its culture. To that end, my energies are focused on three additional key areas;

- First, the development of a cohesive communications system - one that links localized news through our newsletters, TV 35, our website and the local press. Our community is much stronger, and safer, when people know where to get information AND how to get information quickly and accurately to their neighbors.
- Secondly, I am committed to ensuring that all of our residents, young and old alike, have economical, safe and family-oriented recreational opportunities available that reflect the diversity of our population.
- Finally, Fanwood's strength is its people. It is remarkable that we possess such a wide variety of skills, knowledge and abilities among our residents. Even more impressive is the genuine commitment to share these talents with our community. My goal, to see every resident engaged in building our community by being a volunteer, whether it is for one day or on an ongoing commission or committee.

With your help - Fanwood's future is in good hands and I hope that at the end of my term I will be able to reflect on OUR good work!

## Cultural Arts Committee Hosts 4th Annual Concert

The Fanwood Cultural Arts Committee will host its Fourth Annual Summer at the Bandstand Concert on Saturday, September 18th from 3:00 P.M. until 5:00 P.M.

The featured performer will be Mark Johnson, who is coming to Fanwood from Nashville, Tennessee for this special event. Mark has performed with legendary greats like Marianne Faithful and he has written dozens of songs for a variety of artists, including blues legend Paul Butterfield and Capitol Record's The Smithereens.

His songs were featured on Disney's companion CD to the hit movie Finding Nemo, entitled "Ocean Favorites."

He has won the BMI Best New Songwriter Award, and his 1990s classic "12 in a Room" received national attention when Musician Magazine gave it a full-page lead review. It has also been included in Goldmine Magazine's top 50 Power Pop CDs of all time.

Strong Recordings of Nashville is scheduling release of Mark's new CD next spring. Called "Green Summer Rain" the CD cover will feature artwork by internationally acclaimed Plainfield artist Maria Mijares, who will also be present at the concert.

Weather permitting, the event will be held outdoors on the patio of the Kuran Arts Center (Carriage House), and guests are invited to bring lawn chairs and blankets.

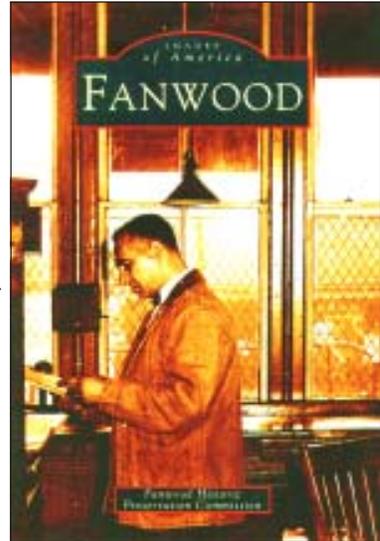
If the weather is inclement, the concert will take place inside the Kuran Center. Admission is free.

## Images of America Series Offers New Fanwood Book

*Fanwood, Images of America* a publication of Arcadia Press has been a labor of love by the members of the Historic Preservation Commission. This pictorial history of Fanwood provides the reader with more than 200 historic and recent photos of Fanwood depicting the community's link to the railroad.

With the diversity of Fanwood's social history on display, the book reveals the railroad as the basis for the continuity of the community. Clubs, schools, churches, libraries and celebrations are all a part of this fantastic publication.

*Fanwood, Images of America* will be offered for sale by the Historic Preservation Commission at Fanny Wood Day on October 3rd and at local bookstores and shops after that date



Fanwood Borough Hall  
75 North Martine Avenue  
Fanwood, NJ 07023

## Fanwood Community News

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