

Hopper & Prospect get four-way stop?

BY BRETT FREEMAN
For Suburban News

WALDWICK – The Borough Council will discuss placing a four-way stop at the intersection of Hopper Avenue and West Prospect Street after the state’s five-accident threshold was met last month.

This is one of many recommendations made by the Waldwick Police Department and will soon be considered by the governing body, Councilman David Marino said in an interview after the council meeting on April 10. However, he said it’s only one of several options and no decisions have been made.

This follows previous discussions by officials that led to the installation of reflective striping and double-sided stop signs at the intersection as well as “Stop Ahead” signs before both stops on Hopper Avenue. West Prospect is the through-street.

Once five accidents occur, the borough can apply for a four-way stop with the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Marino said. The intersection was also the site of five accidents in 2003, two in 2004, one in 2005 and three in 2006.

During the council meeting, Marino said he had met with the police, and in addition to the four-way stop, they are considering several options – one of which is stepped-p enforcement over the next couple of weeks.

One of the enforcement tools used by police is a traffic counter that is able to collect information on the time, frequency and speed of cars.

The police have been waiting for

the weather to break before installing a traffic counter at the intersection, Police Chief Mark Messner said in a phone interview last Wednesday.

Now that the snow-season has ended, police can apply an adhesive to the pavement, which would hold down the plastic tubing and the green metal box containing a computer with the counter. After the data is collected, the police department will be able to better determine when to patrol the intersection.

Police have also suggested installing rumble strips – the bumps that make a noise and are often seen before toll plazas.

Aside from the concern at the intersection, Messner said that between April 9-23, police will step up enforcement of the graduated driver’s license law in a coordinated effort with the Bergen County Office of Highway Safety, the Bergen County Police Chiefs Association and the Bergen County Traffic Officers Association.

“Every time you turn on the TV, there’s a carload of kids getting killed,” Messner said.

According to New Jersey law, teens aren’t allowed to get a basic license until they are 18 years old. At 16 years old, teens must be supervised by an adult, and at 17, teens can’t drive between midnight and 5 a.m., among other restrictions.

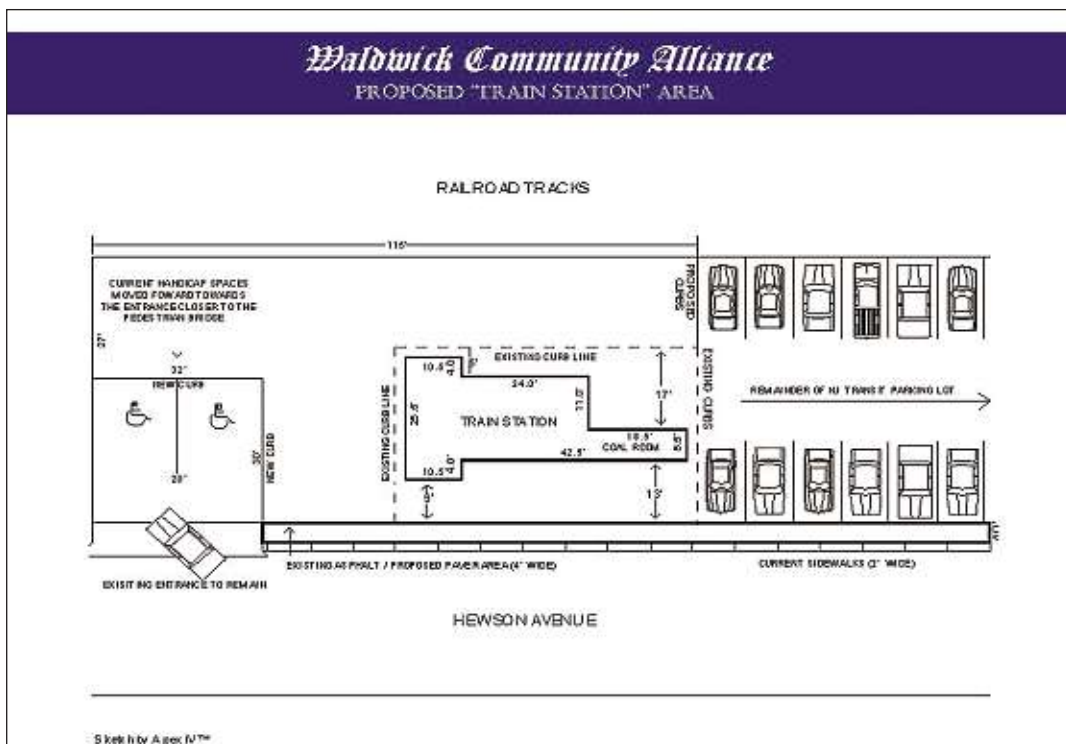
In addition to the increased enforcement of the graduated driver’s license law, police plan an education campaign, Messner said.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF WALDWICK COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

Five spaces would be eliminated and handicapped parking would be moved closer to the entrance and pedestrian bridge in a plan to renovate the vacant train station on the east side of the railroad tracks.



BRIEFS

Mayor will not seek a fourth term

Three-term Republican Mayor

Rick Vander Wende announced that he will not seek a fourth term on April 9, the deadline for candidates to file nominating petitions for the June 5 Democratic and Republican primaries.

Instead, Republican Councilman Dan Marino filed to run for the mayoral post. Incumbent Councilmen Thomas Giordano and Donald Sciolaro also filed, seeking their second terms on the all-Republican governing body.

No Democrats filed nominating petitions for the primary; Independents have until June 5 to file for the November general election.

In a telephone interview last Wednesday, Vander Wende said of his decision, “I believe in term limits. Every four years, I get everyone on council together and say if anyone is interested in the job, let me know and I’ll step aside. This year I was thrilled that Councilman Dan Marino said he’s like to run. That’s great. The job is bigger than the person. Much as I love doing it, I won’t stand in anyone’s way.”

Vander Wende was first elected mayor in November 1991, after serving on the council for two years. After two terms as mayor,

Alliance to lease train station

BY BRETT FREEMAN
For Suburban News

WALDWICK – Details are yet to be worked out, but the Waldwick Community Alliance received word on April 6 that New Jersey Transit (NJT) plans on leasing the borough’s historic train station building to them for 25 years.

Following that announcement, the Borough Council on April 10 endorsed the request of the Waldwick Community Alliance to lease the building, which dates back to the late 1800s and appears on the national and state historic registers.

“Without any official backing, NJT is a little hesitant,” Alliance Vice President Doug Cowie said in an interview Friday. He said New Jersey Transit wouldn’t want to lease the building to an entity that might fold.

The Waldwick Community Alliance is a group of local residents and business owners dedicated to transforming the borough’s historic train station building – abandoned since the 1970s – into a museum complete with

Once plans are finalized with NJT, Cowie said, the alliance plans on having a large-scale community meeting across the street from the train station at the VFW.

artifacts, photographs and train memorabilia.

The alliance has already performed basic repairs on the building, but has been awaiting approval from NJT to do more work.

So far, NJT has agreed to lease the building and its footprint, Cowie said, but the alliance would like to obtain five parking spaces surrounding the building for displays, benches and gardens.

“They’re always worried about parking,” Cowie said. So far, NJT hasn’t agreed to this request, but the alliance is resubmitting its proposal in hope of convincing them, Cowie said.

Over a four-week period, the alliance gathered data on the parking lot and discovered that between 11 and 21 spaces are always empty at any given time.

He also said the alliance is looking for NJT to help them out by paying for the restoration of sidewalks and lighting surrounding the parking lot.

Cowie said this is a reasonable request because NJT could always turn around 25 years from now and tell them, “Thank you for the renovations, but we want the building back.”

Once plans are finalized with NJT, Cowie said, the alliance plans on having a large-scale community meeting across the street from the train station at the VFW. So far, they have raised more than \$20,000, Cowie said, but they are seeking more donations for the restoration of the building.

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