

WALDWICK SUBURBAN NEWS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2007

All together now, say 'Cheese!'



PHOTO/SETH LITROFF

A parent capturing the moment on the first day at Traphagen School in Waldwick.

TRAIN STATION

Alliance close to securing 25-year lease

BY PHILIP DEVENTIS
Of Suburban News

WALDWICK —NJ Transit and the Waldwick Community Alliance appear to be close to signing a 25-year lease for the borough's historic train station.

The alliance is interested in returning the station — abandoned since the 1970s — back to its 19th century luster. Eleven months ago, it began negotiating with NJ Transit to assume responsibility for the refurbishment of the station and

the surrounding area. It hopes to turn the station into a museum, commemorating the history of the borough and railroading.

"I'm really ecstatic with the prospect of a lease agreement," Douglas Cowie, alliance vice president, said last week. "But I know better than to get too excited."

Cowie has previously accused Transit officials of being a source of misinformation.

"We never saw eye to eye till now," Cowie said. "Transit officials had always thought they were

doing us [the alliance] a favor for allowing us to lease their building, while we maintained we were doing them a favor by renovating their property."

Mayor Rick VanderWende said last week that he remains "cautiously optimistic" about the finalization of a lease agreement.

"Transit could be difficult to work with sometimes," VanderWende said. "But I'm absolutely thrilled with the progress that has been made. A 25-year lease was the goal all along, and a restored

station will make such a difference."

Transit spokesman Joe Dee verified that his organization and the alliance are making headway.

"Our discussions with the alliance have been ongoing and are now progressing," Dee said. "We are in the process of drawing up a lease agreement that will benefit the borough of Waldwick, the alliance and NJ Transit."

Dee said he could not talk about lease specifics until the agreement has been finalized.

Last week, a Transit engineer assessed the station for structural deficiencies, a necessary step before it can be turned over to the alliance.

According to Cowie, the evaluation turned out better than expected. Water had not seeped through holes in the roof, which the alliance had feared — and if it had, Cowie said, the building has enough ventilation to allow evaporation. The alliance is planning to

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What's in your locker?

Organization
is key.
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Born to gurgle

A new batch to
bounce on your
knee.
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