



WESTFIELD  
RESIDENTS  
ASSOCIATION,  
INC.

# WESTFIELD NEWS

Est. 1981

Edition #31 Volume 1

October, 2012

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2012**  
**ANNUAL MEETING (7PM)**  
**AND**  
**MEET THE CANDIDATES NIGHT (7:30PM)**

**FELLOWSHIP HALL OF THE THIRD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
**94 MINER STREET**

Not a debate, WRA's Meet The Candidate Night is an opportunity for the public to hear and talk personally with people seeking their vote. This year we will be voting for a representative for the State House and Senate, and for a representative for the U.S. House and Senate. We will also vote on a \$37M bond referendum, the money will be used to pay for construction costs necessary for Middletown to join the Mattabeset regional sewer plant.

Come meet your elected officials and those who are running against them! The full list of candidates is on page 3.

We will have a brief business meeting at 7PM, followed by the candidates at 7:30PM.

**The primary purpose of the business meeting will be to elect Officers for the WRA Executive Committee. See back page for how to become more involved in our organization.**

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***In this Issue:***

Meet the candidates!!	1
Remembering Arline Rich	2
The Candidates	3
Paving projects	4
Artie Schiemann	4
Municipal Matters	5
Middle Street Zoning Violation	5
Get Involved!	6
MEMBERSHIP FORM	6

**Westfield Residents  
Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 373  
Middletown, CT 06457**

**Mail to:**

## Arline Rich, WRA leader and tireless advocate for Westfield

Arline Rich died on July 20th, after a two month illness. Arline was the chair of the WRA executive committee for many years, she set an example of commitment and dedication that the current executive committee will have to work hard to match. She worked on Westfield matters until just before taking ill.

With her passing, the city lost one of its most dedicated participants in civic governance, because Arline's impact on the city was not simply restricted to Westfield. She was a decades long observer of municipal boards and commissions, and unafraid to do what she could to influence their deliberations. Her dedication, knowledge, and participation certainly influenced every decision that impacted Westfield in the last 20 years.

### Rational and Reasonable

Arline embodied the WRA model of participation, she was thoroughly non-partisan, it might be that none of us ever learned which candidates she favored at either the local or the national level. If Arline had an agenda in her opposition or support of any proposed land use, it was never pro- or anti-development, she simply wanted all development in Middletown to be rational and reasonable. For her this meant that every developer should adhere to regulations which are themselves rational and reasonable.

Arline paid more attention to more developments than anybody outside of the City Planner's office. She closely studied all proposals in Westfield. For nearly 20 years, she clipped the agendas of city meetings out of the newspaper, and if there was a subdivision on it, the Planner's office would know to expect her in the office. She would pore over the developer's plans with a ruler in one hand, and the zoning regulations in the other. No discrepancy would get by her, she paid attention to set-backs, to lot frontages, to the City's Plan of Development, to anything that impacted the city's wetlands, public safety, traffic, or tax base. She would carefully document any discrepancies with Planning and Zoning, and request that each one be addressed before approval was granted.



Recognizing the importance of the zoning regulations and the Plan of Development, Arline spent many hours reviewing any proposed changes to them. Our city's current regulations on land use are better for all the work she did on them.

### No NIMBY

Her persistent attention to the technical details was one of Arline's greatest strengths, and earned her respect from developers and planners alike. She was no "Not in my backyard!" activist, concerned only about one particular subdivision which might ruin her view. She consistently applied the principles of reasonable and rational to every proposal, whether it was in her neighborhood or not. Developers would often present their plans to her at Westfield Residents Association meetings, knowing that their chances of approval were immeasurably better if Arline approved.

### Official Honors

Arline served in an official capacity with the city on two occasions. In the early 1990s, after the Kennedy family donated the land on Country Club Road to the city, she served on the building committee for what Smith Park. In 2008, the mayor appointed her to the committee tasked with finding an alternative

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Meet The Candidates!

The following candidates are running for office in Westfield. Those in bold have confirmed that they will be attending.

### State House, 33rd

**Joseph Serra (D)**  
**Callie Grippo (R)**

### State Senate, 9th

**Paul Doyle (D)**  
**Joe Dinunzio (R)**

### State House 100th

**Matthew Lesser (D)**  
**Deborah Kleckowski**

### U.S. House, 3rd

**Rosa DeLauro (D)**  
**Wayne Winsley(R)**

### U.S. Senate

Chris Murphy (D)  
Linda McMahon(R)



## Bond Referendum. Mayor Dan Drew will explain the bond referenda

\$37M, for the planning, design, acquisition and construction of a force main and inter-municipal pump station in connection with Mattabassett regionalization project.  
\$4.8M for renovation of Eckersley Hall into Senior Center.

## Arline Rich: Exemplar of Civic Engagement

*(Continued from page 2)*

site for the Army's training center. She brought to the committee her immense experience with land use, her fairness, and the respect she had earned in the city; she played a critical role in the decision to put the Army base on Smith Street

In 2006, Arline was given one of the city's highest honors, the Mayor proclaimed an "Arline Rich Day", and she was given the Keys To The City, in recognition of all she had done for Middletown.

### A Lesson And A Legacy

Arline was completely focused on the practical. She paid attention to the regulations and the process by which developments are evaluated, and applied them to every proposal. She achieved universal respect with informed discussion of setbacks and lot sizes. She was utterly unafraid to speak her mind, and unafraid to change it. After having studied an issue, she would come to a conclusion and let all of those in charge of making the decision know what she thought. But though she was determined, she was never stubborn to the point of closing her mind. She listened carefully to alternative opinions, and if persuaded was willing to modify her position.

Finally, she was indefatigable. For years, she would

prepare for, and attend, two meetings every month of the Planning and Zoning Commission. This diligence and consistency, listening to every discussion on every little Planning and Zoning issue, gave her experience she could draw upon when there was a bigger issue, and it won her the respect of everybody involved.

There are two ways that her diligence and persistence improved developments. First, she found violations on developer's plans, and ensured that they were corrected before approval. Second, everybody involved in a development was more careful, knowing that Arline Rich was going to look at their work. The developer was less likely to cheat, the planning office was less likely to be careless, and the Planning and Zoning Commission was more likely to exercise diligence.

Arline Rich does not leave behind the kind of legacy left by others who have given to our city. There is no cul-de-sac in a subdivision with her name emblazoned across it, there is no plaque at city hall honoring her service as an elected official.

Rather, her legacy is scattered throughout the city, on the land and in our neighborhoods. If the setbacks and lot lines on the development down the street are correct, if the developer followed through on all of his proposed plan, thank Arline Rich.

## Westfield Paving Project Nearly Done

All Spring and Summer residents of the Boardman Lane, Saw Mill Road and parts of Bell Street have been anxiously awaiting roadway improvements. As of the end of September, these roads have had drainage installed, new road asphalt and concrete curbing. The drainage work should be particularly evident on Saw Mill Road which frequently could become impassable for a few hours after heavy rain storms. New drainage has been installed on Saw Mill from Atkins Street to Bell Street, and all of Boardman Lane.

Additional road work is finishing up on Glenwood road from Smith Road to East Street..



## Artie Schiemann, Lifelong Westfield Resident, Farmer, City Benefactor, Dies

The City knew Artie Schiemann as the man who so badly wanted to preserve his family farm as open space that he sold the development rights to the City for far less than they were worth, preserving his beautiful land on Bradley Street forever. Everyone who had the pleasure of meeting him knew him as a wonderful gentleman who shared his love and knowledge of farming. My family would stop by his farm to buy turnips--he would proudly walk out to his fields and pull up the best ones he had for us. Others tell stories about harvesting hay or potatoes with him, or about learning the life of a bee hive. He was driving a tractor until just a few weeks before he died, he was always eager to give a young child a ride through the fields.

Schiemann spent almost his entire life as a farmer in Westfield, leaving only to serve in Italy and North Africa during World War II. He died on September 14th at the age of 93.

In 2009, Schiemann was honored by the City for arranging for the permanent protection of his family



farm. He was praised as one of the kindest neighbors and gentlemen anybody has known. But he was also perhaps the most modest. When asked why he wanted to preserve the land, he told The Eye's Ed McKeon, "I did it because I thought about my mother and father and how much they loved the farm, ... And I did it because it made me feel good."

In Schiemann's obituary in The Courant, it is suggested that donations in his honor be made to The Middlesex Land Trust, which works to preserve land in our city and elsewhere in the county.

## MUNICIPAL MATTERS

### **A New Warehouse On Middle Street**

The large warehouse will be home to WinWholesale, a national company based in Ohio. They sell plumbing and heating supplies. The site was previously approved for a large warehouse, and the city has approved a tax abatement for WinWholesale,

### **Riverfront Planning**

If the referendum on the sewer plant is approved, the riverfront will be an area of active development. Already one developer has proposed a large luxury apartment complex. Although this is not in Westfield, it is such a vital part of our city, all residents should pay attention.

### **Wild Bill's**

Planning and Zoning approved Bill Ziegler's application to build and operate a working Funhouse Museum and Family Entertainment Center on Newfield Street. Ziegler said that his museum would not be just for the admiration of amusement park funhouse artifacts, but would be operational.

### **Habitat For Humanity**

Habitat for Humanity applied for an permit to build two houses on undeveloped land within the Riverbend subdivision on Tuttle Road. Many neighbors have protested the plan, in part because they were told that the land would remain undeveloped. The application was

withdrawn for technical reasons, but Habitat for Humanity plans to resubmit it to the Inland Wetlands Commission.

### **Floodplain Encroachment On Newfield Street**

The city served a Cease and Desist order on the owner of the Newfield Street Citgo station, because he was filling in floodplain and possible wetlands. According to reports, he wanted to build a small shopping plaza, and never filed an application to fill the lowlying land.

### **What Is Happening At The Old Friendly's?**

The Friendly's restaurant on Washington Street closed last year, and it will be the site of a Taco Bell restaurant. The entry and turn-around area around the restaurant will be changed, to improve the traffic flow.

### **Yellow Freight Site To Be Used Again**

The Yellow Freight truck transfer station has been unused for several years, since Yellow Freight was bought by Estes Trucking. Now Estes is applied for a permit to expand the facility with a repair shop. Apparently, the economics of international and domestic shipping now make the Middle Street terminal attractive for operation. The Planning and Zoning Commission approved this application.

## **WRA Monitors Middle Street Developer**

The WRA executive committee voted to send a second letter to the city regarding the apparent violations by the developer of the warehouse on Middle Street opposite the Galleria. This warehouse, developed by Geno Martorelli, has a very large mound of dirt near the edge of residential properties. This violates the site plan that was approved by Planning and Zoning.

After the WRA's first letter in April, the city issued a Cease and Desist Order, and the developer said that he would take care of the dirt. He has not.

This week, the WRA sent another letter to the city, asking for legal action to force the developer to comply

with the site plan. The city zoning enforcement officer has informed WRA that he will issue a second cease and desist order, asking for compliance with the site plan. If nothing is done 15 days (we don't expect it after all these years!), the matter will be turned over to the city attorney.

If this remains unresolved, the judge is likely to force the developer to pay for all legal fees, and to comply with the site plan as approved by Planning and Zoning.

### STAY ACTIVE IN WRA!

The WRA is over 30 years old, and we plan to continue as long as there is a need for residents of Westfield to stand up for what is right in our neighborhood (will this ever not be true?).

The WRA year ends in October. Please renew your membership, either with the form below or in person at the Annual Meeting on October 22nd.

We are effective only with your continued support.

It is only \$10 for a single membership, \$15 for a couple living at the same address.

### GET MORE INVOLVED!

The WRA lost a tireless chair when Arline passed away. Stephen Devoto and Jennifer Mahr have been serving as acting co-chairs since her death, but the executive committee has openings for new members. If you want to become involved in neighborhood citizen activism, please consider volunteering. Contact any of the executive committee members to find out what is involved.

We will elect a new WRA Executive Committee at the Annual Meeting on October 22nd..

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**RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP (IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY)!**

**The WRA represents the interests of all who care about of life in Westfield, and all who care about the reasonable development of Middletown. We hope we can count on your continued support. Please use the renewal application below.**

2012 Officers

Acting Co-chairs  
Stephen Devoto  
Jennifer Mahr

Vice Chair  
Stephen Devoto

Secretary  
Carolann D'Eon

Treasurer  
Ron Goodrich

Committee Members  
Ann Loffredo  
Cathy Branch Stebbins  
Jennifer Mahr

Alternates  
Bill Dougherty  
David Brainard

**WESTFIELD  
RESIDENTS  
ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**Address:  
P.O. Box 373  
Middletown, CT 06457**

**WRA MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**Please Circle One:    NEW                      RENEWAL                      DONATION**

Make checks made payable to **WRA**. Mail to: Treasurer, Westfield Residents Association, Inc., P.O. Box 373, Middletown, CT 06457.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mails: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_                      \_\_\_ \$10.00 per person

\_\_\_\_\_                      \_\_\_ \$15.00 per couple

Middletown, CT 06457                      \_\_\_ Amount of Donation

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_