

# Board approves development plan for packaging company

By Sam Bari

The zoning board, on July 22, unanimously approved a development plan for Environmental Packaging International to construct a commercial building at the corner of Narragansett and Clinton Avenues. A variance for six parking spaces was required. The motion for approval, read by board member Joseph Logan, restricted designated basement space to storage areas.

Mark Liberati, the attorney representing EPI, owned by Victor Bell, raised an argument about the number of parking spaces required by the ordinance. The plan allowed for 17 spaces, but the ordinance required 23. "There is an initial issue of how the building official calculated the space," he said. "The basement will be used for storage only. If we don't count basement space, we don't need the relief."

Liberati added that relief was needed for a handicap space within five feet of the building.

Lynn Bell, wife of EPI owner Victor Bell, said a larger building was vital to their continued success. "In order for us to stay in Jamestown and grow the business we have, we need a new office building that would meet the needs of the staff. It's too cramped for us to stay in." The Bells planned to give the building currently on the property to a woman from Clinton Avenue. The woman wanted to make the building affordable housing for her son.

Bell explained the construction would be a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certified building. LEED is a green building

rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. "The existing building on the corner will stay. The garage and single family home behind the corner building will be moved," she said.

When asked why the two buildings could not be joined, architect Shahin Barzin said seven design possibilities were considered, including attaching the two buildings on the lot. "It became a monumental building, and we did not feel it would be compatible with the surrounding area," he said.

In response to a question on why the applicant did not yet have sewer and water approval, Fred Brown explained a change of policy in the town. When an applicant needs sewer and water, the zoning board often needs costly and lengthy testimony. So to save the applicant money, it was the policy of the town to go to the sewer and water board first. Now, the sewer and water board requests that applicants go through the planning and zoning process first. "It doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me, but that's the way they want it," he said.

Architect Mary Meagher, who contributed to the design, said the shape of the existing building made it difficult to add on to it. "We would have to impede business during construction," she said.

John Murphy, the attorney representing High Tide Condominium Association in the building to the south, said the association was willing to enter into an agreement with the Bells that would provide an aisle for both properties.

Jack Brittain, owner of Jack's

Electric on Clinton Avenue, spoke in support of the project and the Bells. "They've been there long before me. I think they are a real positive role model for that district," he said. "They're part of the beautification of Jamestown."

In other business, the board approved an addition to a house on Hull Cove Pond Road. Mary Meagher represented Creighton and Anne Condon who were seeking to put a second floor on the structure. Board member Richard Allphin moved to approve the application.

The house was built in 1918 and had four bedrooms in those days, Meagher said. The property was already approved for a five-bedroom septic system.

The Condons were trying to maintain the qualities inherent in the area which included preserving the historic landscape.

Gayen Thompson, a neighbor to the west of the property, wrote a letter in support of the proposal. "I haven't had a chance to review the actual plans," he said. "But I have met with the Condons, and I think they have been very careful with what they are attempting to do." The motion for approval passed with a 5-0 vote.

In old business, the board agreed to reschedule Mark Bard's request for a variance to the Aug. 26 meeting. The board also granted a continuance for the David Piccoli application for variance.

In new business, the board, sitting as the Planning Commission, agreed to postpone the appeal of V.P. Enterprises to its Aug. 26 meeting.

# Hurricane

Continued from page 1

located in Cranston. When a hurricane warning is issued, the State Emergency Management Director contacts Tighe, who then activates the local team.

According to Tighe, the police station serves as central command with an additional command station set up at the fire station. After the hurricane warning is issued, a general meeting of all emergency personnel including, police, fire, emergency medical services, public works, town officials and shelter personnel is called by Tighe. During this meeting, each department receives directions as to how to proceed.

If the storm is considered a serious threat, police and fire department personnel will activate a mandatory evacuation process. According to Town Engineer Mike Gray, evacuations are based on the degree of threat the storm represents. "Drains are checked regularly to be sure they are kept clear, but realistically there is a point at which the drains will become overwhelmed by torrential rain," Gray said.

Gray, Chief Tighe, and Deputy Fire Chief Howard Tighe all expressed concern regarding the possibility of roads becoming overrun with water, especially in the low lying areas around the toll plaza, Mackerel Cove, and at Great Creek.

In order to prepare for this possibility, according to Howie Tighe, the island is divided into three separate areas: Beavertail, downtown and the north end of the island. Emergency equipment and resources are deployed to these three areas whenever a severe

storm warning occurs in order to avoid the possibility that emergency personnel would be unable to reach residents. "Early warnings are well established and overall preparations are very solid," the deputy fire chief said.

Concerns regarding accessibility extend beyond the island itself. "In the event that the bridges to the mainland are impassable, the island must be able to sustain itself for at least seventy-two hours," Police Chief Tighe said.

The Emergency Management Team met with the National Guard last Friday and designated eight landing areas on the island where supplies could be brought in if necessary. According to the Town Administrator, the National Guard is conducting briefings with communities and streamlining communications in order to respond more quickly and effectively if the town requires assistance.

Throughout the duration of a storm daily meetings of the Emergency Management Team are held and decisions regarding how to proceed are made. Melrose school serves as the primary shelter for the island while the Lawn Avenue School is utilized as an animal shelter. The upstairs portion of the fire station can also be used as a shelter if necessary. According to Deputy Fire Chief Tighe, residents with special needs and/or serious medical conditions should have an advanced emergency plan in place, including possibly establishing a safe haven off of the island. "Although temporary medical facilities are established at the shelter with volunteer physicians and nurses available, severe medical conditions are best handled off of the island during a severe storm," Howie Tighe said.

Residents can help emergency personnel by following safety precautions and by not walking around outside during a storm. The deputy fire chief recommends keeping a portable, battery-operated radio on hand in order to stay abreast of storm information in the event of a power outage.

An educational pamphlet regarding hurricane preparations for residents will be made available in August at the Town Hall, according to the police chief. Information and educational materials regarding hurricane preparation can also be obtained on the town website. During a severe storm the home page of the Web site, www.jamestownri.net, will contain a list of precautions and information for residents. Residents may also call the fire department at 423-0062 for further information.

The Jamestown Press Web site, www.JamestownPress.com, will also be updated with the latest news.

## Skatefest at Teen Center on Aug. 8

The Jamestown Teen Center is having a skateboard competition on Friday, Aug. 8, at the Jamestown Skate Park from noon to 6 p.m.

The competition will be divided into three age groups: under 8, under 14, and an all age's group. There will also be a "best trick" category open to all who participate. Cash prizes will be awarded.

For more information and to sign up, visit the Recreation Center, contact Melissa Minto or Debbie Tungett at 423-7261 or email to jamestownteens@yahoo.com.

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