

THE VOICE OF WESTERLEIGH

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERLEIGH IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY

P.O. Box 140-043 Staten Island, NY 10314 www.wisonline.org

January, 2008 Vol. 2 NO. 77 Circulation: 850

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to take this opportunity to wish each of our members and residents a Happy New Year 2008! The new year brings with it the hope that living in Westerleigh will continue to be desirable and that both young families and senior citizens will find our community one of the best on Staten Island.

This past month the City Planning Commission certified our rezoning application and Community Board 1 voted unanimously to approve the plan to allow only single family new construction in a large area of Westerleigh. In the next month the Society will testify at the public hearing to support approval of the application. The Society deeply appreciates the strong support of Councilman Michael McMahon along the road to finalization of the new zoning. We also are very appreciative of the support of Councilman James Oddo and Borough President James Molinaro.

The Westerleigh Improvement Society works very closely with all of our elected representatives and receives much assistance in helping to solve the problems of our community.

Members and residents are always welcome to attend the Society's monthly Board of Directors meetings to voice their concerns on issues which affect Westerleigh. The meetings are held at the Immanuel Union Church on the first Tuesday of each month, except July and August. Please visit our website at www.wisonline.org for more information.

This month our Membership Chairman is sending out renewal notices to all members who have not already paid their 2008 dues. Please send in your response as soon as possible. We are one of Staten Island's largest – if not THE largest – civic association in the borough. All of what we can do is only possible by your maintaining your membership.

BOOKENDS FOR THE YEAR

One of the hardest things about any idea is to gain first-hand experience from it. Westerleigh residents had a back-to-back opportunity to do just that last month by enjoying our annual gathering of community residents for an interactive evening of festive entertainment, and then to travel the next day to a sister community with a similar historic

Prohibition Era background to partake of their annual 19th Century celebrations.

December 8 was the Westerleigh Holiday Reception at Immanuel Union Church, with Mike Morrell presiding. A delicious catered buffet by Philip J's and lively music by Gary McDonnell encouraged grand camaraderie for dining, dancing and

conversation. Dan Rieu's ice breaker, Evelyn MacDonald's raffle table goodies and Chuck Curiazza's sing-along of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" spawned neighborly fellowship in the ambiance of the hall, which had been decorated by board members that afternoon.

The following day a bus group went to Ocean Grove, N.J. on the fifth-annual visit to that community's living history of the 19th Century. Participants could choose from an array of activities. Included among them were: a tour of the Victorian architecture of 12 inns and bed-and-breakfast establishments; a concert of holiday tunes by a bell choir at Bishop Tabernacle; a visit to a 19th century dollhouse and railroad exhibit; a visit to a stop, shop and browse curio, and leisurely stops at book and restaurant venues. The 21 members of the group also experienced an afternoon high tea with all the trimmings at the Lillagaard Hotel, where historic recipes and décor "were tasted" with aplomb.

Both events were poignant chances to cross-fertilize ideas of past and present relevance to our community and to continue developing the centrifugal force of insight that always evolves from education communication.



WESTERLEIGH REZONING APPLICATION

Community Board 1 unanimously passed a resolution approving the Westerleigh Rezoning at its regular monthly meeting on Jan. 8.

Ken Mitchell, chief of staff for Councilman Michael McMahon, read a statement supporting the resolution. Michael Morrell, Society president, urged the Board to support the application as well. Following the vote, Board Chairman Sean Sweeney asked the members of the Society present to stand and a hearty round of applause was given to our efforts to maintain the character of the Westerleigh community.

The application has also been reviewed by

the office of Borough President James Molinaro before being returned to the City Planning Commission for a public hearing. That hearing will take place Wednesday, Feb. 13 at 10 a.m. at the commission's hearing room at 22 Reade St., Manhattan.



DUES RENEWAL NOTICES SENT

Membership Chairman Richard Cirbus has sent notices to all members who have not already renewed their membership for 2008. We ask members to be as prompt as possible in returning the renewal notice, along with your check, in the envelope provided.

After all renewals have been processed, membership cards will be sent to all who have responded.

Please let us know if there is a problem with your membership and we will take care of it as soon as possible.



MAINE AVENUE 'HOOLIGANS'

Westerleigh residents, plagued for some time now by gangs of youths at the intersection of Maine and Glascoe avenues, got some long-awaited action when police arrested three teenagers and charged them with disorderly conduct and harassment.

On Jan. 21, reacting to a Staten Island Advance article the day before, as well as complaints from homeowners, Councilman Michael McMahon called a meeting at the intersection to bring attention to the problem that residents say has resulted in drinking and smoking, vandalism, litter, drug dealing and disturbances that cost nearby residents their quality of life.

'07 HOLIDAY RECEPTION

McMahon was accompanied by Sean Sweeney, chairman of Community Board 1, Deputy Inspector John Denesopolis, the new commanding officer of the 120 Precinct., Victoria Larsen of the Mayor's Community Assistance Unit and Mike Morrell, president of the Westerleigh Improvement Society.

Councilman McMahon heard firsthand the complaints from residents about conditions in the area and viewed the graffiti which covered a nearby fence. Referring to the individuals responsible as "hooligans," the councilman vowed a strong effort to eliminate the problem while working with the police and the Westerleigh Improvement Society.

Just a few hours later, his words became prophetic. Later that same day, a pair of squad cars descended on the area and arrested the youths.

While the situation is far from being resolved, President Morrell said it was a good first step. He also invited all of the residents in the area to the next monthly meeting of the Society where Deputy Inspector Denesopolis will meet with the Board of Directors to discuss the situation further



THIS AND THAT....

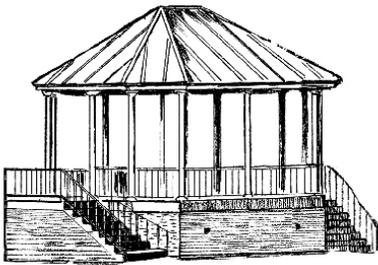
Please notify the Society about any traffic signs that are missing or defaced and street lane painting that is also missing or faded. We will forward the locations to the Department of Transportation for correction ... Road resurfacing has been suspended for the winter months. Jewett Avenue is slated for resurfacing when the program begins again in the spring ... Please use the Important Numbers List on the rear page of this newsletter for any public officials and offices you may need to contact.



Westerleigh Improvement Society, Inc.
P.O.Box 140-043
Staten Island, NY 10314

www.wisonline.org

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Serving the Community for 114 years

Important Numbers

that can be used by Westerleigh residents
for civic and quality of life concerns:

Borough Hall Helpline:
(718) 816-2000

120th Precinct:
(718) 876-8500

Congressman Vito Fossella:
(718) 356-8400

State Senator Andrew Lanza:
(718) 984-4073

Councilman Michael McMahon:
(718) 556-7370

Councilman James Oddo:
(718) 980-1017

Public School 30:
(718) 442-0462

Community Board #1:
(718) 981-6900

Westerleigh Improvement Society, Inc.
Officers:

President... **Mike Morrell**
Vice President... **Rick Wexler**
Treasurer... **Joe Ficara**

Secretary... **Evelyn Otten MacDonald**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please enroll me as a member of

Westerleigh Improvement Society Inc.

P.O. Box 140-043, Staten Island NY 10314

Annual Dues:

Regular Membership **\$10** Associate Membership **\$20**

Membership # (3 digit number from upper left of mailing label)

Name

Address

Phone# (optional)

email (optional)