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# The New Rochelle Sound Report

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A weekly newspaper serving New Rochelle

Friday, March 18, 2005

## Simone chosen for Church/Division development

By Kathy Gilwit

At a March 11 press conference held in the rotunda at New Rochelle City Hall, Mayor Tim Itoni announced the council's selection of Simone Development Company to build a mixed-use development on the current Church/Division parking garage site.

Flanked by Democratic members of City Council; city administration; and Simone associates, the mayor referred to the proposed development as the "newest addition to our surging housing and retail plans for downtown New Rochelle."

The \$175 million project calls for construction of a new 388-space decked municipal parking garage on the site of the present Prospect Street parking lot, in fulfillment of the city's original Request for Proposal; followed by demolition of the old Church/Division Street parking garage and construction of mixed-use development on the site.

A 34-story residential tower will rise on the approximately 385 condominiums, 25 of which will be duplex-style townhouses at the plaza level. The building will also encompass 44,200

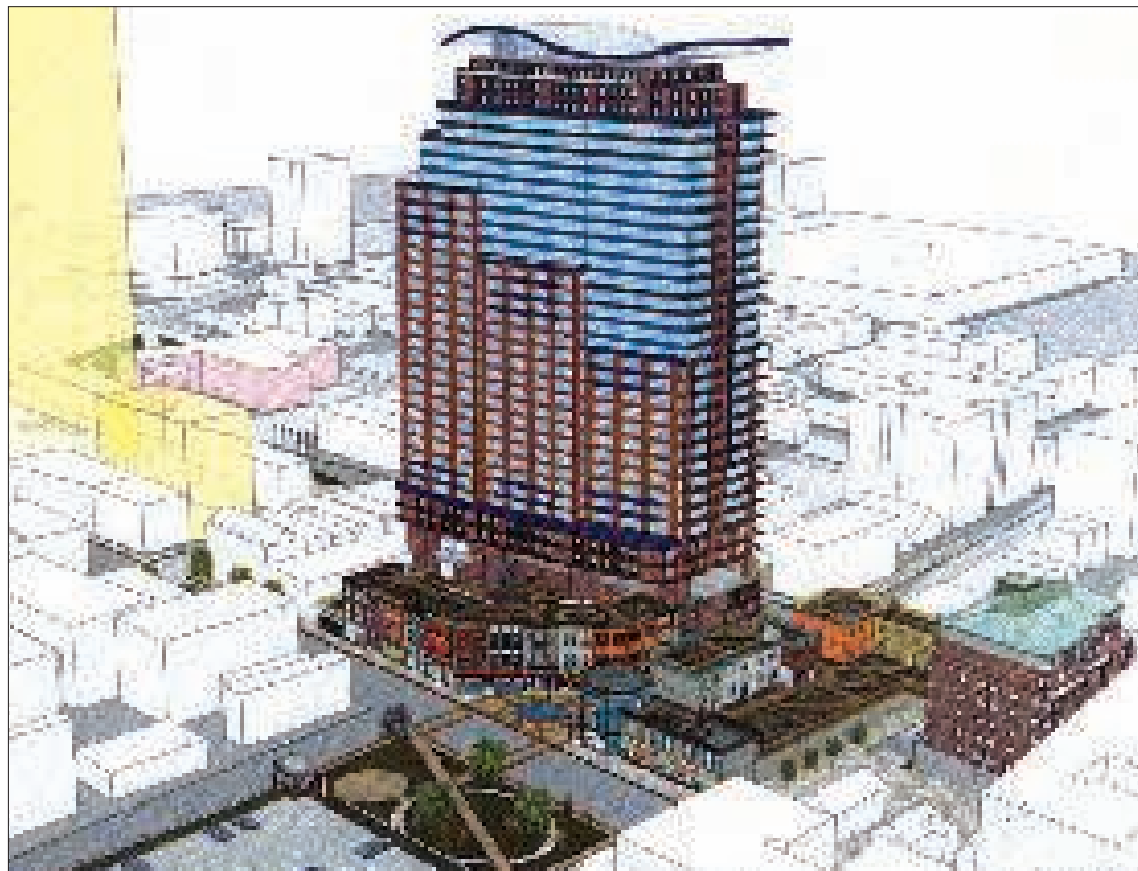
square feet of restaurant and retail space; and approximately 700 underground parking spaces for residents and some for retailers.

In response to council's request that Simone's more modern-looking design be modified to better fit the character of the downtown, the current proposal calls for glass and masonry as well as a distinguishing "wave" design on the top.

A second mid-rise residential tower, 5-8 stories with 30-50 condominium units and approximately 2,500 square feet of professional office space, will be erected on adjacent private property owned by Peter Bizzarro.

"We're going to expedite this as soon as possible...It's very doable," the mayor added in an interview after the announcement, noting that the project was planned in stages so that public parking downtown would never be compromised

At the city's request, the New Rochelle-based Simone Development has agreed to set aside approximately 20 units on site as affordable/workforce housing or, will make a contribution of \$700,000 to the city or



its designee for an affordable housing down payment fund. The fund would be made available to qualified New Rochelle residents purchasing housing anywhere in the city.

Lastly, at the city's option,

the company would enlarge the capacity of the new garage by 140 additional spaces or make a \$3 million contribution to the city

"We are very pleased and honored to have been selected

by the city for this vitally important and exciting new development. We are looking forward to working with the city to create a world-class residential condominium tower,"

See *Developent*, page 17

## From one Don to another

By Kathy Gilwit

After 45 years of dedicated service to the school district,



Donald Conetta



Donald Baughman

New Rochelle High School Principal Donald Baughman will officially retire on June 30. Baughman joined district officials at the March 15 Board of Education meeting in personally applauding the probationary appointment of Assistant Principal Donald Conetta to fill his position.

In an interview at his office

of 14 years, Baughman recently reflected on his decades of service - from his hiring in 1960 as a social studies teacher, through his promotions to department chair, assistant principal and finally principal; and highlighted the changes, challenges, and accomplishments of his tenure.

The student population has fluctuated over the past 40 years

from a high of 3,000 to a low of 1,800 in the 1980s, and now up again and over 3,000. From an academic standpoint, the biggest change has been going from a comprehensive high school to an all-Regents school, which now includes ninth graders.

"Those are significant changes," he noted, pointing out that the addition of a freshman

class "changes the dynamics of the school."

Noting that his tenure spanned the '60s and '70s, where student unrest was prevalent, Baughman said the building was more secure than ever before. "The students seem to be getting along better than (then)," he

See *Don*, page 12

### Assistant Principal tapped to replace Baughman

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## Westchester Youth Action Convention Set for March 23rd at Pace University

### Annual Conference Seeks to Create Teen Activists

Bullying, helping teens cope with stress, abstinence, addressing homophobia, conflict resolution and healthy relationships are among the topics teens will discuss at the 21st annual Westchester Youth Action Convention on March 23rd at Pace University in Pleasantville. More than 160 teens from seven high schools and 11 community-based organizations from around the county have registered for the conference, which will give them the opportunity to participate in a variety of peer-led workshops focused on giving high school students the tools they need to become successful community activists and problem solvers. The Youth Action Convention is being sponsored by the Westchester County Youth Council, a program of Family Services of Westchester, along with the Westchester Children's Association and Pace University.

"Every year the Youth Action Convention gives teens the chance to network with kids in other communities and share ideas about how they can make a difference," says Frank Marte, coordinator of the Westchester Youth Council. "Our goal is to educate them on the issues and show them the process, so they can see how they can accomplish change and have impact in their own communities." He notes that this year's registrants represent

both public and private schools from both urban and suburban communities.

Participants will begin their day with breakfast, then move to one of 12 different workshops. After the workshops, participants will regroup

for lunch, followed by a presentation of major advocacy issues and the chance to vote on a youth platform.

Family Services of Westchester is a non-profit organization working to strengthen and support families, children and individuals. FSW provides more than 16,000 individuals a year with a broad range of social and mental health services, including family and individual counseling, adoption services, parent skills training, programs for seniors and Camp Viva for families living with HIV/AIDS. FSW has distinguished itself as a leader in the field of youth programming through its Big Brothers Big Sisters,

AmeriCorps and Westchester Youth Council programs. The Westchester County Youth Council is a teen-run, multi-issue youth advocacy program. The mission of the WCYC is to empower teens to become an active "voice" and sounding board throughout Westchester County for issues of concern to young people. The WCYC consists of teen representatives from demographically diverse areas who meet monthly and interact with local governments, commissions, task forces and youth agencies.

The annual Westchester Youth Action Convention was begun in 1983 by The Westchester Children's Association. The WCA has been a voice for Westchester's children since 1914. The WCA works to identify the needs of the county's children and develops innovative policies and programs to meet those needs.

For more information call 937-2320, ext. 36



Mayor Tim Itoni and Joseph Simone, President, Simone Development

said Joseph Simone, President of Simone Development Companies.

"The City of New Rochelle is enjoying a renaissance and we're delighted to be playing a major role in revitalizing the downtown area. The magnitude of this upscale project will certainly aid in turning around the Main Street corridor," he added.

The relation of this development project to Main Street was an issue raised by Council Member Jack Quinlan at the March 15 council meeting, who in voting to approve Simone as developer for the site said he hoped the project's retail aspects would not detract from existing businesses. "I hope they work together," he said.

The vote to approve the designation of Simone was unanimous.

According to their website,

www.simdev.com, Simone Development has built a number of office, retail and industrial complexes, but lists no residential credits. A brochure handed out at last week's press conference contained inserts detailing Simone's development accomplishments included a sheet on one residential project in Purchase, a cluster of single family upscale homes.

Still, New Rochelle Development Commissioner Craig King backs the choice of Simone. "He's a very experienced developer. We have confidence he'll be able to build this project," said King, adding that he looked forward to "fruitful negotiations" in the 90-day period ahead wherein the city will draft a Memorandum of Understanding.

## News

*Continued from page 4*

awards, and special music and dance performances by New Rochelle students. In addition, student artwork will be on display throughout the evening. Music by the Rob Freeberg Big Band and a raffle, with prizes such as a \$500 travel voucher, jewelry, and sports tickets, will round out the evening's festivities.

Tickets to the Gala are \$100 per person. Advertising space in the Gala journal is available at a variety of prices. For additional information on purchasing tickets, raffle tickets or advertising in the journal, please call Donna Weissman at 576-4657.

Contact Angela Rios at 632-9109 ext. 25., or email her at [angie@csjinc.com](mailto:angie@csjinc.com) for further information.

### Thursday, April 7

From 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Hugh A. Doyle Senior Center, 94 Davis Ave. in New Rochelle, a representative from the New York State Attorney General office will be presenting a lecture on

consumer issues such as, "Home Improvement Scams", "New York's New/Used Car Lemon Laws" and "Tips on Charitable Giving, What You Should Know." For more information call 235-2363.

### Women's industry theme weekend

The Huguenot and New Rochelle Historical Association will celebrate Women's History month on Saturday and Sunday, March 19 and 20 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with activities centered on the theme "Women's Industry." The suggested donation is \$3 per person and \$1.00 for children under 12. Visitors can learn about women's roles within the home during our colonial past, including weaving cloth on a loom, spinning wool on the wheel and making "mini" quilts. Hands on experience will make these Colonial activities meaningful. For information, visit [www.ThomasPaineCottage.org](http://www.ThomasPaineCottage.org) or call 633-1776.

### Temple discussion set

Basic concepts of Jewish practices in the 21st century, especially among Reform Jews, will be examined in four, four-week

"minimester" programs, beginning April 7 at Temple Israel of New Rochelle, Rabbi Richard M. Prass, Associate Rabbi and Director of Education, announced. The Holocaust, in all of its ramifications, and an introduction to chanting the Haftarah - the book of Prophets - will round out the spring adult education offerings. "We are fulfilling the Temple's commitment to explore our Jewish identities and participate in the journey of Jewish education, goals set through the Re-Imagine project, a statewide endeavor of Reform congregations to enliven Jewish Education," Rabbi Prass noted. Two of the classes draw on ethical traditions and biblical sources in their consideration of "Gender Roles and Sexual Identity" and "Creation and Procreation." The Holocaust study will delve into both the prose and poetry literature that has provided testimony to that horrendous event, in an effort to understand its antecedents and impact on Jewish identity. Registration for the "minimester" courses should be made by March 31. To register for any of the courses, contact Ellen Egan at the Temple office (235-1800, ext 220). For additional information, contact Rabbi

Prass.

### "Passion" viewing

The Presbyterian Church of New Rochelle on 50 Pintard Ave. will have two DVD showings of Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ," in the church Guild Room on Sunday, March 20 at 12:30 p.m. following the 11 a.m. worship service. The second showing will be on Friday, March 25 at 1 p.m. The showings are open to the public and refreshments will be served. For information, call 636-2953.

**Deadlines for community news is noon on Fridays. Space is not guaranteed. We will try the best we can to include your listing. Send listings to [jchattman@hometwn.com](mailto:jchattman@hometwn.com).**