

Route 206 project at center of Byram mayoral election

Editor:

With everyone getting over the school board elections and with the June 7 primary election campaigns in full swing, the Byram election, scheduled for Tuesday, may be overlooked by even the most dedicated of voters. On that date, the mayor's seat and one council seat are to be filled.

By popular referendum, Byram Township adopted the non-partisan, council-manager form of government under the Faulkner Act in 1985 after a period best described as one of "political insincerity." To keep the communities with this form of government as non-partisan as possible, elections are held at times other than those of primary and general elections.

I have filed for re-election as mayor and Councilman Jim Oscovitch has done the same to succeed himself on the council. No one filed to run against either of us before the deadline to do so. While I believe that this is a sign of confidence in my performance as mayor and in Jim's dedication on the council over the past few years, one cannot presume that write-in campaigns will not be launched at the last minute by those who have disagreed with our stands on various issues. Therefore, it is as important as ever to exercise one's right to vote.

As you may know, the mayor and council have made some excellent professional appointments; we have funded an expansion of C.O. Johnson Park to make up for lost recreation fields; we have revised the master plan; we have obtained weak financial support from Trenton. We feel we have significantly improved the delivery of governmental services to our constituents.

I do not use the term "we" unadvisedly. Although we have our disagreements on some

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issues, not the least of which is the design for improving Route 206, the council and I are working together for the community we have all come to appreciate and are proud to call our home.

On Tuesday, I respectfully urge all Byram voters to go to the polls and vote. It is your right to vote and it is the privilege of those elected to serve our great community.

Eskil S. "Skip" Danielson
Mayor, Byram

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Editor:

I'm sure Byram residents all agree that our town is a great place to live, work and play. For several years, however, it has lacked focus, leadership, and a vision for the future. It's time to fix that problem.

I believe in a "Better Byram." I also believe Byram deserves a better choice for mayor, and for that reason, I'm asking my neighbors to write-in my name on the ballot Tuesday.

The ingredients for a better Byram are already in place — talented elected and appointed officials, and dedicated volunteers already serve our community. We need a mayor who exhibits leadership.

Elected officials and volunteers have spent more than 10 years seeking designation for Byram as a village center. This nearly one-square-mile area is now some of the most sought-after and developable land in Sussex County. Yet the township has been devoid of leadership that encourages new ratables, and our residents carry an increasing tax burden.

Our recently completed smart growth plan, village center ordi-

nance, and a new master plan all focus on the Route 206 corridor to become Byram's "Main Street." Rational, thinking people realize it is time to revisit the DOT's massive widening plan, yet some still advocate the hideous and unreasonably wide expanse of five lanes of pavement that will decimate the rural character of our town, offering only limited and dangerous access to current businesses and our village center. Our town's future requires a mayor with vision toward creating a vibrant business climate.

Our "Township of Lakes" depends on its vast forested tracts for clean water. In February 2004, our council was presented a tree protection ordinance that ensures proper management of our forests and tree-filled neighborhoods. More than 14 months later, it still sits unaddressed. Talk is cheap, but action shows dedication. Our environment demands a mayor who will focus on "green" leadership.

I have been a resident of Byram since 1997. As co-founder of North Byram Concerned Citizens, a community activist group, I have been an outspoken advocate for combining smart growth with preservation of valuable natural resources.

Focus. Vision. Leadership. That is what Byram needs today.

Scott Olson
Byram

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Herald welcomes letters from its readers for publication in the Editor's Mailbag. All letters, however, must be originals, not copies, should be limited to 300 words, and must be signed. Form letters will not be printed. Letters must contain writer's complete name, address and telephone number to allow for prompt verification. It is the paper's policy to publish names of persons sending letters.

Letters should be sent to: The New Jersey Herald, PO Box 10, Newton, NJ 07860.