A Residency Advisory Committee Meeting was held in the Library of the High School, One Post Road, Old Westbury, New York on January 23, 2008.

Present:
- Dr. Marjorie Toran
- Jeffrey Brandon
- Dr. Robert Root
- Adelaide Brinson
- Jacki Caines
- Diane Van Nooten
- Lawrence Zaino
- Grace Bryant
- Doris Cotto
- Lucinda Brandon
- Dr. Pless Dickerson
- Mildred Little
- Diane Holzer
- Chester McGibbon
- Dr. Constance Clark

CALL TO ORDER:

At 6:15 p.m., Dr. Pless Dickerson, President, Board of Education, called the meeting to order.

Minutes of the November 28, 2007 Residency Advisory Committee were distributed.

Comments and Discussion:

- Discussion on whether the schools have exceeded allowable occupancy numbers. It was pointed out the problem is not with occupancy but lack of ample space for all the programs.

- Discussion regarding the new apartment buildings being built in New Cassel. A demographic study of the additional housing could possibly allow for an additional 400 students into our schools. One building will have 52 units. Of those units, 28 have to go to New Cassel residents. People from the community have first preference. Discussion on the Horizon condominium. Some of the apartments do have families with children.

- Discussion on overcrowding in the schools. Dr. Clark said this was a misnomer. What we have is not sufficient space for certain programs, e.g., music and art. It is not an issue of classrooms being overcrowded. We just don’t have the space for all the curriculum specialty programs. Class sizes are not overcrowded. Many of the programs we now have in the schools were not required years ago.

- It was noted that in the elementary schools the gym is not a gym. It is a multi purpose room. The average class size is 22 or 23. Compared with other school districts in Nassau County, Westbury’s class size is a bit lower than average.
• Comments regarding putting together a plan to solve the illegal housing in Westbury. The problem is the overcrowding in some homes and the unscrupulous landlords. The problem is not only in New Cassel. Once we allow this problem to exist, then more will come. We need to work with our elected officials to solve this problem. New laws should be made to resolve this problem. It was pointed out that the officials should enforce the laws that are on the books.

• Discussion on the number of people living in a house legally can be determined by the square footage of the house. Suggestion was made to redefine what constitutes a family. Some laws need to be changed. The community needs to help solve these problems and the politicians need to do something. We all need to take responsibility. It was noted that at one open house showing, the house had an illegal kitchen in the basement.

• Dr. Dickerson noted that at the last Residency meeting, Joan Boes invited the committee to the Village of Westbury’s town meetings. This is something the committee should consider because the building inspector attends the meetings. Dr. Dickerson will contact Robert Troiano.

• Discussion on developing something full proof that a house has been inspected and that person is a bonafide member of the community. Something needs to be put in place with the Village and the Town of North Hempstead.

• Comments that a big issue in the school district is the illegal residents (those not living in the school district) trying to get into our schools. Regarding this issue, a question was raised if the district has the power to check these residents. Dr. Clark noted that the district does have home visits. Dr. Dickerson added that when the school receives information that the student is an illegal resident, the parents are being notified they will be getting a bill. The district is being very proactive in validating those not living in the district. It was pointed out that some are actually paying to use Westbury residents’ mail boxes.

• It was agreed that the community needs to ask the politicians to enforce the laws that are on the books. It was noted that the problem of illegal housing in the Village is growing. The committee agreed they can start out by having its next meeting at Village Hall. The Village meets the first Thursday of the month.

• Discussion on whether the Nassau Assessor said that Westbury School District is the No. 1 area with illegal housing or that Westbury has its fair share of illegal housing in Nassau.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:30 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.