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BARKING MAD AT BOROUGH HALL

Another Red Bank Council meeting, another ugly blow-up. And last night's was a Richter-scale doozie.



Mayor Ed McKenna

As usual, the main event was Mayor Ed McKenna v. Councilman John Curley, but two other council members and a borough resident got into the finger-pointing and shouting.

Through it all, Curley's opponent in the race to succeed McKenna, Council President Pasquale Menna, stayed on the sidelines before restoring an air of calm to the proceedings.

Last's night flashpoint, or at least the first of several, was the

question of whether or not William Meyer of Tinton Falls has long been misrepresenting himself as a Red Bank resident for giving his address as 12 Monmouth Street when he speaks at public forums, as he did last night.

Meyer owns the building at that address and runs a law practice from an office there. McKenna, also an attorney, has previously contended, in a letter to the editor of the Hub, that Meyer is "a fraud" for failing to instead identify himself by his town of residence.

Last night, Meyer raised objections to the borough's plan to pay \$2.4 million for a two-acre parcel of property on the West Side for the creation of affordable housing project called Cedar Crossings. (An ordinance clearing the way for the land purchase passed after the brouhaha. See the [Asbury Park Press](#) today for details.) Meyer cited two examples of case law to bolster his argument.

Up next after Meyer was Tony Busch of West Front Street, who angrily demanded an investigation into whether Meyer is illegally using his office as a residence. That brought a sharp rebuke from Curley.

"Mr. Busch, I'm glad to see you're an FBI agent. I'd like to see your credentials," he shouted. Meyer, he said, "is a taxpayer, and he has the right to speak." When Busch retorted that speakers are "supposed to" give their home addresses, Curley called Busch a "minion" of McKenna, and offered to get Busch a dictionary when Busch said he didn't understand the word.

McKenna jumped in, insisting that Curley allow Busch to speak, but the shouting continued. It was defused, or seemed to be, when Councilman

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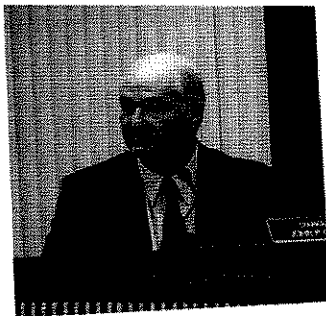
03.06 - Teddy Bear Tea at Navesink CC REGISTER NOW. On April 6, The Friends of the Monmouth Museum present a special event for kids 3 to 8 years of age, hosted at Navesink Country Club in Middletown with activities including a Teddy Bear Parade (led by 'a famous bear'), gourmet treats, 'a lesson on manners, etiquette and polite conversation' plus gift baskets and more. Click for phone/email contact info.

03.06 - Hidden Valor: Female Soldiers of the American Civil War In commemoration of the Civil War Sesquicentennial, historian Glenn LeBoeuf visits the Monmouth County Library's Eastern Branch for a presentation on the unknown number of women who disguised their gender to follow their husbands and relatives into battle — 'the strange stories of concealment, service in battle and discovery of these patriots without petticoats.'

03.06 - EYESIGHTS Photography Show at the Guild The Guild of Creative Art hosts the 8th annual Open Juried Photography Exhibition for its members (with a concurrent display of 'Small Treasures' by associate members). Juror awards will be presented (by guest judge Anrew Darlow) at 4p during the reception, and the exhibit continues through March 30 during regular gallery hours.

03.06 - RockIt! Live The kids of the classic rock conservatory (a program offered by the Count Basie Theatre Performing Arts Academy and directed by Bruce Gallipani) bring their best stuff to the big stage, in the climactic showcase event of the winter session.

03.06 - Teen Arts for Peace: A Juried Exhibition In conjunction with the Preview Party for the John/Yoko GIVE PEACE A CHANCE exhibit, The Monmouth Museum presents a display of artworks created by young Monmouth County artists 'with the theme of PEACE, reflecting and honoring the lifetime work of John



Councilman John Curley

Robert Bifani interjected that perhaps speakers in Meyer's situation "give both addresses next time."

The calm didn't last. Curley, apparently reading from notes or a prepared statement, ran through a litany of reasons for his objection to the land purchase, including an appraisal of the land's value that he questioned. But when he mentioned Bifani's family, who own an adjacent property to the

Cedar Crossings site, McKenna burst back in, shouting over Curley, who forged ahead.

"You lie," McKenna shouted. "There's *another* lie! You've just told five blatant lies!" McKenna called Curley a "used car salesman" who is "incapable of telling the truth."

"Tell me what you have done in four year on the council toward affordable housing," he shouted. "Absolutely zero."

Republican Councilwoman Kaye Ernst, who regularly sides with Curley, intervened, but that brought a rebuke from Democrat Art Murphy, who angrily told Ernst he was "up to here" with what he said were her constant interruptions of other speakers.

Bifani succinctly and without shouting chastised Curley for bringing his family into the argument.

Councilwoman Sharon Lee didn't say a word. Menna, too, chose to stay out of the line of fire until the combatants had spewed most of their venom. At that point, he calmly explained that he thought the legal analysis offered by Meyer was off the mark, and said he saw no reason to challenge the findings of a respected appraiser.

The borough's purchase of the land, which is to be fully funded by the state, is a "sterling opportunity," he said, to add to the borough's affordable housing stock.

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Posted on October 10, 2006 at 12:06 pm, filed under Government, Politics, Real Estate. Bookmark the permalink. Follow any comments here with the RSS feed for this post. Trackbacks are closed, but you can post a comment. Email this story.



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03.07 - Little Silver Planning Board
Time: 7:00 pm

03.07 - Tinton Falls Board of Education Workshop
Time: 7:00 pm

03.07 - Red Bank Planning Board
Time: 7:00 pm

03.07 - Little Silver Borough Council
Time: 7:30 pm

03.07 - Middletown Township Committee Workshop
Time: 8:00 pm

03.08 - Red Bank Environmental Commission
Time: 7:00 pm

03.08 - Rumson Borough Council
Time: 7:30 pm

03.08 - Tinton Falls Shade Tree Commission
Time: 7:30 pm

03.08 - Rumson—Fair Haven Regional Board of Education
Time: 7:30 pm

03.09 - Red Bank Construction Board of Appeals
Time: 4:00 pm

03.09 - Fair Haven Planning Board
Time: 7:00 pm

03.09 - Tinton Falls Planning Board
Time: 7:30 pm

03.10 - Middletown Landmarks Commission
Time: 7:30 pm

03.10 - Middletown Sewerage Authority
Time: 7:30 pm

03.10 - Red Bank Shade Tree Committee
Time: 7:30 pm

03.12 - Shrewsbury Shade Tree Commission
Time: 9:00 am

03.14 - Red Bank Borough Council
Time: 6:30 pm

03.14 - Fair Haven Borough Council
Time: 7:00 pm

03.14 - Tinton Falls Open Space Committee
Time: 7:30 pm

03.14 - Tinton Falls Historic Commission
Time: 7:30 pm

03.15 - Red Bank Green Team
Time: 6:30 pm

03.15 - Sea Bright Borough Council
Time: 7:30 pm

03.15 - Tinton Falls Borough Council
Time: 7:30 pm

03.15 - Little Silver Board of Health
Time: 7:30 pm