

NEWS

TOWNSHIP OF WOODBRIDGE



MAYOR JOHN E. McCORMAC

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STATEMENT MAYOR JOHN E. McCORMAC

Thank you for submitting the petition. Most of the questions raised in that document refer to the education system in Woodbridge and I know they are being responded to by Dr. Joseph Massimino, the Superintendent of Schools.

We wanted to provide a summary to you in addition to everything that we have posted on our Township web site and on our social media pages and in addition to information we provided at our most recent Township Council meeting that was videotaped and aired on our TV-35 station.

We became aware of the issue of possible links between victims of brain tumor(s) and/or brain cancer(s) and their attendance or employment at Colonia High School (CHS) through social media. We contacted the author of these posts, Mr. Al Lupiano, and offered our help. We also immediately consulted with the Township environmental engineering firm, T&M Associates, and came up with a plan to test both the air and ground inside and outside the school to check for signs of radiation that is generally agreed to be the primary source of brain issues.

We communicated our plans with various Federal and State agencies including the New Jersey State Departments of Health and also Environmental Protection, the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, the Center for Disease Control, the Agency for Toxic Substance Disease Registry and our own Township Health Department. We had the assistance of the offices of Governor Phil Murphy and Congressman Frank Pallone who is the Chairman of the Environmental Committee in the United States House of Representatives. All agreed that our approach was appropriate.

At the April 5 Council meeting, we passed an Emergency Authorization to provide \$450,000 in funding for the testing and analysis and we authorized a \$211,350 contract with T&M (which subcontracted some work to Cabrera Services) and actually started the work on Sat., April 9. Our contractors placed over 100 alpha track detectors throughout the high school in every classroom and office plus the gymnasium and auditorium. These canisters were collected on April 24 and sent to a laboratory for analysis.

Our contractors also commenced a study to obtain radiation measurements throughout the entire inside of the school building plus across all 28 acres of land outside the school. That testing was completed on April 30 and the results were also sent to a laboratory for analysis and we expect those results along with the canister results within three weeks.

The Township and Board of Education are also searching through all records related to the construction of Colonia High School in 1967, but after 55 years there is little available. Our engineers are also undertaking research on the site to obtain any other records that may be available regarding the school construction.

Finally the New Jersey Department of Health has had discussions with us about a plan to verify the information contained on the list of potential victims from social media which to date has not been validated. The DOH has a Cancer Registry and they have offered to work with us to gather appropriate information from those on the list through their medical professionals.

The Township cannot comment further until results are collected and analyzed with all of our consultants along with Federal and State experts and they will then be released publicly. We are taking this issue very seriously and we acted expeditiously and we are involving multiple entities who understand this issue to advise us along every step of this process.

It should be noted that at no time throughout this process over the last six weeks has any individual or local, State or Federal entity expressed any concern that the Colonia High School building or grounds were not safe for students and faculty. As public officials, public safety is our primary concern and it includes Health as well as Police, Fire and First Aid among others. We have been transparent about our actions and will do the same with our results.

Thank you.

Mayor John E. McCormac
Woodbridge Township