

THE VOICE OF WESTERLEIGH

Westerleigh Improvement Society, Inc.

PO Box 140-043, Staten Island, NY 10314

www.wisonline.org

JUNE 2018

Vol. 53 No. 3 Circulation: 850

Serving the Westerleigh community since 1893



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We've finally arrived at the warmer days of late spring and are absorbing all of the beautiful colors of our gardens. Many of us are busy enhancing our yards and making improvements to our homes.

During the month of May the Society held its Annual Meeting at the Immanuel Union Church. Michael Cusick, our NYS Assemblyman, was the guest speaker. A complete description of the topics discussed is printed in this issue of the newsletter.

The Borough President's Office has announced there will be a Sunset Concert in Westerleigh Park on July 26. The performers will be announced in the near future.

The Annual William Schorkopf Patriotic Sunday in Westerleigh Park will take place June 24 at 2 p.m. The South Shore Band will be performing for the 34th year. All are welcome. Refreshments will be served.

If any resident has an issue that they feel the Society can assist with, please contact us as soon as possible.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meeting begins at 8 pm
Westerleigh Talks at 7 pm

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2

Immanuel Union Church

693 Jewett Avenue
at the corner of Maine Avenue

~Everyone Welcome~

UPCOMING EVENTS IN WESTERLEIGH PARK

Sunday, June 24, 2PM:

WIS hosts Patriotic Sunday
with the South Shore Band

Thursday, July 26

Sunset Concert Series
performers to be announced

NYS ASSEMBLYMAN
 MICHAEL CUSICK
 ADDRESSES
 WIS ANNUAL MEETING



(left to right) Frances Genereux, Michael Cusick, Michael Morrell and Ed Malone.

“Westerleigh is my home. It is ingrained in me. My values come from this neighborhood.”

- NYS Assemblyman
 Michael J. Cusick

With those words, Michael J. Cusick, who has represented our community in Albany since 2003, began his address to the audience of more than 100 at the annual meeting of the Westerleigh Improvement Society on May 16 at the Immanuel Union Church.

And right from the start, it was obvious that not only was he comfortable among the people he grew up with, he was acutely aware of the problems and challenges facing his constituents, almost all of whom he counts as his friends.

For example, on the hot-button issue of tolls, he pledged to work to ensure that the discounts enjoyed by Staten Islanders on the Verazano Bridge – currently set

at \$5.50 for EZ Pass holders – would remain in effect, despite the ongoing efforts of many in the state legislature to rescind that benefit.

“I will make sure (our) colleagues understand the need to continue this discount ... they should expect big push back,” he continued, not only from him but the rest of the Island delegation.

In addition, he said, “we need a mechanism ... to keep



Staten Islanders from paying more than their fair share of the toll burden” that falls on drivers in this city in general, and this borough in particular. He pledged his continued efforts to make that a reality.

On another sensitive issue – MTA Express Bus plans – Cusick strongly urged

residents to attend upcoming meetings to let officials know “your complaints.” Only then, he said, can we hope the MTA board members will tweak some of the problems riders endure each day. “They are listening,” he assured the audience, and that is “encouraging,” but we need to continue the fight.

Addressing the soaring fees on water usage, Cusick said the problem is with the Water Board, which is stacked against residents. He has introduced a bill that will allow each borough president a representative on the board, although he himself admitted its passage was doubtful. “The city blocks it each year,” he pointed out, but vowed to keep fighting.

“This is why I work for you in Albany,” he said of his efforts to improve the quality of life throughout his district, “and I hope to continue to work for you in the future.”

* * *

The Assemblyman then took questions from the

Continued on page 3



THE NEWLY RE-DESIGNED WESTERLEIGH IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY WEBSITE WISONLINE.ORG

The Westerleigh Improvement Society recently revamped its website www.wisonline.org in order to have a fresher, more attractive look. Members and residents will find the familiar places for meetings and photos as well as all of our past newsletters online.

Now donations and dues can be paid through the website using the PayPal function.

Additionally, a links page featuring historic resources has been added. There you can access many of the *Westerleigh Talks* produced by Vice President Mark Anderson, which can be viewed on YouTube. ☺

WARDWELL AVENUE CAPITAL PROJECT MOVING INTO FINAL PHASES

With the warmer weather upon us the contractor for the Capital Project on Wardwell and neighboring streets will move into high gear. Much of the sanitary sewer work is underway and the next phase involves construction around PS 30 after the school year ends.

Massive storm sewer sections will be placed

in streets around the school and work will continue unabated until school reopens in September.

In addition, the contractor will employ more than one construction crew to expedite the work. The inconvenience will be obvious, but the results at the end of the project will make it all worthwhile. ☺

Continued from page 2



*NYS Assemblyman Michael Cusick
with WIS President Michael Morrell.*

audience on additional topics. They included:

HOV lanes along the Staten Island Expressway: Cusick

heard the usual complaints about drivers who violate the policy, the lack of rules enforcement along the highway, and the feasibility of either eliminating them all together, or extending them. He said he was working with governmental officials to fund a study to extend/complete the HOV lanes along the complete route, but offered no quick solution to the myriad of problems brought up.

On the issue of legalizing marijuana: Although he knows

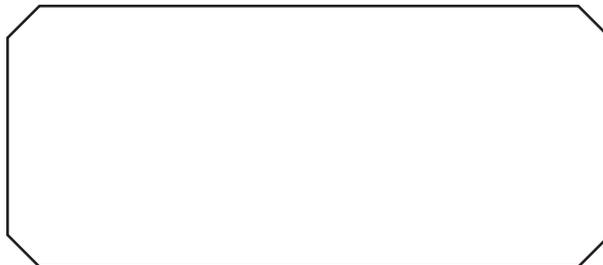
there are valid arguments in favor of legalization, he is not now in favor of legalizing the drug. "Now is not the time while we are fighting an opioid epidemic" he said.

Recent developments in the alteration of property has led some residents to express the desire that the Building Department adequately enforce current regulations. The Society offered to meet with the Assemblyman to seek ways to do so. ☺

Westerleigh Improvement Society, Inc
P.O. Box 140-043
Staten Island, NY 10314
www.wisonline.org

PSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID

Permit #99
Staten Island, N.Y.



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

- * U.S. Congress, NY District 11
Dan Donovan: 718-351-1062
- * NYS Senate, District 24
Andrew Lanza: 718-984-4073
- * NYS Assembly, District 63
Michael Cusick: 718-370-1384
- * NYS Assembly, District 61
Matthew Titone: 718-442-9932
- * SI Borough President
James Oddo : 718-816-2000
- * NYC Council, District 49
Debi Rose: 718-556-7370
- * NYC Council, District 50
Steven Matteo: 718-980-1017
- * Staten Island District Attorney
Michael McMahon: 718-876-6300
- * 120th Precinct: 718-876-8500
- * 121th Precinct: 718-697-8700
- * Community Board 1: 718-981-6900
- * P.S.30: 718-442-0462
- * I.S. 51: 718-981-0502

Westerleigh Improvement Society, Inc

EMAIL US AT: WIS_SI@YAHOO.COM

OFFICERS:

President—Mike Morrell
Vice President—Mark Anderson
Treasurer—Ed Malone
Secretary—Frances Genereux

NEWSLETTER DESIGN:

Regina Paleau
NEWSLETTER EDITOR
Lou Bergonzi



WIS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

ANNUAL DUES:

Resident Membership \$20 _____ Associate Membership \$30 _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

PHONE # (OPTIONAL): _____

IF RENEWING: MEMBERSHIP # _____

(the number on the upper left of mailing label)

Please mail this form with your check made payable to the Westerleigh Improvement Society, P.O. Box 140-043, Staten Island, NY 10314