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**Bristol**



**Phoenix.**

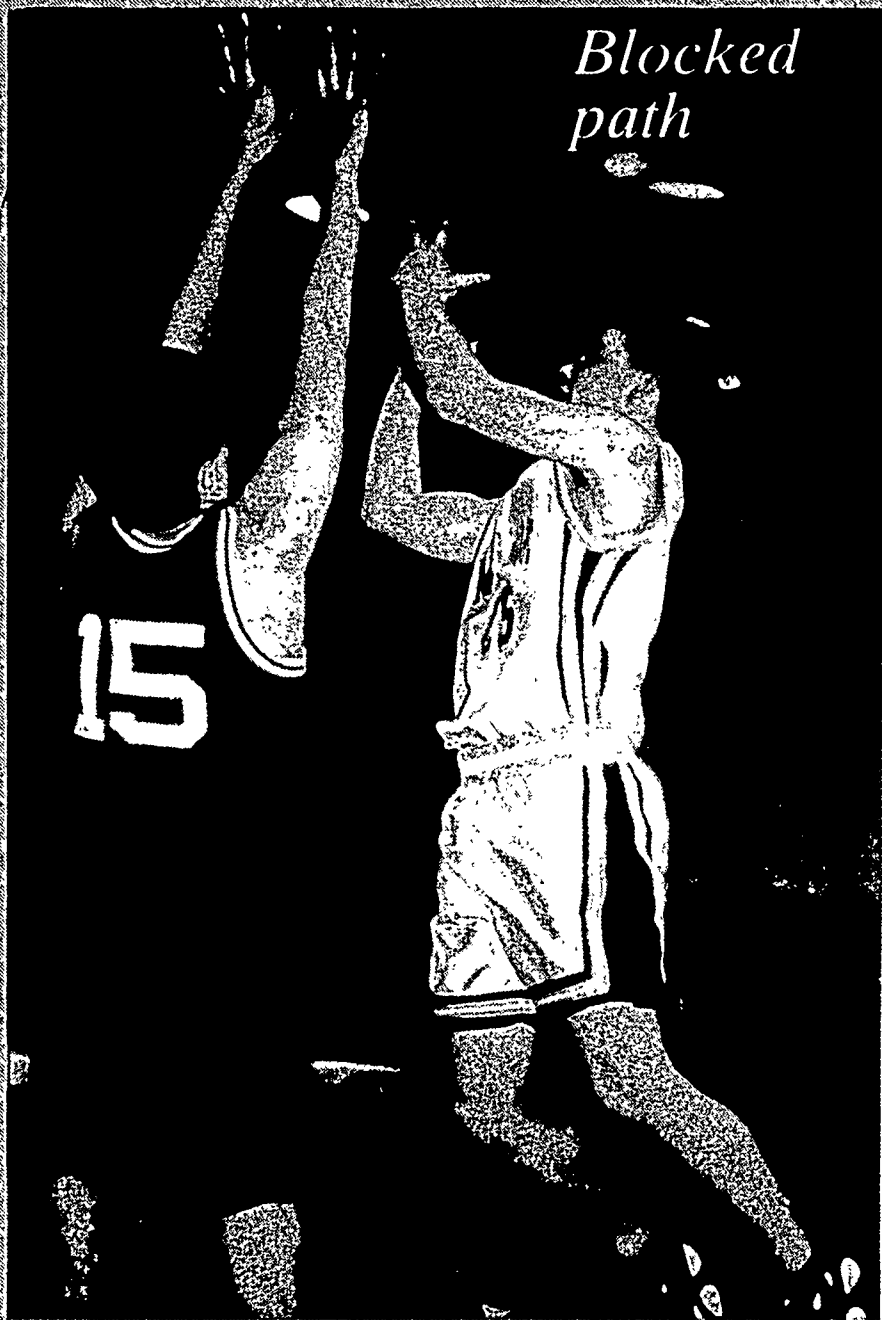
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*Mt Hope High's Jeff Griska goes up for a jump shot despite the presence of Smithfield's Phil Naismith during Monday's playoff game. See story on page 25*

## Tower St rezoning petition under fire

By David Singband

Abilio Ferreira's request to rezone land around Tower Street has run into some snags, including conflict of interest charges and fears about the future of Bristol's green space.

Republican Town Committee Chairman Joseph J. Scanlan, in a March 3 letter to the state Ethics Commission, charged Town Council Chairman Richard Ruggiero and Zoning Board member Jerome A. Squatrito with violating conflict of interest rules. Both men and Mr. Ferreira were officers of Bayside Eight Inc., a real estate development company, until it closed last year.

Mr. Ferreira, who owns 145,000-square-foot lots on Tower Street purchased by his father in 1952, petitioned for a zoning change in the Tower Street/Doris Avenue area (about 1,500 feet east of Metacom Avenue) from single restricted residence to limited residence. The change would reduce the buildable lot size from 40,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet, allowing Mr. Ferreira to build seven homes on the property, if he chose.

When the matter went before the Zoning Board last August, the board, on Mr. Squatrito's motion, approved Mr. Ferreira's request.

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## School funding question looms over budget talks

By Ken Coia and Bill Rupp

Gov. Bruce Sundlun's proposed 1994-95 budget, unveiled last Thursday, may have raised more questions than it answered for Warren/Bristol legislators.

The biggest mystery of the budget is education funding.

Sen. Mary A. Parella, R-Bristol/Warren, called the budget "unrealistic" because it doesn't address where money for the Guaranteed Student Entitlement (GSE) would come from.

A recent court decision is forcing the state to provide a more equitable aid formula to school districts, as well as local property tax relief. The GSE, through which the state supports a minimum amount of spending per pupil, is seen as the solution to inadequate urban education funding.

There's a "tremendous amount of work" to be done on the budget, she said.

Rep. Charles E. Millard Jr., R-Bristol/Warren, agrees that legislators need much more information on education aid and the GSE before they can come close to finalizing a budget. And they need it as soon as possible.

The April 12 date set by the governor seems a long way off, he said.

This uncertainty is hampering both Bristol and Warren's budgeting plans and the school district's plans for a \$30 million construction and renovation project.

"I'm concerned about my taxpayers and how I'm going to levy taxes next year. We need those numbers to formulate our budget," said Bristol Town Councilor Michael Mello.

Although the fate of the bond issue for construction is uncertain, Sen. Helen M. Mathieu, D-Warren/Bristol/Portsmouth, said she felt construction reimbursements may remain about the same.

However, Sen. Mathieu, who is on the Board of Regents, was not as optimistic about regionalization bonuses. As it now stands, the GSE would reduce regionalization bonuses, but Sen. Mathieu felt the state should make a commitment to continue to pay the full bonus.

State Budget Director Michael O'Keefe said lowering local property taxes is one of the governor's priorities.

"The governor believes that if you lower taxes, you lower the cost of doing business," which in turn promotes economic expansion and jobs, Mr. O'Keefe said.

Under the proposed budget, Bristol would get about \$748,000 in non-school aid, or \$330,000 more than last year.

Most of that money — \$401,000 — will come as aid to communities to help make up for taxes lost on exempt property, such as Roger Williams University and the Rhode Island Veteran's Home.

Last year, Bristol received about \$85,000 from the program.

The loss of 1,293 state jobs and cuts in the number of people eligible for General Public Assistance (GPA) have different meanings for each town.

Most of the jobs would come out of the school lunch program, which would not affect the Bristol Warren Regional School District.

The district will switch to a private vendor in September, said Administration Director Roger Gaspar.

"We had an inkling" the state would eventually get out of the school lunch business, Mr. Gaspar said.

Rep. Millard said he favors reducing state jobs.

The effect of the GPA cuts is harder to gauge. Statewide, about 600 GPA recipients could be cut off, leaving 600 remaining.

For the third year in a row, the budget also cuts funding to the Department of Environmental Management, which may force the state to all but abandon some of its parks. Colt State Park in Bristol is not specifically mentioned.

However, area legislators say abandoning parks — which Rep. Millard said have been hit "as hard as they can" — is unlikely because local legislators won't want parks closed in their districts.

Overall, Rep. Millard said he thinks the governor's budget "is a pretty good starting point for discussion," especially because it does not raise taxes.

## Huskies' Dave Kemmy retires

Mt Hope High School wrestling coach Dave Kemmy gathered his team together in the school on Tuesday and told its members he would not return as coach next season.

"It's time," Kemmy said. "I just feel it's time to take a break. You can just tell when it's time and for me, the time is now."

Kemmy, coach of the Huskies in their initial year of competition this season, led the Bristol High School team the previous eight years and is credited with turning the program around.

"I accepted his resignation with deep regret," Mt Hope Athletic Director Martin "Buddy" Biancuzzo said. "He's a very good coach, very organized and very dedicated. He built a strong program. If he coaches somewhere else, they'll get a very good person."



Dave Kemmy

When Kemmy began coaching in 1985, Bristol had suffered through losing seasons in eight of its nine previous years. Just two years after taking over, Kemmy guided the Colts to an undefeated season and the league championship, one of three league titles Bristol earned under his supervision. For the past four years, Kemmy's teams have been runner-up to Coventry in the state championship meet.

But despite all the individual accomplishments and laurels earned by his wrestlers and a career record of 128-33-2, Kemmy said what he will miss most is the relationships forged with his wrestlers.

"The thing I value most," Kemmy said, "is how many kids we've helped. If they didn't have wrestling at the level we've had it at, who knows where those kids would be."