Traffic Study Draws Reactions

Several of the suggestions made by the Traffic Management Study came up for discussion at the October 20th membership meeting of the Society Hill Civic Association. Among the proposals to be implemented during the first phase of reform are:

- Changing Front Street to northbound only.
- Making Spruce Street one way, west only.
- Permanently closing 3rd Street's east lane between Pine and South with parking on the east side.
- Changing directions of small streets and making one-way streets (traffic barriers) in some of them.

During the second phase, TMS recommends closing South Street to traffic between 3rd and 5th Streets. After a short discussion, this recommendation was voted down.

A petition from residents of Pine Street was read. "A recent survey conducted by the city's traffic management study group concluded that Pine Street carries more traffic than any other street in Society Hill or Queen Village. A large proportion of this traffic build-up consists of through traffic in the form of cars and trucks destined for I-95. Pine Street residents call on the City of Philadelphia to reroute the I-95 traffic by closing access to the highway through our neighborhood." A motion of support from all of Society Hill for the Pine Street petition was made and passed unanimously.

One wag suggested the overpass from Spruce Street to Delaware Avenue be turned into a parking lot.

A Rare Occasion—At the proceedings to dedicate a marker at Nicholas More Place, Second and Spruce Streets on October 26th, Charles Peterson, secretary pro tem of the Friends of Nicholas More, addressed the crowd. Mr. Peterson shared the platform with four of seven justices of the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, including Chief Justice, The Honorable Henry X. O'Brien and honored guests. (Photo by Nancy Freund)

Nicholas More's Place

Thanks to the almost single-handed efforts of resident Charles Peterson, Society Hill had its own Century IV celebration on October 26th to honor the man who practically invented Society Hill 300 years ago. Chief Justice Henry X. O'Brien and members of Pennsylvania's Supreme Court, many other distinguished guests and neighbors assembled at the southeast corner of Second and Spruce Streets where the Philadelphia Fire Department Band played. After several short speeches a temporary marker (to be replaced in due time by a permanent plaque) was unveiled. The marker reads:

"The Nicholas More Site"

"This little triangular plot was the waterfront property of Dr. Nicholas More (c. 1628-1667) president of the Free Company of Traders for whom Society Hill was named. More was the first speaker of the Pennsylvania provincial assembly, (1682), the first chief justice (1684) and one of William Penn's five commissioners appointed to govern the province (1686)."

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

There will be a general membership meeting of the Society Hill Civic Association at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, December 15th, at the Old Pine Community Center, 4th and Lombard Streets. The first 30 minutes will be an open forum, so bring your issues with you. There will be an update on Independence Place, Traffic and Parking, and I-95 on the agenda.

The SHCA Board will meet that evening at 6:30 p.m., also at Old Pine. All members are invited to attend.
The Trashing of Society Hill

SIGN LANGUAGE

Some folks walk "through" their neighborhood daily without really seeing it. Others think that what they see, including signs, either adds to or detracts from the quality of life in that neighborhood. A couple of Queen Village residents called the Newsletter staff recently, to see what could be done about the ever-increasing number of "sidewalk" or "sandwich board" signs in the vicinity of 2nd St. This type of sign is illegal in every part of the city. The number to call to protest this kind of violation is 689-5550. If the sign you want to report is a sign that you suspect does not have a permit, call 689-2483. Let them know you're a taxpayer.

According to a city Licenses and Inspections employee, some storekeepers don't realize that the permit they apply for is only for one sign, on their storefront, and not for any number of signs they wish to stake out in the neighborhood to advertise their wares or services.

One would think that businesses coming into an area such as Society Hill and Queen Village would be interested in accommodating to the neighborhood style, in an effort to cultivate business—instead of vexing their potential customers with offensive signs.

Recently several neighborhood condominium councils (Washington Sq. E.

SIDEWALK SIGNS—Sidewalk signs such as these one staked to the category and the one lying on the ground are expressly against the Philadelphia signage code. The Dubliner and the Sixth Street Brewery are about to have a friend in Civic Hall (Photo by Nancy Freas).

Condo #1 and #2 and Hopkinson House) petitioned the SHCA Board to formally request that the city do whatever must be done to abrogate the network of signs at the 5th and 6th Street intersections the Washington Square Parking Garage. These signs were cited by the city in August of 1983 as being in violation of the zoning code and for having been placed without required permits. Also, the signs are not in accord with Community and Planning Commission Agreements for the property.

If you see signs, you should know the code for the Washington Square Redevelopment Area. The code is, as follows:

Signs other than billboards, posters, and advertising structures, are permitted only under the following conditions:

1. In any Residential District a) Signs for professional, religious, or institutional use, not to exceed 100 square inches in area, must pertain to a use permitted on the premises and be attached flat against the wall of the building. b) Exterior signs for commercial purposes must be of a uniform style, located in side according to the regulations for commercial districts and be attached flat against the wall of the building or to the face of a structure.

2. In any Commercial District an exterior sign which pertains only to use permitted on the premises, may not exceed two square feet for every linear foot of building frontage must be attached flat against the wall of the building or to the face of a structure. It may not project above the roof line or wall coping, nor may the sign be an ad of an adjoining lot which is in ano Residential District.

3. Temporary signs advertising the sale or rent of the real estate upon which they are erected, provided that the total area of such signs or any combination of signs shall not exceed twenty-five square feet in area.

4. Signs may be illuminated provided the illumination does not interfere with pedestrian traffic or the use of the road.

5. Signs with faces, illuminated, or tiered illumination shall not be erected.

6. Red and green lighted signs may not receive permit within fifty feet of a signalized intersection.

Interpretations of this ordinance contained in this Section shall be those of the Redevelopment Authority.

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INNOVATION IN RENTAL

IN THE HEART OF THE ACTION!
A Christmas Agenda

December 6, 7 and 8
7 p.m. Old St. Mary's Church. Devotions in honor of St. Mary. Some time this week there will be a Christmas-tree-lighting-ceremony in Washington Square Park.

December 12
1:45 p.m. Old St. Joseph's Church. Advent/Christmas Choir Service of Readings and Carols
4:30 p.m. Society Hill Synagogue. Hanukkah Party
6 p.m. Old Pine Street Church. (Third, Scol and Manners Presbyterian Church) Community Christmas Caroling.

December 12-13
COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROLLING
Sponsored by: Old Philadelphia Congregations, 2400 Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA 19103. All welcome. All music. All fun.

December 14-20
24 hours Old First Reformed Church (United Church of Christ). Outdoor live animal Nativity scene with sheep, cow, donkey.

December 16
6 p.m. St. Peter's Church, St. Peter's School Christmas Play.

December 17
11-11:30 a.m. Old First Reformed Church. Holiday Festival. Gift tables, roast beef sandwiches, cranberry bread, Christmas cookies, etc.

December 19
10 a.m. Old First Reformed Church. Christmas Sunday. White Gift Service with play/program and
11 a.m. Festival Christmas Worship with special music.
7:30 p.m. Old Pine Street Church. Lessons and carols.

December 20
11:15 a.m. Old St. Joseph's Church. Confessions, to 12:05 p.m. and 4 to 5 p.m.

December 21-22
1 p.m. McCall School—Winter musical, featuring choir, bell ensemble, band, orchestra and string ensemble.

December 22
9:30 a.m. McCall School. Winter musical, featuring choir, and 1 p.m. bell ensemble, band, orchestra and string ensemble.
10:30 a.m. Community Center. St. Peter's Lower School “Christmas Celebration of Carols and Poetry.”

December 24
5 p.m. Chisel Church. Family Service—Holy Communion; and
10:30 p.m. “Magnificent” by Bach. Christ Church choir brass and organ; and
11 p.m. The Holy Communion.

December 25
6:30 p.m. Old First Reformed Church. Live creche. People take 1 p.m. place of maraquins; and
7:30 p.m. Candlelight carol service.
7:30 p.m. Old Pine Street Church. Christmas Eve service.
8 p.m. Holy Trinity Church. Christmas Eve mass.
10:30 p.m. St. Peter's Church. Music by choirmen and boys; and
11 p.m. Christmas Eve service.
11:30 p.m. Old St. Mary's Church. Christmas music with carol singing.

December 26
Midnight, Old St. Mary's Church. Christmas masses.
10:30 a.m. and noon
6, 7, 30, 9
Old St. Joseph's Church. Christmas Day masses.
10, 11 a.m.
“M”
12:15 p.m.
10 a.m. Christ Church. Holy Communion.
10 a.m. St. Peter's Church. Holy Communion

January 1
6, 7, 30, 9
Old St. Joseph's Church. New Year's Day masses.
10, 11 a.m.
and
12:15 p.m.
9, 10, 30
Old St. Mary's—Sunday masses.
11 a.m.
and
noon
5 p.m. Holy Trinity. Sunday mass.

January 1
6, 7, 30, 9
Old St. Joseph's Church. New Year's Day masses.
10, 11 a.m.
and
12:15 p.m.
9, 10, 30
Old St. Mary's. New Year's Day masses.
1 a.m.
and
noon
5 p.m. Holy Trinity. New Year's Day masses.
poor, some substantially provided for," Mrs. Tanz recalled. Neighbors helped one another, she pointed out, "if a family came upon hard times, the people on the street would take up a collection or provide food—there was a great feeling of close-ness."

She described 5th Street in the days before she crashed (the early 1930s). "All of 5th Street from Spruce to South—was jobbing houses (midisemen who bought fabrics, clothing, linens, slip covers from the mills and sold to wholesalers, to peddlers, to stores such as still exist on 4th Street). Push-carts and dry goods stores lined 4th Street," she said.

"These were large and thriving businesses until the crash. Along 5th Street, too, were three Jewish restaurants, the great Reisman Pretzel plant and four Jewish newspapers—the Jew; Forward, the Jewish World; the Day and the Morning Journal. They served the immigrant Jewish population, Yiddish-speaking and reading, until that population gradually died off."

"The area, she said, was known as the "Bloody Fifth Ward." It was solid Republican up until the time of FDR. On her block was the Fifth Ward Republican Club—a social club. It was permitted to serve liquor. Before that, it was where Joseph Levine's funeral was held and it's now on North Broad Street. In the early days, some private homes became the small Baptist and Jewish churches—some became synagogues—there would open and close.

On 6th Street there was a huge junk yard, a half block long. There were tailors, hardware stores, printers and Hurford's who made their own chocolates. "For a penny, I could get a pound of chocolates. I'll never forget the taste of their caramels."

Then there was Willy's lumberyard, which occupied a large part of the 600 block of Pine Street, she added.

As the economic picture changed so did the character of the neighborhood. Some families had to leave their large homes, some converted to apartments, some rented rooms. The socio-economic picture changed. Renters and boarders moved in. Few of the doctors and dentists remained—many of them moved to Spruce and Pine, west of Broad."

Some of the remodelling of the old houses began in the 1950s. The urban redevelopment began their demolition and reconstruction in the late 1950s and early 60s. Mrs. Tanz noted that all of 5th Street had to relocate. Reisman Pretzels moved away. The Jewish newspapers left. The block of Pine from what is now 500 to 516, where there used to be the Jewish Shulok and a Ford automobile agency displaying cars and running a service bay (before that it had been a stable), was now zoned residential.

In the late 50s, the early 60s— the re-development movement changed the whole area. That was when Society Hill began to flourish, Mrs. Tanz said. Real estate people began to make a lot of money and a lot of money began to change hands. The area started to come back again. It's turned a full circle— bringing professional people back again."

—Fran Israel
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Past Port, Future Port

A look at the complex Port of Philadelphia, its 300 year history and its uncertain future, can be found at the Philadelphia Maritime Museum, 211 Chestnut Street, through April 28th. Represented in the exhibit are a score of organizations that have port interests, from the U.S. Corps of Engineers to Energy Terminals, Inc., Conrail to the Camden Office of Development. Society Hill residents should find a number of exhibits that answer questions we have on riverfront development in center city. The City Planning Commission's Riverfront Study, the Penn's Landing Corp./Philadelphia Department of Commerce/Cooper-Linden Associates, Penn's Landing plans, the DACP Riverwalk project—all can be studied in detail. Alley Friends Associates has a three-dimensional futuristic lightshow look at the waterfront, and the Coalition of Riverfront Communities invites audience participation. Early viewers have left the following ideas behind them on the CONC board:

"Penn's Rowboat on the Delaware"
"Save the view on Front Street"
"Fishing Privileges at Penn's Landing"
"Old folks home on empty lot at Water & Morris, formerly Shannahari's"
"Make Delaware Avenue usable as a major north-south route."

THIRD ANNUAL COMING UP—Another SHCA Membership Party is scheduled for early next year. If you missed last year's (where this picture was taken) watch for further details. (Photo by Edna Heron)

Party Preview

Yes! There will be another SHCA party to welcome new members early next year. The SHCA Board hopes to encourage residents of Independence Place to join the Society Hill Civic Association and become active in the association as well as all our Society Hill neighbors. The chairperson this year is Diane Shechter, quadrant director from the Northwest quadrant. When a date is set and plans with New Market are complete, your invitation will be at your door.

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Society Hill Playhouse Playbill:

A Little Theater With Big Ideas

Anyone unfamiliar with 507 S. 8th Street is missing one of the neighborhood's finest little theaters. The Society Hill Playhouse, Philadelphia's oldest resident theater, has been the hub of local dramatic activity for 25 years.

The Playhouse offers a rich theatrical environment for professionals, amateurs and drama buffs. Acting classes for adults and children allow creative development in an informal atmosphere. It is also a showcase for local playwrights, and training ground for hundreds of performers and technicians.

Dean Kogan of the 200 block of Delancey Street, is general manager of the theater. The Playhouse, she reports, operates solely on community support, which has been strong over the years.

One element of the theater's work is the Philadelphia Youth Theater, now in its tenth year. The city wide program is sponsored by the School Board. The Youth Theater gives accredited study to drama students in combination with a high school degree. Five recent graduates have progressed to the Broadway stage. The primary goal, however, is student involvement—young people watching and working with their peers.

You may enjoy the troupe in the upcoming production of Growing Up, a play developed by young people for other young people. The show runs December 6th-17th, and all performances are free and open to the public. For reservations, call 923-0210.

The Society Hill Playhouse, actively in use about 14 hours a day, has an adult stage production running, too. The Philadelphia premiere of We Can't Pay, We Won't Pay by Dario Fo, currently a runaway hit in London. This political farce is set in a Milan suburb and follows the adventures of local housewives who strike against inflationary supermarket prices. The show runs until January 3rd. Ticket prices are $6, $8 and $10, with group rates available. Call 923-0210.

REDEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Commodore Barry—The Redevelopment Authority has announced that a developer has been selected for the old hotel at 736-738 Pine. It is the Commodore Barry Redevelopment Company, comprised of the Sage Group, Inc., Peter Hamilton, limited partner; and Baker Rhynschild, architect. Proposed are nine apartments with the additions to 736 along 8th Street to be used either for offices or more housing. Civic associations of both Society Hill and Washington Square West are opposed to commercial use, but RDA will not object to any use that conforms to present zoning. Another developer who bid on the property also proposed nine apartments. The RDA gave preference to the Commodore Barry Redevelopment Co. because it submitted a higher bid for the property, and is prepared to spend $47 per square foot on rehabilita-

tion to the other group's $36 per square foot. Both plans call for four parking places. The proposed rehabilitation will go for approval to the City Planning Commission in December, and to City Council in January. Settlement is expected late winter with construction to begin in the spring.

6th and Delancey—The RDA has submitted a proposal for the rehabilitation of these properties to the SHCA. Three units of housing, two apartments on the first three floors and one on the fourth, are proposed.

A-4, Bookbinder's Parking Lot—The Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation is asking for hotel proposals for this site by December 17th. SHCA is assured it will have an opportunity to review plans before they have been approved.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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NO WEISBEIN, BUT A $1 MILLION SCULPTURE

At the SHCA Board meeting on November 15th, Charles Quinter, project manager for Independence Place, appeared before the Board in place of Joel Weisbein, president of The Greenwood Group, the developer of the high rise condo on Washington Square in all fairness. It should be said that Mr. Quinter could only act in the role of personal messenger, because the questions planned for Mr. Weisbein were not in Mr. Quinter's scope of responsibility. The SHCA Board pressed for an answer from Mr. Weisbein by December 1st as to why there has been no further action on his part to expedite the signing of the Declaration of Easements, Covenants and Restrictions as drafted by Mr. Weisbein's attorney on November 16th, 1981, with corrections made by the designated representatives of the neighborhood.

It was also established at the board meeting that there continues to be flagrant disregard for at least six of the restrictive covenants that apply to the site and physical characteristics of the retail space in the condo's South Tower.

Although no date has been announced for the start of the North Tower at Independence Place, plans for a "Site Specific"

RED HOT RUMORS

Item—The old Rohm and Haas Building on Washington Square at Locust Street will be turned into a squat bar.

Item—All those carts running on the aisles at the State Store are here to test our sobriety.

Item—The Parking Authority will paint all curbs in Society Hill to match or harmonize with those on the east side of 2nd Street.

Item—E.T. was spotted in Welcome Park pleading to go home.

Item—The Ritzy got a film without subtitles.

Item—Frank Rizzo is building a house on the site of Tun Tavern.

Item—Dick Doran was seen walking to work.

Item—Nicholas More was invented by Charlie Peterson because he thought the neighborhood needed to attract lawyers.

Item—Central Penn is offering 8% mortgages.

Item—PSFS is offering 7% mortgages.

Item—Un's stacked six of their pizzas and caused a China syndrome meltdown.

Item—Keep in Touch is carrying kooky Mother's Day cards.

Item—St. Peter's new addition has a 10-unit video arcade on the third floor.

Item—The Colonial Cab Company purchases its horses from Pat's Steaks.

Sculpture (which an RDA spokesperson said cost over $1 million) has been approved by the Fine Arts Commission and revealed at an October press conference. The sculpture, purportedly the largest public art project in the United States to be created by a single artist, more than qualifies for the one percent art allowance related to the entire project, including the 0.3% percent for both the Washington Square E. condominiums. The artist, Barbara Neijina, a native Philadelphian, was selected from over two hundred artists from the U.S. and abroad, but alas, we were asked not to print a photo of the sculpture until the inquirer got their exclusive on it. We tried to explain that we are not exactly in the same league with the inquirer—but that didn't work. I guess we should be flattered...

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RE REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENTS

Did you receive a real estate assessment on your property in June of this year and another one in September or October? The assessment should have been the same or lower in the fall, and for this, you can thank Mr. Coleman, president of City Council, or Mayor Green—or both.

The Coleman-Green Agreement went into effect in the spring of 1981 and was the cause of real estate assessment rollbacks in the fall of 1982. According to Barry Maschelotti, assessor on the Board of Division of Taxes, Assistant City Solicitor Torn Erickson interpreted the Coleman-Green Agreement, as follows: Spring 1982 assessments on property previously appraised at less than 36 percent of market value, qualified for a rollback if the 1981 assessment (figured in 1980) was higher than it would have been if the Coleman-Green Agreement had been in effect in 1980. The rollback had the effect of forestalling sharp increases in a short period of time.

Another clause in the Coleman-Green Agreement guarantees that 1981 assessment increases of more than 15 percent will be frozen until such time as the increase companies with what it would have been if the agreement had been in place in 1980. However, anyone who bought his home after January 1981 is not covered by the freeze.

Considering how complex the answer to our first question was, we asked Mr. Maschelotti to consign writing a piece on how the assessor views the market and now he factors other elements into his evaluation of market price, for publication in the Newsletter. Mr. Maschelotti indicated that he was interested.

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GET OFF YOUR S—An "oscillation" is being felt with the mixture on either this fall of the previous in each of the city's magazines—each with this banner slogan of success. They are being replaced one by one. The street in the picture was shot in on the former site. It was replaced in time for veterans. It was printed by Nancy Rennert.

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Darts & Laurels

Laurel—To Panama Street's Ray Erle for pitching in to repainting the graffiti-filled doors at McCall School.

Dart—To the lowlifes who steal doorstop planters . . . May you, your children and your children's children have hiccups.

Laurel—To Councilman Jimmy Tayoun for constantly supporting the neighborhood in their attempts to get decent treatment from City Hall. (His latest feat was getting cleaners out to pick up the litter in Sound Barrier Park on Front Street.)

Dart—To the Sanitation Police for not following up on numerous complaints about the garbage in front of the apartments at 505 Pine Street . . . and to make matters worse the door is minus a mail slot so that every free piece of literature zips all over the 500 block of Pine.

Laurel—To the policeman with a full book of unwritten tickets. He gave a $40 one to a wrong-way driver on the 500 block of Cypress Street . . . a warning to the Spruce and Delancy folks.

Dart—To those home owners who install burglar alarms with no time cut-off. After the police have been called, and the culprits scared off, what are neighbors supposed to do for the remainder of the weekend—wear earplugs? City Councilmen, isn't it time we had some legislation requiring an "in event of emergency please contact . . ." wall notice and a penalty for failure to turn off an alarm within a 15-minute time period? The proliferation of continuous alarms means a quiet weekend in Society Hill is becoming rarer.

Laurel—To the community-spirited residents of PAW Street who carried the I-95 traffic petition from house to house.

Laurel—To the neighbors who plant, trim, water and pick up trash in Delancy Park and St. Peter's Way since the city, which is supposed to, won't. They help keep our neighborhood attractive for all of us.

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