



SOCIETY HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

THE RESIDENT NEWSLETTER

313 Pine Street

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

September, 1972

THE METROPOLITAN SITE: THE GOOD GUYS WON

You have to go back a year or two. There is one large scale site left to develop in Society Hill. This time, the Redevelopment Authority invites the Association to participate in the design decision. The tract is at Third and Spruce--the one occupied by Metropolitan Hospital before it was demolished. A housing complex is planned.

The Redevelopment Authority advertises for bidders. A half dozen development proposals come in.

SHCA appoints a committee to review the various plans. They consult immediate neighbors. Many hours are devoted to the project. Which of the six plans will be best for the neighborhood. The best looking and most functional?

The committee grades them, picks a first, second, third and fourth choice, finds two unacceptable. The membership agrees.

OPDC also reviews the plans and comes up with a first choice. Same one we did. The Advisory Board of Design of the Redevelopment Authority goes through the same procedure, comes up with the same first choice.

Looks easy doesn't it?

But we get the word informally that one of the plans rejected as unacceptable will get the nod. Politics as usual? Maybe. Maybe not. We ask the members to write to the Mayor and appropriate agencies. We line up allies at other agencies. Our President does unbelievable spade work and gets to address the Authority Board. Months go by and the decision is finally announced.

Our first choice prevailed. The plan submitted by developer William Chanoff Investments and designed by Steven Goldner, Architect, was chosen.

It was a tremendous effort by lots of people. The big thing is that City Hall was responsive to the wishes of the community. It's a new sensation and we like it.

MEETING NOTICE

Wednesday, October 4, 1972
Preston Hall (Theatre I) Eighth & Spruce

8:00 p.m.



NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER FOURTH

The first fall meeting of the Association will be held on Wednesday, October 4th at Pennsylvania Hospital's Preston Hall, (Theatre I) at Eighth and Spruce Streets at 8:00 p.m. Latecomers will not have their tonsils removed.

On the agenda are discussion of the Mariner's Church zoning, an update of the good news about the Metropolitan Hospital, proposed changes in the By-laws and other topical matters.

If you can, bring along a neighbor or two. If they aren't members, we'll sign them up.

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Three summer concerts sponsored by SHCA were held on the plaza in front of the Society Hill Towers shopping center this summer. The evenings - two classical and one contemporary jazz - were brilliantly performed and well attended despite uncooperative weather.

They were arranged by SHCA members Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Curtis, themselves members of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

The evenings were something of a marriage of the arts. Silk-screened posters announcing the concerts were designed and printed by SHCA member, Sam Maitin, one of Philadelphia's most celebrated printmakers. A limited edition of 50 posters signed and numbered by the artist were also donated to the Association. Most of them are gone, but if you would like to purchase one (they're \$15) contact Mrs. Peggy Duckett, 335 S. Second Street. Proceeds go to the concert fund.

HARVEST FESTIVAL: WHITE ELEPHANTS, MUMMERS AND LUNCH

"A Market Day in Old Philadelphia" is the theme of St. Peter's School's ninth annual Harvest Festival scheduled for Saturday, September 30, at Head House Square, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

There will be buying and selling of books, flowers, materials, hand-made items, white elephants, outgrown clothes, produce and gourmet foods. Some Mummies will be on hand to provide musical entertainment.

And for children, there will be special events with games, rides, competitions, races, puppets, a fortune teller, toys and hand-made costumes to buy.

A wide variety of tempting foods will be available for lunch and snacks.

All proceeds will benefit St. Peter's School.

THE ANCIENT MARINER: COMMERCIAL OR RESIDENTIAL?

Back in the '60's when Frank Roberts first proposed restoration of the historic Mariner's Church at Front and Delancey Streets into a movie theater, the idea was received enthusiastically because development was at a standstill and there seemed to be a need to create some activity which would draw people into the neighborhood.

When Carl Massara and his group came up with plans in 1969 for a movie theater/restaurant for that site it still seemed like a good idea, particularly since they appeared to have commitments and money to proceed immediately. Residents questioned the parking problems and were assured attempts would be made to solve them.

Since that time the property has changed hands several times and the building has deteriorated. Because its outcome was questionable residential zoning was recommended for the site when the overall zoning plan was submitted to City Council.

The new developers, with the same plans, now need a variance to proceed. Neighboring residents feel there has been an unreasonable delay in the development of the property and conditions have so changed as to make commercial use undesirable. Restaurant development has increased (there are 20 or more in the area between Market and South). A movie is planned for Head House. Head House East will be primarily commercial. The big problems are deliveries, trash removal, heavy increase in traffic and the lack of adequate parking facilities for a 600 seat theater.

The question is whether restoration should be for this type of commercial activity or whether a residential or community use would be more desirable. Nearby residents feel the building would now be attractive for other uses. It will be discussed at the October 4 membership meeting.

FOOTBALL: BIGGER, BETTER AND NEEDS SPONSORS

This year Society Hill and Queen's Village have combined to field five football teams in different weight classes. Bob Smith's Bicentennials will play in the 70 pound, 85 pound and 110 pound classes. Oscar Hankinson's Rams will compete in the 135 pound and 165 pound classes. Bob will be assisted by Gene Riley and Paul Greco, and John Nelson will help Oscar. You, too, can help by sending a check to the Society Hill Fund. Over 150 boys are involved in these teams, and equipment league fees, transportation and insurance will cost over \$3,000. (\$20 per player). How about sponsoring one or two boys this season?

Enclosed is my contribution to help equip football teams. (Make check payable to Society Hill Fund and mail to George Schall, 518 Spruce St., Phila. 19106. Contributions are tax deductible,

Name _____

Address _____

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE HOUSING RESOLUTION

At the June 14th meeting of SHCA, a resolution was passed by a vote of 161 to 59 approving the report of a study committee on relocating seven tenant families scheduled to be displaced by the Octavia Hill Association. The committee recommended establishing a community-controlled non-profit corporation which would build 19 units of federally-subsidized housing on two parcels at Sixth and Lombard and Sixth and Panama Streets. The remaining units will be available to other neighborhood families displaced by urban renewal.

The proposal was qualified to require that the corporation be staffed by directors who live within a four block area of the projects--within a perimeter bounded by Fifth, Seventh, Spruce and Lombard, with a majority being resident homeowners.

To carry out that mandate, SHCA president, Joanne Denworth, named an organizing and nominating committee from that area who established criteria for selection of directors, researched nominees to meet that criteria, determined their willingness and interest, and finally selected fifteen directors who will serve until the first annual meeting of the corporation's members. They are:

Mrs. Sarah Bachman, 430 South Fifth Street
 Mr. Jay Baer, 640 Addison Street
 Mrs. Selma Buchsbaum, 610 Spruce Street
 Mr. Joseph Centifanti, 633 Pine Street
 Miss Doris Drayton, 420 South Seventh Street
 Mr. Robert Hill, 631 Addison Street
 Mr. William Leatherbee, 333 South Sixth Street
 Mrs. Leah Marks, 639 Addison Street
 Mrs. Dorothy Miller, 615 Lombard Street
 Mr. Howard Morrison, 643 Lombard Street
 Mrs. Gretchen Niedermayer, 514 Spruce Street
 Mr. Richard Ostrander, 408 South Sixth Street
 Mrs. Tina Pappajohn, 515 Delancey Street
 Mr. Lewis Reade, 406 South Sixth Street
 Mrs. Lillian Tilley, 623 Lombard Street

The SHCA resolution triggered the formation of an opposition group which calls itself the Society Hill West Civic Association.

The Corporation which is called Benezet Corporation after Anthony Benezet, a colonial figure who set up a school for black boys at Sixth and Lombard, is proceeding with feasibility studies design and procurement of funds.

FOOTLITE FOOTNOTE

Society Hill's impresario, Frank Roberts, is bringing another first to Philadelphia. The New Phoenix Repertory Company will open its tour at the Annenberg Center Theater, October 14 to 29, with O'Neill's "The Great God Brown" and Moliere's "Don Juan". The backers are hoping to create a National Repertory Company with Philadelphia as the "premiere" city. Gala openings are scheduled for October 18 and 19. More information can be obtained from the Box Office.

DARTS & LAURELS

- Dart: To the city fathers who put an airport on our doorsteps without ever consulting the neighbors.
- Laurel: To Downtown Airlines, the operator of the facility at Penn's Landing (they're seaplanes), for providing great service to New York (\$27 one way) and weekend flights around the neighborhood (for \$8)-- an unforgettable experience.
- Dart: To "The Resident" from reader Lucille Mason who objected to our laurel in the last issue for the A&P fish sculpture swipers.
- Laurel: To the City Streets Department for repaving Sixth Street.
- Dart: To Van Arkel & Co., putative developers of Head House East, for leaving their undeveloped 100 block of Lombard Street looking like a set from a Tarzan movie.
- Laurel: To Lautrec, the new wine and cheese coffee house on Head House Square for demonstrating that good taste and good management are not dead on Second Street. (HH Tavern, take note.)
- Dart: To the A&P for the diffident way they restock their shelves and shortage of checkout personnel. One lady counted 23 people waiting to get through the express line.
- Laurel: To the city fathers who gave good design and community sentiment a shot in the arm by going along with the SHCA recommended nominee for developing the Metropolitan Hospital site.
- Laurel: To Lickety-Split at 4th & South for gourmet cooking at budget prices. (But bring your own bottle).
- Dart: To architect Lou Sauer (Penn's Landing Square) - it keeps looking worse every month.
- Laurel: To Mabs Segal of Redevelopment for being the most cooperative liason we have ever had, as she moves up to a bigger assignment.

-Rhadamanthus

SUMMER SOFTBALL - NOBODY STRUCK OUT.

The Community Coalition Softball League scored a complete success in its first season of play. The schedule ran from June through August with six teams participating. The most gratifying aspect is that many games were played between youths from 5th Street and 13th Street without incident and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, which was one of the main goals.

Success would not have been realized were it not for the community groups, businesses and individuals who gave financial support and those individuals who gave many hours of their own time to coach the teams. The entire Community Coalition says thanks.

MERRY DO-IT-YOURSELF CHRISTMAS

Deck your doors, light your candles and come to the party! SHCA and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society are planning a beautiful neighborhood holiday celebration this December.

The plans so far:

1. Wreathmaking workshop, early in December. Learn how, or brush up on new techniques.
2. Greens sale. Berried holly, cedar garlands, wreath kits; freshly cut and very reasonable -- with directions included. Advance orders would be appreciated. Further information at the next SHCA meeting.
3. House-decorating contest. Traditional, contemporary, anything ingenious using mostly natural plant materials.
4. Festivities later in the month: candlelight stroll, tree-lightings, torchlight parade, open house. More details to come.

Co-chairmen Deborah Latta (WA 5-2871) and Ellen Miller (WA 2-1273) would welcome your help right now. Call them and join the fun.

THE RESIDENT NEWSLETTER welcomes newsworthy contributions of neighborhood interest. Send to our Secretary, Mrs. Peggy Duckett, 335 South Second Street.

Contributors to the September issue: Joanne Denworth, Peggy Duckett, Alan Halpern, Georganne Mears, John Nelson, David Stevens



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May, 1972

THE CASE OF THE DISPLACED TENANTS

The report of a special SHCA committee formed to help relocate Octavia Hill tenants will be the main topic at the June 14th membership meeting at McCall School.

The committee was charged by the Association to come up with suggestions for housing seven families from the 600 block of Lombard Street who face eviction by Octavia Hill. To comply with a Redevelopment order, Octavia Hill must renovate the properties; the renovations will make the units too costly for the present long-time tenants.

Briefly, the committee, after numerous meetings with public agencies, is recommending a proposal for new construction of 19 rental units on two parcels of land -- one at the northwest corner of Sixth and Lombard Streets, and the other at the southwest corner of Sixth and Delancey Streets. Construction would be assisted in various ways by federal funds; they would be owned by a community-controlled corporation and managed by Octavia Hill. The goal is to have mixed income housing, which would be regulated by the community.

The proposal will be explained at the meeting and will not be undertaken unless supported by the community.

Prior to the SHCA membership meeting, a meeting will be held to explain the proposal to residents in the immediate vicinity of the projected development and determine their reaction. This meeting will be held Thursday, June 1 at 8 p.m. in the McCall School auditorium.

Philip Price is Chairman of the Committee. Members are Leonard Bachman, Rev. F. Lee Richards, David Stevens and Hugh Zimmers.

GETTING OUR FOOT IN THE REDEVELOPMENT DOOR

The Redevelopment Authority has agreed to have an SHCA Representative at meetings of the Advisory Board of Design. SHCA made the request so it could receive more timely information on plans and proposals for our area and make recommendations at a meaningful time in the development process.

Two architects, Robert Hill and Marshall Meyers, who are current SHCA Board members have agreed to share this responsibility. They will be able to review plans and to participate in meetings of the Advisory Board and in open meetings with developers, but will not have a vote.

THE SOCIETY HILL FUND: Give 'til it feels good!

In 1971 the Society Hill Fund distributed \$200 more than it collected. However, thanks to a good opening balance, it was still solvent at year's end. A total of \$1,275 was disbursed: \$200 for concerts, \$250 to Starr Garden, \$250 to McCall School, \$575 to three football teams.

The Fund was started in 1969 as a non-profit organization to encourage people to donate money to worthwhile causes in and around the neighborhood. Contributions are tax deductible. The Fund is managed by five trustees all of whom are members of SHCA (Messrs. Erfle, Latta, Randolph, Schall, Stevens).

About half the funds in 1971 came in as a result of specific appeals. The other half was unrestricted and came in along with membership dues. The trustees prefer to use the unrestricted funds as matching grants. For example, when the McCall Home and School Association needed \$500 for audio-visual equipment, the Fund promised \$250 if Home and School could raise the other \$250. The same matching offer was made to Starr Garden when it was raising money to equip its new building.

Anyone who wants to support the activities of the Community Coalition (see below) can send a contribution to the fund with the word "Coalition" on the envelope. Similarly, if you want to help support the concerts, send a check with the word "Music" on the envelope. Checks should be made out to Society Hill Fund and sent to George Schall, Treasurer, 518 Spruce Street.

CONCERTS: SUMMER OF '72

Why head for Tanglewood or Saratoga -- or even the Dell -- when you can listen to Mozart under the stars just a few yards away from your home?

Three outdoor concerts are scheduled for the mall at Society Hill Towers from a bandstand set up in front of the shopping plaza. Bring along a blanket and stretch out on the grass or use the folding chairs to hear an exceptional musical series booked for SHCA by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Curtis of the 600 block of Spruce. The Curtises play with the Philadelphia Orchestra and have signed up some of their colleagues plus a modern jazz group. Mark your calendar for:

Saturday, June 24th: a woodwind octet of Philadelphia Orchestra members will perform works by Mozart and Beethoven.

Saturday, July 29th: The Orchestra's Philarte Quartet will perform works by Haydn and Ravel.

August (date not yet set): Bernard Peiffer, the great French jazz pianist, will lead his trio through some familiar pieces and some meandering improvisation.

Concerts will probably start at 8 p.m. Watch for posters confirming the time.

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH FOR THIRD AND SPRUCE

Get out your fountain pen again. Here's why.

The choice of a developer for the old Metropolitan Hospital site has been a primary concern of SHCA since last September when six bid proposals for the site were submitted to the Redevelopment Authority. At that time, SHCA was granted an opportunity to review the proposals. A committee reviewed them according to objective criteria and, after consulting with immediate neighbors ranked them in order of acceptability. The committee's report was endorsed by the Board and the membership.

SHCA's first choice as developer -- William Chanoff Investments, Stephen Goldner, Architect -- was also first choice of the Advisory Board of Design of the Redevelopment Authority, and selected as the "best proposal" by OPDC. Thus, both community and professionals agreed on the most desirable proposal.

Since October, the matter has rested with a Review Committee, which is made up of representatives of the Authority, OPDC and the City Planning Commission. This Committee will make final recommendations to the Authority, for their action.

In March, we learned that Mr. Bronstein's plan was to be recommended, even though it was one of two proposals which SHCA deemed totally unacceptable and ranked at the bottom of all the advisory groups' lists. Several hundred letters from residents have temporarily staved off that result. Because of community interest, HUD is currently reviewing the proposals and the selection procedure. Some action must be taken soon. You can help further by writing to:

Dr. Bruce Baldwin
Redevelopment Authority
City Hall Annex
Philadelphia 19107

Mr. Theodore Robb
Housing and Urban Development
Curtis Building
Philadelphia 19106

Hon. Frank Rizzo
Municipal Services Building
Philadelphia 19102

At issue is whether government agencies will respect the Community's interest in assuring good design and quality performance in the development of the neighborhood.



SOUND
OFF!

We want to hear from you. In person. At the next meeting of SHCA. It will be held, as usual, at the McCall School Auditorium on Wednesday, June 14th at 8 p.m.

The main topic will be the committee's report on the Octavia Hill tenants. They'll tell you what they propose. You tell them what you think.

Plus a review of other neighborhood concerns. Plus dozens of niggling sundry items.

Miss it at your peril!

THE GOOD SEED

If you can't get your kids to eat carrots, maybe they might be interested in growing them. 4-H Clubs are now a big city thing in other parts of the U.S. This summer, children between the ages of six and twelve are invited to have their own vegetable garden in the Presbyterian Church lot at Fourth and Lombard Streets. Parents who would like to help are needed. If you are interested, call Joan Putney, MA 7-5952 for information.

DON'T STRIKE OUT ON OUR KIDS

There are two kinds of gangs. One kind hangs around the corner and gets into trouble. The other kind gets together and channels their activities constructively. The Community Coalition was formed to turn the first kind of group into the second kind.

The big push over the summer is in sports. The Coalition's Recreation and Education Committee has been working hard to establish a number of neighborhood baseball teams to compete in district and city league competition:

Ages 14 to 16 years - an eight-team softball league has been formed. Opening game is May 30. Doubleheaders on Tuesdays at Fourth and Washington beginning at 6 p.m. Single games on Thursdays at Starr Garden at 6 p.m.

Ages 12 to 14 years -- a team representing Starr Garden has been entered into the city-wide league. League play has begun.

Ages 10 to 12 years -- Mrs. Jean Smith is forming a four-team league. It's not too late to sign up. Games will be played at Starr Garden and will be coached and supervised by adults.

Ages 8 to 10 years -- there have been inquiries about instruction for this age group and attempts are being made to accommodate them. Those interested should sign up at Starr Garden.

This is only the beginning of a year-round sports program being developed by the Coalition. They are also working with officials from the Police Athletic League to establish a PAL facility in the Southwark area.

Help is most urgently needed. If you can donate some time to help coach or umpire call Rev. F. Lee Richards -- WA 3-7147. Also useful is sports equipment in good condition.

Money is needed, too. It can be a tax-deductible contribution through the Society Hill Fund. Simply indicate your contribution is for the Coalition. To help with fund raising, contact Chairman, Deborah Newbold, WA 3-0766.

It's your turn at bat!

DARTS AND LAURELS

Laurel: To the Perelman Antique Toy Museum for its Grade A garden on Second Street.

Dart: To Jefferson Hospital for not cleaning up after their "day" at the Head House.

Laurel: To Phil Price for his countless hours on the Octavia Hill Tenants Committee.

Dart: To Norman Denny for blocking Spruce Street with trucks for Washington Square East when we're trying to get to the office.

Laurel: To Penn's Landing Square for finally replacing all the trees they knocked down. When they get to the Belgian block maybe Attica East won't be as bad as we thought it would be.

Dart: To the Streets Department for never filling all those pot holes.

Laurel: To the Streets Department for finally cleaning up the neighborhood earlier this month. The white wings came around with shovels and got it all up.

Dart: To Van Arkel & Co. for failing to meet its commitment to develop the east side of Head House Square for the seventh consecutive year.

Laurel: To the A & P for drastically lowering its prices in mid-May.

Dart: To Penn's Landing Square for not providing free parking with its high priced apartments.

Laurel: To Lerner's Cafeteria, Market near Second, for continuing to produce the world's best and stickiest cinnamon bun.

Dart: To Redevelopment or L & I or whomever's responsible for not keeping the Mariner Church boarded up, thus providing a comfortable home for assorted winos, dogs, rats and junkies looking for a quiet place to nod.

Laurel: To the art lovers who swiped that monstrous metal fish sculpture from in front of the A & P. We wish they'd discover the horror in Bingham Court.

Dart: And a sticky foot to dog owners who refuse to curb their curs.

Laurel: To the good people who planted all those new trees on Lombard Street and the 300 block of South.

Dart: To the Sugar Cone for having every flavor of ice cream except our favorite - apricot sherbert.

Laurel: To everyone in the neighborhood who sends in additional items for the next edition of this column.

PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL'S TRIPLE HEADER

The ladies have really pulled out all the stops. For their annual "do", the Women's Auxiliary has come up with three neighborhood happenings to turn you on and keep the hospital solvent:

A House Tour on Sunday, May 21st from 1 to 5 p.m. Three Society Hill houses will be open, together with the Philadelphia Contributionship at 212 South Fourth Street. Also highlighting the afternoon's festivities will be a flea market and antique car exhibit on the hospital grounds on the 800 block of Pine Street.

A Sidewalk Fabric Sale in front of Stapler Fabrics Inc., 1224 Walnut Street on Wednesday, May 31st.

Pennsylvania Hospital Day on Wednesday, June 9th, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Washington Square. Plan to have lunch and enjoy the music. There will be foods, plants and goodies to buy as well as games to play.

POSITION AVAILABLE

The Old Pine Street Church Cooperative Nursery at Fourth and Pine Streets has an opening for a Nursery School Teacher for the 4 year-old age group. Classes will run five days a week from 9 to 12 p.m., September through June. Applicants may contact Mrs. J. N. Pattison, WA 5-8813.

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Contributors to the May issue: Joanne Denworth, Peggy Duckett, Mrs. Frank Elliot, Alan Halpern, Anne Leitch, Georganne Mears, John Nelson, David Stevens