RESIDENT NEWSLETTER

Box 3, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19105

March, 1981

Party of the Year

Upwards of 300 people had a very good time on February 1st at the SHCA party to welcome new members held in NewMarket. There was a host of new faces - many of them condominium owners from the Society Hill Towers and Hopkinson House. We hope to see them again at our General Membership Meeting on March 11th.

Huzzas and thanks to: The Party Committee - Lu Bangert, Carol Berger, Nancy Frenze, Joan Simon and Edna Wenk; the Membership Committee - Carole Saft and Sissy Futcher; the SHCA Board; the promoters, Joan Simon and Nancy Hohns of Domsky Simon Advertising Inc. for NewMarket; Bob Adomunes of Lily's; Ronald Godley of L'Affiche Gallery; Larry Grady of Four Seasons Florist, and the entertainers, the Al Stauffer Trio.

The Latest Dirt

Litter Committee Chairman Liz Ostrander contacted the Philadelphia deputy managing director, Steve Avinger, and learned that:

The long-time Clean Block Program is no longer functioning. Instead, a new program called Philadelphia More Beautiful is being developed. If people would like to sign up with the city as block captains, they will be registered with the city and will become a part of this program.

Although both the anti-litter and the anti-dog-litter laws are now in effect, neither is being aggressively enforced. The city is presently checking on the legal ramifications and is also developing a media blitz to publicize the two laws. Avinger

(continued on page 7)

Mark Your Calendars

Meeting of the Society Hill Civic Election, and By-Laws Revision. Association will take place on Wednesday, March 11th at 8 p.m., Wasson Hall, Old Pine Community Center at 4th and Lombard.

The following items will be on the agenda: Low Income Housing, Real Estate Tax Appeals, Independence Place, "Bookbinders Lot" Hotel, I-95, Trash in Society Hill, Resident Sticker Parking, The Shambles

The next General Membership (Headhouse), N.E. Quadrant Mayor Green has been invited to address the meeting, but has not yet committed himself to attend.

> There will be a question period at the onset of the meeting for the benefit of new members and prospective members who want to know more about the Association and its activities.

Committee Reports

Income Housing Low

The Committee on Low-Income Housing, composed of Robert J. Holtz (chairman), Aaron Beyer, Elizabeth Ostrander, Elizabeth Schall and Janet Andereck, met three times in January and the beginning of February. The committee reviewed the present status of the low-income housing litigation in an effort to resolve this long controversy. There is presently an outstanding consent decree in the **Dodson** case, which would provide for new construction of 14 to 18 units of low-income housing on three sites along 6th Street, at Lombard, Pine and Panama Streets. The Civic Association has instituted a lawsuit, the Harris case, attempting to block the implementation of that consent decree in Dodson, and after much legal wrangling, it now appears that the Harris case is moving towards a trial in the near future. The committee recommended to the board of directors that the Civic Association continue to pursue the Harris case, and that in the meantime it explore new possibilities of reaching a. compromise solution to the lowincome housing controversy. The committee further recommended that funds needed for the litigation be raised outside the auspices of the Civic Association, for the time being, but that the Civic Association support such fund-raising efforts and contribute up to \$250 as needed

(continued on page 5)

N.E. Quadrant Director **Election**

At the March 11th General Membership Meeting, a NE quadrant director will be elected to replace Kathleen Lynch who has resigned since moving from the area. Stephen W. Miller president of the Society Hill Towers Owners Association has been recruited to run. All challengers must be from the NE quadrant to be eligible. Steve is a partner with Clark, Ladner, Fortenbaugh and Young and has been active in several civic groups.

Sticker Parking Inches Onward

A draft proposal for a Resident Sticker Parking Program has been approved by the SHCA board and will, hopefully, go to the City shortly. The proposal was drafted by SHCA president Michael Willmann in his capacity as the chairman of ACCEPT (Action Coalition for East Philadelphia Traffic). ACCEPT is composed of representatives from SHCA, Queen Village Neighbors Association, Queen Village Businessmen Association, South Street Business Association, NewMarket management and merchants and the Pennsport Civic Association. Co-chairing ACCEPT are QVBA president Rick Sirianni and QVNA president Conrad Weiler.

The proposal was drafted and preliminarily approved by ACCEPT on December 5th and approved by the SHCA board on January 14th "as a first step" in getting the City to sponsor such a program in the affected neighborhoods. The plan would not guarantee neighbors parking spaces, but would designate certain streets exclusively for parking by residents so that neighbors would have a better chance of finding on-street parking near their homes.

I-95 Update

Discussions by the representatives of the City government and the leaders of the riverfront communities from Northern Liberties to Whitman continue concerning the possible addition of new on and off ramps to I-95.

A special meeting of the SHCA on January 7th produced an Association position in opposition to any new ramps and in favor of the reconstruction of Delaware Avenue from Tasker Street on the south to Callowhill Street on the north for the purpose of providing a quality roadway serving existing I-95 exits

(continued on page 8)

The Flowers of Spring

Cheer up! Spring and May Baskets are not far off. Saturday, May 2nd is the date to display your creation. The Hill-Physick-Keith House will have its annual plant sale on Saturday and Sunday, April 25th and 26th, from 10 to 6, and experts will be there to demonstrate May

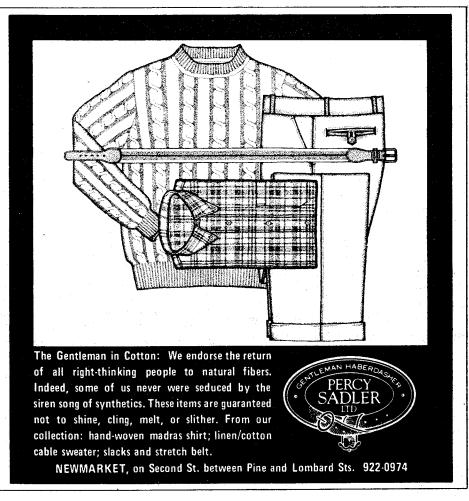
Basket techniques and designs. There will be a contest again this year, with entry forms available in mid-April. If you miss yours, pick one up at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, 325 Walnut St. For more information call Ellen Miller at 922-1273.

Pro Musica Score Card

Pennsylvania Pro Musica will perform on Sunday, March 8th, at 4:30 p.m. at Old Pine Street Church; the program is "Spanish Music III", the third in a series of musical works from the Iberian peninsula. On Sunday, April 5th at 2:30 p.m., Pro Musica will present Bach's St. John's Passion, the first version written for performance at the Thomas Kirche Leipzig on Good Friday in 1734; this epic masterwork will be performed at Old Christ Church, Call Dorothy Riggie at WA 5-7706 or PPM at 727-5819 for ticket information.

Chamber Musicale

The Friends of Independence National Historical Park will present their First Concert Series on Wednesday, March 11th at 5:30 p.m. at First Bank of the U.S. at 3rd Street between Chestnut and Walnut. The Amado String Quartet will perform Quartet Opus 76 No. 4 in B Major by Joseph Haydn, Three Pieces for String Quartet by Igor Stravinsky, and Quartet No. 6 in F Major by Anton Dvorak. Tickets are \$5. Reservations must be made in advance. For information, call 597-7919. (And don't forget to come to the SHCA General Membership Meeting afterwards).



Around the neighborhood . . .

If you didn't see the fireworks, you heard them. And you might have been in center city when movie people careened through City Hall courtyard and smashed into the Wanamaker window.

So you probably know that John Travolta has been in Philadelphia making a movie entitled "Blow Out." But do you know who allowed it? Who let them in? Well, we know now. One of our neighbors did. Joseph W. Brown, a Delancey Street resident, is commissioner of public property and his permission was needed for all of this to happen.

Commissioner Brown talked to me in his Municipal Services Building office recently. It wasn't hard to figure out that he had left a very satisfactory retirement to take on the running of a department with an \$130 million budget because an old family friend, Mayor William Green, asked him to.

The Commissioner, who is a CPA, had obviously enjoyed his lifestyle after retiring from **Price**, **Waterhouse** in 1976. He still spends weekends in Florida where his wife winters. During the leisurely years, he became first a partner in the **Sassafras Bar** and then a partner in the **Key & Quill** shop. But that's all behind him now—or at least for as long as he chooses to sit in the commissioner's seat.

He came to serve in the Green administration, he said, because the mayor needed "people he could trust to head up departments." he said he would leave as soon as he thought his area was "well organized and operating efficiently."

As a man who had spent his life in the business world, the commissioner expressed his "agreeable surprise with the quality of career people" whom he has encountered in his government post. He made special note of the engineers and architects and said of them: "They are very competent. They are excellent. They are survivors. It isn't easy to adjust to changing

administrations."

Real estate is one of the areas his department is very much involved in, the commissioner said, enumerating some of the operations under his aegis. "The city rents properties to people and the city leases properties from people." We maintain custodial services of the major buildings-City Hall (that's how he got drawn into the moviemaking highlinks), the Municipal Services Building and City Hall Annex. We run the City Hall switchboard-all of the communication systems-including closed circuit television in the subways and police stations. Also fire alarm boxes.

"We're also responsible for all city-owned vehicles not operated by the Streets department," he added.

His architectural-engineering division designs "mini-construction" in the City. For major undertakings, such as the Mid-City Tunnel and the High-Speed Line to the airport, the Commissioner said, outside architects and engineers are brought in.

I asked him when he thought these constructions would be completed—"available to people" and he projected the date of January 1983 for the High-Speed Line and 1984 for the tunnel.

He ventured that if City officials had known when they began these projects what they know now (the scarcity of federal dollars and the extent to which these undertakings soak the money up), he doubts they ever would have been started.

Commenting again on the High-Speed Line, he said: "One of the big problems connected with that is the need to tie it in with Amtrak." That will all have to be coordinated.

I asked the Commissioner three matters of special interest to Society Hill residents: the proposed Tun Tavern museum at Front and Spruce, the Head House Shambles and cable television.

Brown, himself a resident of the area some eight or nine years,

unhesitatingly plunged in and took the points one by one: "Tun Tavern," he said, "is a politically sensitive issue. No one wants to get into a hassle with the Marines. At one point, the City threatened to take the property away from them. We didn't, but we did go about eliminating the immediate danger by filling in the excavation. And a park will go in there. The Marine Corps Foundation hopes that by spring they will come up with a plan for the space."

It seems the Marines had \$350,000 to construct a memorial, but all of the money went into the building of the foundation because of an underground stream which hadn't been foreseen. "There is a new group in charge now—and they promise to do something," he said.

The Commissioner admitted that "we haven't made up our minds yet about the Shambles. It was my idea to form a corporation for the purpose of upgrading it. I had in mind two city representatives, two NewMarket people (one) a management person, the other a tenant) and one Civic Association representative—with the City having veto power. I understand, unofficially, that the SHCA voted it down. So we're back where we were—with the City running it." That would mean, he said, the same kind of arts and crafts marts and fundraising events—pretty much the way it's been. "But we did put a stop to the loud music and the sale of food," he said.

Cable television is an even knottier question. If you thought the hang-up on that was (a) zoning does not permit wires to be strung from poles in this part of the city, (b) the bids from potential franchisers weren't high enough, low enough, or just not forthcoming or (c) somebody in City Hall didn't have the time or wouldn't spend the time coming to grips with the problem—

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Neighborhood (continued from page 3)

none of the above is correct,

according to Commissioner Brown.
Commissioner Brown was the

man directed by the mayor to

explore the possibility and the

feasibility of installing cable tv. What

he discovered was that the rewards

were staggering and it raised the

question, "Why should the city give

away millions of dollars it so

should get \$4 million and the

franchiser would get \$40 million for

operating the service, the

Commissioner pointed out. "Mayor

Green was the lone voice

questioning this. Now many

municipalities are regretting their

contracts and want ownership.

Under an existing plan, the city

desperately needs itself?"

Independence Place

Meetings were held in December and February. The representatives at the December meeting were Edward Edelstein, Nancy Frenze, Charles Quinter, Steven Steelman, Marty Weiss and Michael Willmann. Mr. Edelstein, due to serious illness, and Mr. Steelman were not present at the February meeting.

December Meeting: Complaints from Washington Sq. East Condominium 1 and 2 concerning work on the project before the agreed hour of 7 a.m. were confirmed and the committee insisted that no work start before 7 a.m.:

the committee discussed means of containing the debris that is spreading from the project as the building becomes taller;

The committee was advised that on October 13th, a survey on ventilation was done in the Washington Square garage and that the fans, as a result of the survey, were being upgraded.

The projected construction schedule as of February is:

Activity

Estimated Completion

May 1981

Cast-in-place concrete structure to roof.

July 1981

Exterior brick masonry

August 1981

Curtain wall and glazing Interior finishes

November 1981

Sidewalk and reconstruction

August 1981

of 6th St. Plaza turn-around

October 1981

February Meeting: The concrete section of Manning Walk that the developer agreed to repair at his own expense had been repaired at the time of this meeting. Manning Walk brickwork and lighting repairs and the removal of the Washington Square garage sign was not done at the time of the meeting.

The committee was informed that Washington Square East (continued on page 6)

"One of the questions holding things up is a legal one. Can the city be in this business? We wouldn't actually operate it," Brown said, "we would hire someone to do that. We hire people to build a tunnel for \$325 million . . . and that's a lot more complicated than cable television."

I didn't walk out of Commissioner Brown's office with visions of clear, unscrambled, unghosted television pictures dancing in my head. It may be a while yet.

Fran Israel

Housing (continued from page 1)

for the incidental expenses connected with the fund-raising efforts, such as flyers and mailings. In an effort to settle the controversy over construction of low income housing in Society Hill and to support the Society Hill Civic Association in the current law suit. the Society Hill Housing Foundation was created on February 14, 1981. An application making contributions tax deductible has been submitted to the IRS but it is not yet certain that the application will be approved. If you are interested in supporting the Foundation's objectives, please fill out the form below and mail it with your contribution.

To: SOCIETY	HILL	HOUSING	FOUND!	NOITA

Name	,				_
Address			· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
Phone	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·				
I pledge \$ (low income housing litigat 3/1/81—12/1/81)					
Checks should be made to and delivered or mailed to:	SOCIETY	HILL HO	USING F	OUNDATION	1

R.W. Ostrander, Trustee (phone: 922-6179) 408 South Sixth Street Phila., Pa., 19147

Please check if you'd like monthly pledge envelopes ____ yes ____ no

Darts/Laurels

Laurel—to BoyScout Troop 176 and scoutmaster Charles Jackson for winning the Jane and Maurice Seltzer Conservation Award. A check for \$200 has been presented to the troop, which will be used to purchase camping equipment.

Dart—to Bill Green, Dick Doran and all the other city officials who ride around in their big limousines while the rest of us slough through the trash-littered streets.

Laurel—to the new city skating rink in Queen Village on Front below Washington. No skate rentals offered, but the ice is nice and it's a lot cheaper and nearer than U. of P.

Dart—to Greenfield Real Estate for not attracting a tenant to the 5th and Delancey vacant stores. Are we that difficult a neighborhood that no one wants to join us here? Or does the landlord get the dart for an astronomical rent?

Laurels—to the many newcomers to the Civic Association. Thanks for joining us. Get involved. Meet your neighbors. Participate and let us know what you want from the Association.

Laurel—to Marge Gregory for serving hot coffee to the firemen and policemen at the scene of the fire in the two homes at Third and Delancey adjacent to hers.

Laurel—to Jennie Einman, Valerie Buller and friends for shovelling the north side of Delancey and American Street during out last big storm. Laurel—to Nancy Frenze et al for a great membership party on February 1st.

Dart—to the National Park Service for their *unusual* lack of sensitivity to their Spruce Street neighbors (SSN) at their Manning Street construction site. The 40-foot roof peaks contribute nothing to the purpose of the storage shed, but cast a shadow over all the nearby residential gardens. *Laurel*—to those dogowners who have heard of the dog nuisance law and are doing their part to keep our streets clean.

Darts—to the dogs who haven't read their owners the new law. If they've misplaced the ordinance, here it is:

(1) No person, having possession, custody or control of any animal, shall knowingly or negligently permit any dog or other animal to commit any nuisance upon any gutter, street, driveway, alley, curb or sidewalk in the City, or upon the doors or stairways of any building or place frequented by the public or used in common by the tenants, or upon the outside walls, walkways, driveways, alleys, curbs or stairways of any building abutting on a public street or park, or upon the grounds of any public park or public area, or upon any private property other than the property of the owner of such animal.

(2) Any person having possession, custody or control of any dog or other animal which commits a nuisance in any area other than the private property of the owner of such dog or other animal, as prohibited in 10-102(1), shall be required to immediately remove the said feces from such surface and either:

- (a) carry some away for disposal in a toilet, or
- (b) place same in a non-leaking container for deposit in a trash or litter receptacle.
- (3) Exception. The provisions of this Section shall not apply to a guide dog accompanying any blind persons, or to a dog used to assist any other physically handicapped person, or to animals used in any police or fire activities of the City or to horses.
- (4) Penalties. The penalty for violation of any provision of this Section shall be \$100. for the first offense, \$200. for the second offense, and \$300. for each succeeding offense, and imprisonment not exceeding 30 days if the fine and costs are not paid within 10 days.

Independence (continued from page 5)

Condominium 2 had unanimously rejected the Parking Study conducted by Pennoni Associates, Inc. for Independence Place. Ostensibly, the report-was rejected because it was a parking study and not a traffic study as called for in the agreement.

On behalf of some Washington Square East Condominium 1 homeowners Bert Blicher of 28 St. James Court stated that the major concern of his neighbors was that construction of Independence Place is proceeding without the conditions agreed to by the developer being properly executed and recorded.

Details of the parking study rejection and the status of the agreement with the developer will be discussed at the March 11 SHCA General Membership Meeting.

(Zoning Update)

Dock Street (sometimes called A-4 Parcel: Bookbinder's parking lot)-At this writing the city has narrowed the potential developers to two. Both presently have plans which abide by the guidelines in the Urban Renewal Plan (Stouffer Corp. with 300 rooms and 230 car spaces and Radisson Hotel with 300 rooms and 300 car spaces). Neighbors directly impacted by the hotel's height, as well as vehicular and pedestrian traffic met recently as an Ad Hoc SHCA Committee. They were the Society Hill Towers' residents represented by attorney and Resident Council's President Steve Miller, the Washington Square

(continued on page 8)

Two corrections on Zoning

273 South 4th: The new owners needed a variance to demolish the existing rear structure (which covered 95% of the lot) and rebuild with an 85% coverage - this still exceeds the 70% coverage required in the Urban Renewal Plan. The plans were presented to the board and interested neighbors were

invited. SHCA approved and so did the ZBA.

415 Spruce: Previously an empty lot, this involved new construction, more specifically, the lot was zoned as a three-family site; the present owner wanted to make this a single family dwelling with a utility apartment over the garage for live-in

help. Since the new plans exceeded the allowable lot coverage, a zoning variance was needed. The plans were viewed by the immediate neighbors and the SHCA approved the plans contingent on the neighbors choosing the color brick and upon receipt of a letter from the owner assuring SHCA that the utility space would not be rented.

Crimestopper Lowdown

A free program on all areas of self-protection and security, from how to walk down the street to what kinds of locks to put in your house will be held at the Old Pine Street Community Center (4th and Lombard) from 7 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, April 1st, 1981. The program will be conducted by members of The Philadelphia Police Department. It is sponsored by Western Savings Bank and WCAU Radio. For more information about the session, call 985-5721.

Dirt (continued from page 1)

said that the city will begin to crack down on litterers after there has been adequate publicity in the community. We asked Mr. Avinger to see if we could get extra trash baskets in areas used heavily by dogs.

Hello Strangers

From May 2-10 the neighborhoods of Philadelphia will once again welcome visitors to Philadelphia Open House. Sponsored by an umbrella of local groups including SHCA, the series of 28 tours in 16 neighborhoods will show private homes and gardens, historic houses, churches and other buildings. Six of these tours will take place in Society Hill - four afternoon tours run by the Friends of Independence National Historical Park and two evening tours run by the Landmarks Society. Many volunteers are needed for the afternoon tours (May 2, 4, 6, 9) to act as hosts and hostesses in the private houses and in the headquarters at 3rd and Pine (Kosciuszko House). Scheduling is usually arranged to allow time for volunteers to see other houses. Please call the Open House headquarters, 928-1188, to volunteer or to ask for brochures, or stop in at 313 Walnut Street. For Friends of INHP membership information, call 928-1553.

All neighbors are encouraged to have their property looking at its best - spruce up and clean up, make a May basket, leave garden gates and front windows uncovered so our visitors can get the full flavor of Society Hill. We're receiving national attention for these tours - let's show them our style.

Watch for more information soon on the Second Annual Society Hill Vernal Pretty-Up and Historic Balloon Race tentatively scheduled for April 25, in conjunction with plans to "pretty-up" for Philadelphia Open House.

An Ad First for SHCA

Interested in our new advertising scheme? For more information, call Loyde Harley at 925-4574 or Janet Andereck at 596-9556.

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Update (continued from page 6)

Townhouse Council (3rd Street Pei houses) represented by Marvin Sachs, M.D. and president of the council, and interested neighbors. The outcome of that meeting was a resolution that strongly endorsed the height restrictions within the Urban Renewal Plan. The Ad Hoc Committee plans to meet with both developers as they enter stage 2 to give them input, and later to come before a general membership meeting.

I-95 (continued from page 2)

with multiple access points for South Philadelphia and center-city thoroughfares.

The membership took this position in an effort to avoid traffic log-jams on key streets and to spread the burden created by I-95 as uniformly as possible.

Among the possible new ramps being discussed would be a southbound ramp exiting at Delancey Street and flying up and over the expressway and emptying onto Delaware Avenue at South Street; a northbound exit ramp coming off at the existing Queen Street stub and emptying onto Delaware Avenue at South Street; and a southbound entrance ramp on the existing stub at Morris Street with access only from Delaware Avenue and not through Pennsport or on Front Street.

The discussions were initiated by the City in an effort to see if a consensus could be developed among the affected communities. SHCA president Michael Willmann represents the Association in these discussions.

JOIN US

Tear off and mail to Society Hill Civic Association, P.O. Box 3, Philadelphia, PA, 19105, attention: Robert S. Thanhauser, Jr., Treasurer.

Please renew my (our) membership in the Association.

Name: ______1 person, \$6

Address: ______2 persons at same address,

Address: ______ 2 persons at same address, \$10

Phone: ______ I request waiver of dues

Add \$1. per member for your numbered SHCA parking sticker; include a self-addressed stamped envelope; \$5. more for each additional sticker.

Thanks . . .

Thanks to contributors to this issue: Libby Browne, Ellen Miller, Jean Drake, Liz Ostrander, Peggy Davies, Fran Israel, Bob Holtz and Mike Willmann. Copy for the April-May issue should be submitted by April 13. Copy can be dropped off at one of "staffs" homes: Alan Halpern, Jan Stephano, Peggy Robb, Nancy Frenze or mail to SHCA Newsletter, Box #3, Philadelphia, PA 19105.