SOCIETY HILL REPORTER

Issued March 8, 1997

Message from the President

Working Together

t is hard to believe it has been almost two Lyears since I took the office of president of the Civic Association. A lot has been accomplished - most of it due to the efforts of a number of dedicated Society Hill residents who have contributed their time and skills in all sorts of ways. This is the month to thank and publicly recognize them.

SOCIETY HILL VIC ASSOCIATION

Before getting down to specifics, some over-all "thank you's" are in order. Every one of them, whether or not mentioned below, has made an important contribution to the Civic Association and our community. Everything we have done has been a team effort. I also thank our members for their continuing efforts and support. Without a large and strong membership, we would lack both the numerical clout and the financial support that we need. You know who you are, and can know who else is a member of our civic organization by reading the list on pages 8-9 in this issue.

Preservation of our community

Now for some names. Preservation of our community is perhaps the number one function of the Civic Association. Most often this work involves zoning and planning. Here, I thank a true stalwart, Lorna Katz Lawson. Lorna, also a vice-president of the Association, has labored for years in monitoring potential zoning and planning changes for the community, attending zoning hearings, holding monthly and special Zoning and Development Committee meetings. Lorna has recently turned over her leadership to co-chairs Richard Bost and Bruce Thompson, but she continues working on SHCA's behalf as a vice-president. Thanks also to Richard and Bruce for undertaking this strenuous and never-ending task. And thanks also to George Compton, Ed Robinson and Howard Lander (another of our three vicepresidents) for making substantial contributions in this arena.

A subset of preservation is, of course, "historic" preservation. Bernice Hamel, one of our vice-presidents who chairs our Historic Preservation Committee, has devoted much of her efforts toward preserving our neighborhood's 300-year-old infrastructure and integrity. The committee continues to pursue the designation of our neighborhood as a city-certified historic district and works on other related initiatives.



This bi-monthly REPORTER itself is a very important function of the Civic Association. It is our principal method of communicating-not only with our members but with the entire neighborhood. Six times a year, Bernice Hamel and Alan Halpern alternate editorial responsibilities to "put it all together." We also have Bill Hawkins to thank for his excellent job on the business and advertising end of the newsletter. Each issue is a lot of work, and we get a consistently superior product. Thanks to everybody - including all who contribute articles.

A special thank you

A very special thank you (or perhaps a series of "thank you's") to Mary Sturdivant. I think Mary has a twitch; every time we ask for volunteers, her hand goes up! Mary has contributed in countless ways: Co-Chair of Clean-Up Day for four years; obtaining speakers and venues for our General Membership meetings - e.g. Ted Hershberg, last year, and Dean Gary Hack, for the upcoming March meeting; tree-planting and care; Membership Committee Co-Chair; and our Sidewalk Cleaning Project, among others.

Membership is the Association's lifeblood, and Matt DeJulio and Mary Sturdivant have led the work of that committee for several years. Through their efforts, our membership increased about 25% in 1996 to more than 625 households. We hope to do even better this year, because we need more than 800 member households to sustain our Sidewalk Cleaning Project. We have 551 members for 1997 thus far-so we haven't yet met last year's level. If you haven't joined or renewed, please do so TODAY.

Continued on p. 6

From the Board of Directors

n behalf of the entire community, we ask: how can we ever thank you, Mr. President? The job of running our Civic Association requires a range of talents that few individuals, in any community, can be found to have and all wrapped up in one personable package! How we ever got lucky enough to convince to you to take the job in the first place, and now continue for another term — none of us will ever know!

We're grateful for all the visible and invisible initiatives you've taken on - such as working together with nearby communities for such purposes as: (1) trying to persuade the City to create a public library that will serve Society Hill and our nearby neighbors; (2) curtailing the proliferation of "fastfood" restaurants in the South Street corridor; (3) forming a "rare alliance with the city of Philadelphia" in opposing the National Park Service's proposal to close the 500 block of Chestnut Street to vehicular traffic, which would be a serious hardship for our residents; (4) continuing the tradition of conducting neighborhood forums in which to express our concerns regarding quality-of-life issues — which are always at the heart of the matter for you in everything you do.

So it's not just that you put out our "brush fires" with your years of experience and people skills and legal skills. It's the nights you stay up writing letters, taking calls and being available to maintain and improve the amenities in our little corner of the world. We all know, that if this were "the real world," you'd be paid in the six figures for all this aggravation! Do you need it? Probably not! But somebody's got to do it! So thanks, Mel, from all of us. And keep up the good work!

SPRING CLEAN~UP DAY

Streets will be cleaned & our neighborhood beautified!

Save the day: Saturday, May 3

Society Hill is a neighborhood of beautiful homes and gardens. In recent summers, many residents have enjoyed the hanging baskets that neighbors have placed on their Franklin Lamps. This year the community is working toward having all Franklin Lamps adorned with beautiful flowering baskets. Please talk with your neighbors about "adopting" the lamps near your homes. Watch for a flyer filled with information about how to pre-order these finished baskets through plant sales on the same first weekend in May sponsored by the Physick House (321 S. 4th Street) and the McCall School (6th and Delancey Streets).

Our 1997 annual Spring Clean-Up Day is co-sponsored by the Society Hill Civic Association and the



Landmarks Lecture Series

Monday, March 24, 7:00 pm
Physick House, 321 S. 4th Street
"A Face as Familiar as that of the Moon,"
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Wednesday, April 9, 7:00 pm
Powel House, 244 S. Third Street
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Wednesday, May 14, 6:30 pm
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Washington Square West Civic Association. Society Hill coordinators are Janet Cooke and Jim Covello. John Jordan and Herb Scherrer represent Washington Square West.

Many city and community services and organizations will contribute time, energy, and equipment to help us clear away winter debris on the streets and sidewalks. It's up to us to beautify our gardens, window-boxes, doorways and Franklin Lamps with flowers. The success of the day depends on each of us pitching in to help maintain those features that make us all proud to live in Society Hill.

Future announcements about Clean-Up Day will include information about a community lunch where you, your neighbors and fellow workers can enjoy refreshments together and relish the feeling that comes with a job well done. Please watch for a flyer in your mailbox on the preceding Wednesday, April 30th. The flyer will provide explicit instructions about how to fully participate in Clean-Up Day: when and where to move your cars to facilitate the cleaning of all streets by the Philadelphia Streets Department; where to borrow brooms and acquire bags for sidewalk sweeping; and where to deliver your filled garbage bags and other trash. Mark your calendar for May 3 now—so that you can join us on this important day.



Plans for Washington Square

Presented at SHCA's General Membership Meeting, January 15

As most neighbors probably already know, the Fairmount Park Commission is handing over stewardship of Washington Square to Independence National Historical Park after completion of major renovations. Upgrading of the Square is a necessary condition made by the National Park Service prior to accepting it into the park system.

At the January General Meeting of the Civic Association, Winchell Carroll of the Patriots' Fund and Dave DuTot of the Delta Group, the landscape architects for the renovation, presented the plans for improvements. They reported that major work on the Square was last done in 1975, when it was closed for two years. The cost for those renovations was paid for by Continental Bank. Delta Group considers few of the existing elements to be of historical significance.

Plantings in the current plan conform to the 1818 design, with tall native trees following walkways and open grassy spaces. (See Editor's Note below.)

The Friends of Washington Square, headed by Anna Marie Marshall, gave the Delta Group their parameters for renovation. Plans include replacing the outside sidewalks with brick, removing all the existing slabs of stones of the interior walkways and replacing them with smaller, 3 x 2 blue-stone pavers, set in concrete. The wide perimeter walks will be reduced in width; the diagonals to remain the same. The central fountain is to be retained with an improved water jet. The Eternal Flame will be fueled by a City gas line instead of the current bottled supply. Today's Franklin Lamps will be concentrated along the lateral walks, while the diagonal walks will be illuminated by new lamps of a similar design.

The projected cost of \$5.3 million will include repair of the existing perimeter brick walls (which were built in 1956 without proper expansion joints), an upgraded irrigation system and new benches.

To date, Congressman Tom Foglietta has secured a \$2.6 million federal appropriation and the City has promised \$1 million. The Patriots' group is actively soliciting donations to fund a daily flag ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It also seeks to replace the deteriorating wall behind the flame.

Discussion from the floor expressed concern over the lack of public toilets, although there is a sewage system already in place. Park Service representatives, who attended the meeting, responded that facilities were inappropriate at this location and that, in any case, there were available facilities nearby at Independence Park.

Association members questioned the two year's duration of the project, and Dave DuTot answered that it would take that long to have three quarries deliver sufficient stone paving material. A greater concern of neighbors was voiced over the removal of all the 60-year-old, oversized pavers, which are irreplaceable, and surely of great value. Dave commented that 30% of the pavers are broken and that it would not be possible to set the old stones into a concrete bed as they are of varying thicknesses. Several individuals from the audience, claiming professional expertise, said that this was not so.

In spite of some of these expressed concerns, the community appears to be happy to see this project move forward. A note of caution, however: it is going to require some serious fund-raising!

—Cherry Bombeck

Another Cautionary Note:

While the neighbors are looking forward to receiving federal and municipal funds to fix up the Square, we still want to use Washington Square as our city park. Are we prepared to have as its primary purpose a strictly solemn memorial to honor those buried there? Arlington National Cemetery was the model quoted by Win Carroll at SHCA's meeting. Would activities like picnicking, sunbathing and exercising dogs then be banned as "inappropriate activities"—as was the idea of installing public toilets for the comfort of visitors?

---Mary Sturdivant

Editor's Historical Note:

Washington Square is one of Philadelphia's original five squares planned by William Penn in 1683. In 1825 its name was changed from Southeast Square to honor George Washington. The Square is believed to be the burial ground of over 4,000 Revolutionary soldiers and at least 10,000 victims of the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1793. Today this urban park contains about 200 mostly native American trees, planted by the City beginning in 1816. The Tomb of the Unknown Revolutionary Soldier and an eternal flame memorial commemorates all those who fought for America's freedom in the American Revolution.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Wednesday, March 19
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Presentation by Dr. Gary Hack
Society Hill Sheraton
6:30 pm Board of Directors' meeting
7:30 Refreshments
8:00 Program
(See page 4)

Wednesday, April 16, 7:30 pm BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING Old Pine Community Center 4th & Lombard Streets

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SOCIETY HILL REPORTER

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Penn's New Dean Addresses Membership

at SHCA's General Membership Meeting Society Hill Sheraton, Wednesday, March 19, 8 pm



Dr. Gary Hack

On Wednesday, March 19, at the Society Hill Sheraton, Dr. Gary Hack, newly appointed dean of the Graduate School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania, will address the general membership on "The Future of Center City: Perspectives for the 21st Century."

Dr. Hack comes to Penn from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he was a professor of Urban Design. A consulting principal with Carr, Lynch and Sandell, he was chief plan-

ner for the redevelopment of the Prudential Center in Boston, the West Side Waterfront in New York, and a new metropolitan plan for Bangkok. He has lectured at Harvard, University of Virginia, University of California at Berkeley, USC, University of Michigan, and other American universities, as well as international universities including Melbourne, Naples, Genoa, Tsinghua, South China Institute of Technology, University of Hong Kong, and many others.

The six pages of projects, books and articles he has written include papers for HUD and the White House and many urban spaces. With this varied background, he has a broad perspective

to offer this community as Society Hill struggles with its own development issues.

The General Membership Meeting begins at 8 pm in the Hamilton Room at the Society Hill Sheraton, at One Dock Street. Refreshments will be available at 7:30 pm. In addition to Dr. Hack's presentation, the Board of Directors will ask the membership for feedback on Project Sweepstakes, the sidewalk cleaning program inaugurated last fall.

Please make every effort to attend the meeting and Dr. Hack's stimulating talk. This educational forum is one of the benefits of membership in SHCA.

-Mary Sturdivant

John Warner Duckett

Society Hill lost a long-time friend when John Duckett died on February 24. At the standing-room-only memorial service at Old Pine Church, friends and colleagues spoke of his irrepressible energy, enthusiasm, warmth and humor.

The moving service, led by Rev. Deborah McKinley, included a sermon by former pastor, Rev. Bill Pindar, and music performed by neighbors Margarita Montanaro, Jim Straw, and Tom Whittemore. John was an Elder at Old Pine and active with the Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble. To his wife Peggy and sons, Warner and Pace, we extend our deepest sympathies.



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Message from the President, continued

More committees at work

The ownership, creation and expansion of liquor licenses is always a matter of great concern in our neighborhood. The job of chairman for our Liquor Control Committee was not easy to fill. Luckily, about a year ago, I was able to persuade **Ed Robinson** to take the job. Ed has performed diligently and, in fact, to prove his dedication, he even visited some of the local licensees at his own expense. (He has assured me that it was "strictly business," but who knows???)

Public safety is always a concern, and my thanks go to **Barbara Bagelio** for her efforts in keeping Town Watch alive and well in Society
Hill. Philadelphia is a city of trees, and **Jean Bodine** has continued
leading our program of tree planting and maintenance, along with a coterie of committee associates known as "tree-tenders."

Last year we received a grant for sidewalk cleaning, a test project, which **Dave Stevens** agreed to supervise and monitor. He has done a superb job, and is now working with the Membership Committee to increase membership sufficiently to enable us to continue the program without outside money.

Thanks also to everyone else who have demonstrated initiative for the betterment of our community. An example is **Joan Less**'s new and humane Committee for Homeless Intervention.

The Civic Association is not all committee activity. It is also administration-keeping records, taking and writing minutes, arranging meetings, keeping our essential equipment in order. Here, my thanks go to Janet Cooke, our secretary, for her skillful note-taking and writing of meeting minutes. She will now be co-chairing our Spring Clean-Up Day with Joe Covello (see article on page 3.) I also thank our treasurer, Martha Moore, for keeping our association's books and Judy Friedman, our administrator.

Thanks again to everyone named and also to the many who have helped, but for whom space was not sufficient for specific recognition. Let's keep working together!

- Mel Buckman

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Update:

Committee on the Homeless

The response from Civic Association members to our newly formed Committee on Homelessness was enthusiastic and uplifting. Nine people attended our first meeting. We hope even more people will join our efforts.

On February 20, an educational meeting was held with professionals who work with the homeless. Attending were Will O'Brien, Director of Project Home Outreach and his associate Peter Gonzales, Sister Marie Christie from Old St. Joseph's Church (in our neighborhood), and Roosevelt Darby from the Philadelphia Committee to End Homelessness. After describing what services each of their organizations provide, we brainstormed the most effective ways that our committee could help homeless people obtain housing or enter treatment centers.

We have already collected information which we hope will be of value to SHCA members. If you want to report somebody sleeping, loitering or who appears to be living on our streets, please call Will O'Brien of Project Home Outreach at 232-7272. He will dispatch an outreach team to visit that person and try to entice him or her into a city shelter.

There are many projects that our committee is looking into that we hope will benefit both the homeless people as well as our neighborhood. With welfare and budget cuts, we can probably expect an increase in the number of people who live on our city streets. That makes your involvement in our efforts even more crucial. No training required! Just call me at 625-9849 and leave your name and phone number. I'll get back to you. Thank you for your support.

Call the cops! It works!

I called the graffiti cops about spray paint on my 700 block of Pine and Delancey Streets. About ten days later I had a call back from one of the two police of-

ficers, Ed Salamon, to tell me that the "male perpetrator" had been caught in the act by two police officers on patrol at 7th and Bainbridge.

Most graffiti writers are not caught in the act and, even if

known by their "tag," can't be arrested.

The young man they caught lives on the 700 block of Pine Street, is an art student, confessed his graffiti crimes to detectives, and showed them additional sites that he had "decorated."

The two police specialists, Officers Ed Salamon and his partner Stan Sheppard, recently spoke to SHCA members—that's how I got their phone number: (686-3099).

Meanwhile, if you find graffiti on your property there are products to remove it. There are also prevention products against most types of graffiti. For information about a local supplier of professional anti-graffiti products, call Equipment Trade Service Company at 610-583-7657.

-Bernie Cleff

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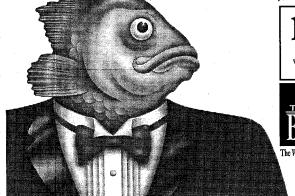
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1997 SHCA Members

This list of our membership households is current to February 25, 1997. Asterisks next to names indicate new members.

Look over the list to see who's missing! If your next-door neighbor is not included, please give him/her/them a call to solicit their participation. Bring them a copy of the newsletter with your personal note attached. Remind them that our weekly sidewalk cleaning program, Project Sweep-stakes, depends on sufficient household memberships to pay for the cost. Surely \$40 per household per year is worth that extra touch to clean sidewalks after weekly trash pick-ups. Don't you agree?

To Members: Thanks for joining us one and all! We hope to see new and familiar faces at future meetings and social events.

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* Indicates New Member

Mailbag

January 25, 1997

To the Editor of the Society Hill Reporter:

As a member of the Board of Directors for the Society Hill Civic Association for the past two years, I have listened to many presentations and proposals for developments in the South Street Business District. Often it has appeared that the needs for business development conflict with quality-of-life issues for those who live in the nearby neighborhoods. These discussions have prompted me to think about my own relationship to South Street.

I moved into Society Hill in September 1993. While a few businesses and restaurants on South Street have changed since then, to a large degree, South Street is as it was when we chose to move into this neighborhood. My husband and I enjoy the convenience of walking to many shops, services and restaurants. A quick list of establishments that my family and I regularly patronize includes: Tower Books, Tower Records, The Book Trader, The Gap, Haagen Das, Chef's Market, South Street Bagel Shop, Mustard Greens Restaurant, Primavera Restaurant, Java Coffee Shop, TLA Video Store, Pearl Paints, Thrift Drugs, Bobby Schorr's Dry Cleaner, Essene, Fourth Street Deli, South Street Florists, The Card Store, Kamikaze Kids and Cohen's Hardware. And I know there are more.

When I go to South Street I often meet people I know and my sense of community is extended. I also see people patronizing some of the businesses I choose to pass by—people of all ages and races and with a variety of persuasions. Diversity is surely a characteristic of the businesses and shoppers one finds on South Street. It's what you expect when you choose to live in a city.

The challenge for the South Street/Headhouse Business District is to foster development on South Street that continues to build a strong base of businesses that offer goods and services in a community atmosphere. Notions of what constitutes progress will often be perceived differently between the business district and the neighboring residential districts. It seems to me only logical that local neighborhood associations will sometimes be in opposition to what the business district proposes.

Over the long run, I believe that through conflict, dialogue, discussion and compromise South Street can thrive as a business strip we are pleased to have nearby. I, for one, do not want South Street to go away, but to simply get better and better.

- Janet Cooke

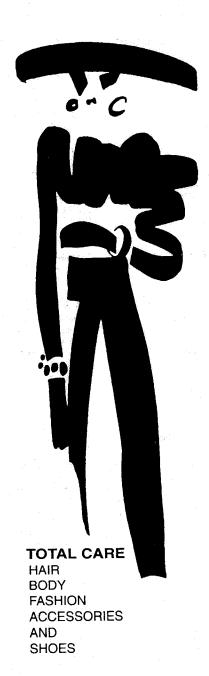


Editor's Note:

If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem! So if you're interested in putting in your "two cents' worth" at committee meetings of the South Street/Headhouse District, here are the people to contact:

Sanitation: Bob Pierson	925-5971
Public Safety, Traffic & Parking: John Foy	922-1813
Planning: Ann Verber	665-3028
Marketing & Promotions: Rob Donaldson	592-0400
Street Decor & Development: Fran Holtzin	625-2640
Business Communications: Brett Mapp	627-5489
Zoning Committee: Harris Eckstut	627-4224





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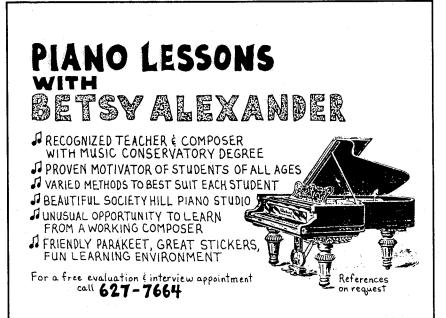
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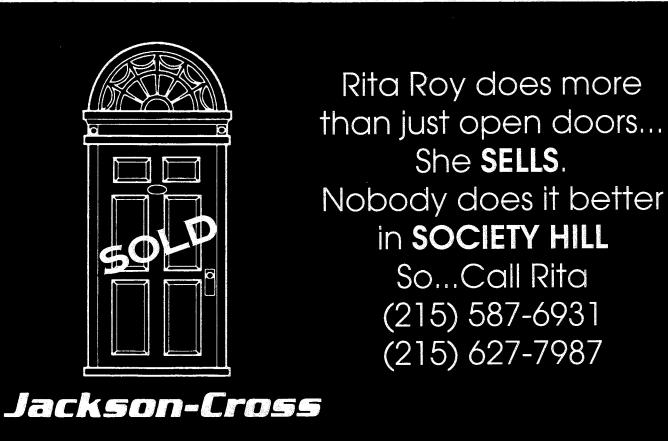
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Wine & Cheese Party!

Because our February Members Reception at the Pompano Grill was so much fun, SHCA will hold a wine and cheese party, featuring a wine-tasting conducted by connoisseur Joe McConnell.

> Tuesday, April 29, 1997, 7 pm Pasta Blitz, 212 Walnut Street \$10 at the door

RSVP: SHCA phone or fax: 629-1288

The party will be a great way to meet and chat with many of your neighbors. If you're a wine buff, you'll have the chance to try some wines selected by Joe McConnell, an expert experienced in conducting educational and enjoyable tastings.

Encourage friends and neighbors to join us. There is no substitute for word-of-mouth promotion. If you have any ideas about making the party a hit, or if you'd like to help in the planning, contact Howard Lander (574-0456), Martha Moore (574-9025), or Liza Seltzer (625-7995).

What! You haven't yet joined for 1997?

This is YOUR Civic Association, an example of democracy at work. We may not always agree with each other—in fact, we often disagree. But on one point we are unanimous: We love our community and want to see it continue to thrive as the unique urban center of vitality that it has been since Society Hill was "redeveloped" in the late 1950s.

Become involved. Join a committee. Come to meetings—held on the third Wednesdays of every month. At the very least, do send in your 1997 dues!

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432 Pine-Completely restored, 4BR, den, 2 car PARKING	\$345,000
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500 Addison Ct-3BR, 2.5b, 2 decks, gdn, GARAGE	\$299,000.
237 Spruce-Fab location, 4br, 2.5b, great gdn, PKG	\$279,000.
500 Pine-Sundrenched 4BR, LR/fp, fam rm, PKG	\$239,000.
Soc Hill Towers-Dbl condo, Ig mstr suite, fab river vus	\$137,000.
Abbotts Square-1BR bi level, fp, deck facing river	\$115,000.
Hopkinson House-1BR, Square vu, pool, GARAGE avail	\$77,000.

SOLD in SOCIETY HILL! 1996 and thru 2/14/97:

(Midtown has participated in the sale of each-either Listed, Sold, or Listed and Sold)

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New Life for NewMarket

NewMarket, the carcass of a 1980s commercial venture, may finally be granted a new life. Owner Michael DiPaolo is moving forward on plans to build a 144-unit, suitestype hotel on the site of the once popular mall bounded by Front, Lombard, Second and Pine Streets.

DiPaolo is talking to several national hotel chains, including Marriott and Summerfield Suites. With the Pennsylvania Convention Center attracting increasing numbers of out-of-towners, the demand for additional hotel rooms is exceeding the current supply.

Attractive to hotel operators

The NewMarket site is especially attractive to potential hotel operators because of its location in Society Hill and proximity to restaurants and shops on South Street and Penn's Landing. DiPaolo is confident that once the hotel operator is chosen, the financing will move forward smoothly.

The new hotel would replace what is now called the Glass Pavilion. It would have two entrances, one on Second Street for pedestrians and people being dropped off by taxis, and one on Front Street, where cars would enter the 119-space parking garage. The hotel would have a coffee shop seating approximately 30 and a small bar area (with liquor license purchased from Chez LaBelle, a former tenant of NewMarket), but no main restaurant.

Zoning hearing

A zoning hearing was held on February 26 regarding this proposed hotel. The developers requested permission to: (1) proceed with this new use for NewMarket; (2) increase the height of the building from 35 to 38 feet; and (3) re-draw the lines subdividing NewMarket so that the Bake House, an historic building in the interior of NewMarket, would be part of the Glass Pavilion subdivision, rather than part of the Old Court subdivision, which includes the buildings occupied by Dickens Inn, Koffmeyer's Cookies and other retail establishments.

The latter request is important to the financing of the hotel, since DiPaolo plans to sell the Old Court section to raise capital for the hotel. Keeping the Bake House as part of the Glass Pavilion parcel would allow the new hotel to have an historic element to it. The requests listed above were granted by the Zoning Board with the proviso that commercial trash pick-up be required.

Neighbors respond

Neighbors seem to be remarkably enthusiastic about the prospect of the hotel as proposed. In fact, SHCA's Board of Directors voted unanimously in favor of the concept of a suites-type hotel for NewMarket when DiPaolo presented a sketch drawn by architect Cecil Baker at the Board meeting on February 19. This enthusi-

asm may be due in part to relief that NewMarket will not become a supermarket, as feared several months ago. The SHCA will continue to monitor this development as plans become more specific.

Residents who live on the south side of the 100 block of Pine Street expressed concern about losing some of the privacy they have enjoyed since NewMarket has been vacant. Currently a 30-foot wall provides a barrier between their gardens and the Glass Pavilion.

DiPaolo has proposed removing the wall and giving residents an additional eight feet of easement to extend their gardens, but some prefer the wall to remain to block hotel visitors from seeing into their properties. DiPaolo has suggested that they appoint a representative to work directly with the design team to come up with a plan that will be esthetically pleasing and meet the needs of both the neighbors and the hotel. Very amicable!

-Liza Seltzer

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