



Society Hill REPORTER

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Summer 1998

Newsletter of The Society Hill Civic Association

No Money, No Cleaning

Sidewalk Sweeping Ends September 1

On Wednesday, July 17, the SHCA Board of Directors decided to discontinue the sidewalk sweeping program until the remaining \$4,800 to fund it can be raised. David Stevens, who spearheaded the effort to get the program started, told new board members that even he felt it should be discontinued — at least temporarily — unless enough residents come forward to pay for it. The original plan to finance the program each year was calculated on taking \$10 from all 1996 current members' dues and enrolling new members at \$40 for the total needed of \$14,400.

Matt DeJulio, chair of the Membership Committee, reports that paid household and corporate memberships stand at 686. While membership has never been higher (triple growth from 1990), it falls 124 members short of what is needed to fund sidewalk sweeping for a calendar year. When membership fell short last year, individuals in the community sent contributions, which the Society Hill Fund matched; a gov-

ernment grant through Senator Vincent Fumo's efforts was obtained; and the Board earmarked funds from the treasury to fill the gap. The prevailing feeling this year was best expressed by David, "Some people need the shock of seeing how bad it can get to realize they have to contribute, too."

The SHCA had paid on a month-to-month basis the Center City District's contractor to clean the sidewalks each Tuesday morning. Tuesday was chosen as the weekly time because it follows Monday night trash pick-up, which ironically causes more litter.

To re-start the program, please send in \$40 for 1998 dues to SHCA at Box 3, Philadelphia, PA 19105 or send a contribution of any amount to The Society Hill Fund, Project Street Sweeps, c/o David Stevens, 116 Delancey Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106. Spruce Street neighbor Howard Sedran of Levin, Fishbein, Sedran & Berman has started the effort with a \$250 corporate membership.

Where Does That \$40 Go?

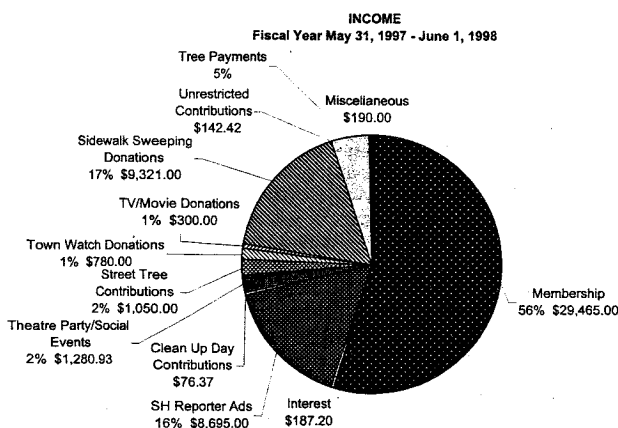
The SHCA Board of Directors felt it timely to share with all the members and the community at large exactly where the money comes from to support this organization and how the money is spent. Sweeping the 70 blocks of sidewalk once a week and publishing this newsletter six times a year to keep the community informed consume the lion's share of the annual budget.

The newsletter is distributed to all of the 2,600 plus households in the community. Project Street Trees has subsidized up to \$100 each for the replacement of 109 diseased or dead trees. SHCA belongs or contributes to several organizations in the neighborhood and city that benefit the quality of life in this community, i.e. The Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks, etc.

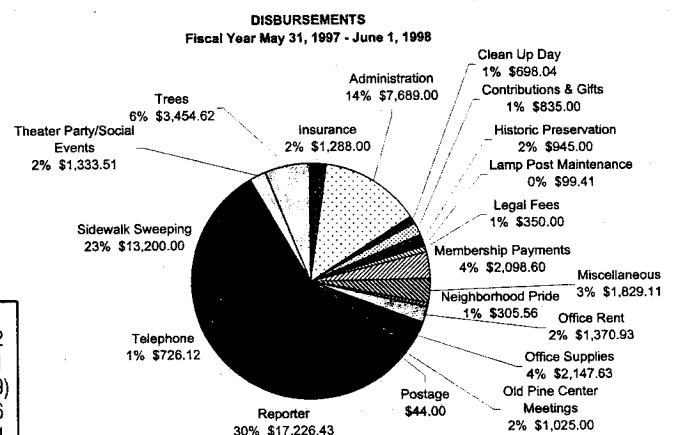
Occasionally, one time donations are made to special causes, i.e. a

\$500 contribution to the legal fund for the Preservation Alliance for a Greater Philadelphia in their efforts to establish the legal teeth of "Designated Historic Neighborhood" or for legal fees in fighting zoning matters. The Board wants to provide quality programs for the General Membership meetings and to provide social functions where neighbors can get a chance to know each other. Painting lamp poles, equipping the Tree Tenders, running two Clean Up Days each year also cost money. Everyone, with the exception of a part-time, paid administrator, volunteers his/her time and talents.

Treasurer Perry Whyte prepared the following two charts. But the bottom line is — We need more people in the community to sign up for membership in order to continue our programs and initiatives.



Synopsis	
Income	\$53,922.92
Expenses	\$62,567.81
Cash Flow	(\$ 8,644.89)
Savings	\$11,550.26
Checking	\$ 2,116.24



Unbent Dart

Bill Gursik took umbrage with the Jeeves Dart about trash from the McCall School. Seems Bill is the building superintendent of the school for the last dozen years and takes great pride in keeping the place nice for the students. He told us a dumpster inside the schoolyard for on-grounds trash pick up should solve the problem. He also ratted on neighbors who have been dumping their household trash in with the privately hauled school trash. Dumpers — consider yourselves BUSTED!

SHCA's sincerest "thanks" to the merchants who contributed goods and services for the Welcome Baskets for new Society Hill homeowners:



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CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOMED

Next Editorial Deadline: September 15, 1998
 Mail or fax contributions to above address.

Chairs Chat

Zoning

Will Smith, native West Philadelphian and a.k.a. *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*, has deposited money for the defunct NewMarket site to develop a low-rise hotel.

The unlicensed custom bridal gown design business from the 500 block of Spruce has relocated to South Street, at least temporarily.

According to Chair **Richard Bost**, no immediate neighbors objected to the new owner's proposed zoning variance request to enclose the penthouse deck in the 300 block of Delancey Street (former residence of Nancy Glass).

Richard also reports he gets occasional irate phone calls about aesthetic issues, such as air conditioning units in first floor windows. No zoning ordinances address this matter. Historic Preservation chair **Bernice Hamel** notes that historic designation status would give SHCA the legal position to address such issues.

The rather large, blue neon sign outside the new Italian restaurant at Society Hill Towers prompted letters to be sent to Licenses & Inspections requesting that in the future they follow regulations and submit sign applications for the approval of the Art Commission. Its position on the north side of the building does not affect any residents.

No one seems pleased either with the very prominent banners at the derelict former Society Hill health club on 5th Street. They are temporary; but immediate residents are even more alarmed at plans to convert the tennis courts to a basketball court. Compare the difference in game etiquette — one favoring court chatter and the other clearly considering shouting as bad form. A private meeting with the operator is scheduled.

While SHCA continues to oppose chain store and fast-food takeouts on South Street, the Board did **not** approve a \$900 request to continue to fight the Burger King/Taco Bell move into the Aaron Mattress site.

Finally, Pennsylvania Hospital is proceeding with the renovation of the orthopedic center in the former Farm Journal building on Washington Square. Some suggestions by immediate neighbors have been incorporated into the design; others proved too costly; and rerouting traffic on Manning Street proved highly unpopular with Washington Square residents.

Liquor Control

Mel Buckman will chair this committee. **Michael Harwood** of Dickens Inn has re-applied for a liquor license to operate an outdoor café at the HeadHouse shambles, but not closing 2nd Street this time. The operator of the Cabaret at NewMarket has applied for a zoning change to expand the uses of the premises, but his tenancy will be vacated if the property is sold.

Neighborhood Pride

Martha Levine reports her committee has leafletted all the homes in the community asking owners to turn on their outside lanterns or leave lamps or electric candles lit in ground floor windows. Also, she will work with Joe Doyle at the Streets Department to install a block of 70-watt, high pressure sodium lighted Franklin Lamps to test the aesthetic appeal and safety improvement.

Welcoming baskets have been delivered to new home owners, a program initiated by Martha. Merchants who contributed are listed on page 2.

Town Watch

Barbara Gelman is setting up a series of meetings so residents can report safety concerns and get them addressed in a timely manner by the Sixth Police District. The first will deal with car break-ins. Even if you don't own a car and are just tired of sweeping up broken glass, you can attend. See you at 8 pm on Thursday, July 30, at Old Pine Community Center, 4th & Lombard.

National Night Out, Tuesday, August 4th, will be marked with two events: a rally at City Hall from 12:00 to 2:00 PM with music and entertainment and a walk starting at 8:00 PM from the HeadHouse Shambles.

Exciting News! The Center City District is planning to establish a **Municipal Community Court** to deal with misdemeanors — the minor, quality of life crimes that can have such a negative impact on the joys of living in a city. A major grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts has funded the requirements study. SHCA hopes to have the plans unveiled at the October General Membership meeting.

Historic Preservation

Bernice Hamel assures us every home owner will in early fall receive a letter from the Philadelphia Historic Commission informing them of the public hearings to attain historic designation. This is an important and sometimes controversial initiative for any neighborhood.

Rittenhouse/Fitler Square is the only historic designated neighborhood in Philadelphia at present. A handbook written for them by the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, *A Guide for Property Owners*, is available after August 1 for \$10 each. Call the Alliance at 546-1146 for a copy.

Bernice proudly announces the installation of new signs informing people about Society Hill and the Head House and market at the Shambles. Researched and written by herself and **Penny Batcheler**, retired historical architect for Independence National Historic Park, the Society Hill sign's design was paid for by SHCA and all other costs were picked up by the HeadHouse Conservancy. The total of three signs (another for Queen Village) fit visually well with all the new signs installed at community houses of worship, a project of the Old Philadelphia Congregations.

Patricia Wilson Aden, senior vice president of the Alliance, hosted the first in a series of lunchtime meetings at St. Peter's Episcopal Church house, for the Historic Neighborhood Network. **Cathy Apothaker**, **Stanhope Browne**, **Matt DeJulio** and **Bernice** represented Society Hill for this group whose mission is to identify concerns and articulate issues unique to historic neighborhoods.

Library

Liza Seltzer reports that the Balch Institute has approached the committee with an offer for space. The other viable site they are considering is the former restaurant location in the Penn Mutual Tower building on Walnut Street.

Carriage Horse Trade

Bill Hawkins disappointedly informs us that Bill 980239 to enhance waste management, change routes, eliminate peak rush hour operation, and improve the working conditions for the horses was contested by the

Continued on page 5

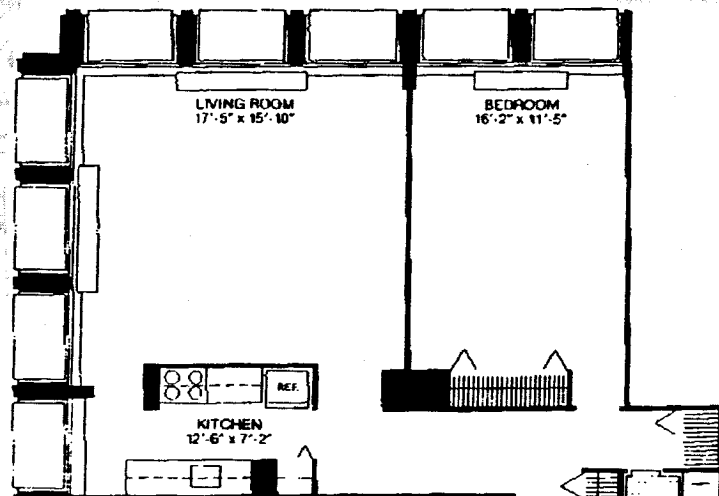
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- Independence Place Corner... DR, eat in Kitchen, Library. **\$390,000.**
- 322 S. 2nd Delancey Me... use, 2.5b, fp, gdn & PARKING **\$285,000.**
- 410 Lombard Excepti... y facade, 4BR, central air, PKG **\$169,000.**
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- Hopkinson House Lg... w/alcove. Overlooks Square! Parquet flrs. **\$65,000.**
- Abbotts Square Lovely 1BR on 5th fir facing North. Great condition **\$65,000.**

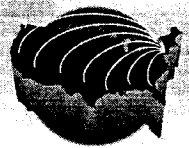
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Chairs Chat, *continued*

owners of the carriage companies and their counsels. The bill never made it out of committee despite strong support from residents and equine experts from around the region. Bill urges concerned people to write, call or fax Councilman Frank DeCicco at Room 332, City Hall, Philadelphia, PA 19197, 686-3458 or 3459, Fax 686-1931.

CPNA (Coalition of Philadelphia Neighborhood Associations)

Larry Meehan reports that a bill introduced by State Representative Terry Van Horne (Democrat from Allegheny) to permit counties to open keno parlors found little support. For now, riverboat gambling appears as a dead issue in the legislature. CPNA (which includes SHCA, the Society Hill Towers Owners Association, South Street Neighbors Association, Queen Village Neighborhood Association, Old City Civic Association, Fishtown Civic Association, Friends of Pennsport, Center City Residents Association, Residents of Greater Manayunk, Northern Liberties Neighbors Association and the 21st Ward Community Council) is exploring its mission and has met with Councilman-at-Large, David Cohen, to discuss strategies about the sponsorship of Council resolutions that might lead to public hearings. Dick Ostrander, the other liaison to CPNA, is firmly opposed to the group's enlarging their mission from lobbying against gambling in the state.

Homeless Intervention

Joan Less will continue to act as the contact point for anyone in the community who has a concern about someone who appears to be homeless in the neighborhood. The committee has been disbanded because they felt the services were adequate in the area and any other real intervention would require more time than anyone could commit.

Yo! Lighten Up!



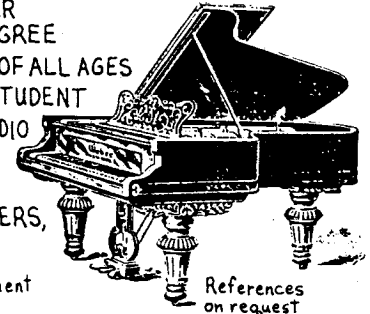
A big thank you to all homeowners who by turning on their exterior front lanterns every night are keeping Society Hill brighter and safer. Keep those lights

burning from dusk to dawn to deter crime on the streets. The cost to burn a 40 to 75 Watt bulb is only 13¢ a day.

Away a lot, get home really late, or does it just keep slipping from your busy mind? Home

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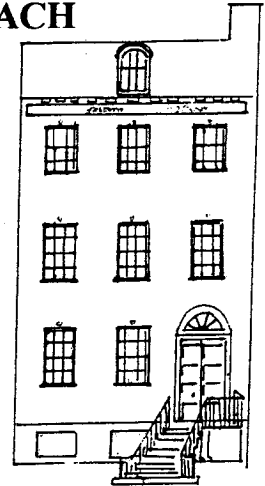
or Bob Villa wannabe. Motion detectors in back alleys that turn on flood lights really deter intruders and help homeowners safely down their own paths! Questions or for electrician referrals, please call Martha Levine at 629-0727.

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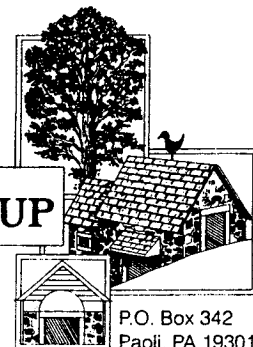
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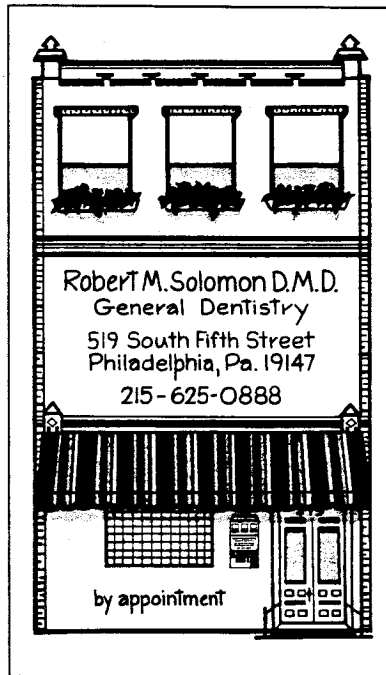
The 35-minute concerts are held in 5-concert series at 10:00 a.m and 11:15 a.m on the following Mondays: 10/26, 12/7, 2/15, 3/15, 4/30 (this one's a Friday). The Saturday series is performed at 10:00 a.m and 11:15 a.m on 10/24, 1/9, 2/20, 3/13, and 4/24. Cost for the series: \$25.

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- 11/14 Gotta Dance
- 1/23 It's About Time
- 3/20 Composer's View
- 4/10 A Family for Baby Grand

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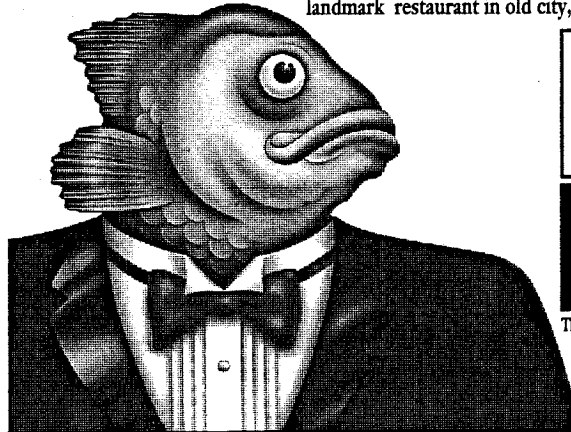
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Construction is in full swing on the 6th Street side of Washington Square, and this section should be completed by the end of 1998.

Laurels to Jerry Balter, Anne and Chris Clark, Craig Eisendrath, Theresa Fera, Bill Hawkins, Herb Lipton, Nicholas Moore, and Roger Moss for getting part of the Square opened throughout the renovation.

Completion for Phase I: July 2000. Oh, what a party we will have!



Photo - Bill Hawkins

Pileggi

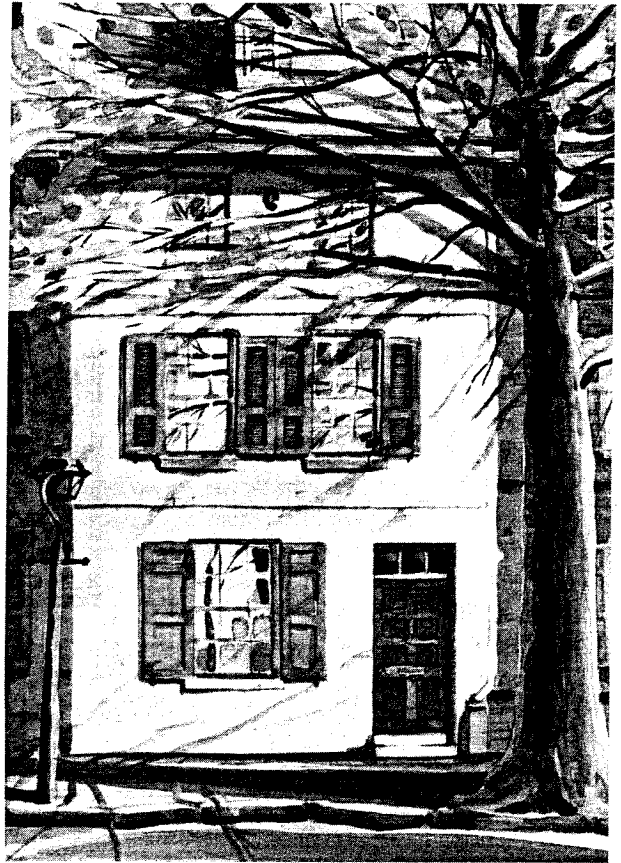
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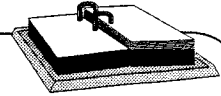
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Photo - Bernice Hamel

Former SHCA president Mel Buckman accepts an 1860 City Plan chosen by Jay Pattison of the Washington Square Gallery on Chestnut Street. More than sixty neighbors came out on a very muggy June 24 evening to meet new board members, Norman Tissian, president, Janet Cooke, Howard Lander and Mary Sturdivant, vice presidents, Perry Whyte, treasurer, Mark Keener, recording secretary, and new quadrant directors Rhoda Haber, Jacqueline Hokanson, Bill Hawkins, Joel Eichen, and Martha Levine. They join incumbent directors William Sells, Jane Stevenson, Matt DeJulio, Richard Bost, Liza Seltzer, Barbara Gelman, Deborah Robinson, George Compton, Joy Lindy, and Bruce Thompson.

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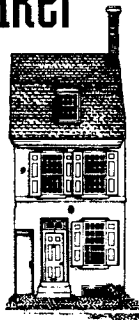


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Message from the President



Hello to all my neighbors!

I'm **Norman Tissian**, and I have agreed enthusiastically to serve as the President of the Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA).

I have lived in Society Hill for over thirty-years, the first five as a renter in the Society Hill Towers and the last twenty-five as a homeowner. I have always been a member of SHCA, an organization that despite many problems, I have believed in from the start. I have agreed to become president in the hope that there are many residents of this community who hold similar beliefs to my own regarding the future of Society Hill.

I believe that Society Hill is a residential community, but thoroughly unique in its location at the heart-of a major city. I believe that our residences, be they house or condo, are first and foremost *homes* and only secondly *real estate investments*. I believe we all chose to live here, in the heart of the City, and thus recognize that Society Hill is not a Gladwyne or Huntingdon Valley.

Yes, as in all great cities, from Paris to San Francisco to Tokyo, we have noise, and dirt, and street crime and crowds of people on our streets that we can probably do without. But we also have all of the benefits — the culture, the diversity, the conveniences of living in the heart of our wonderful and important city.

Many changes are underway in downtown Philadelphia. This city's only significant prospect for major economic growth in the near future is in tourism and conventions. This means more hotels, more retail complexes, more restaurants, more night life. Like it or not, these changes are

inevitable. We cannot stop them, nor do I think we should.

Which is not to say, however, that we should meekly yield to these changes. We have a great responsibility to monitor carefully these "developments." In fact, I believe that a positive and active community can actually play a major role in directing these changes, both for the good of our neighborhood and the city at large. We can be positive leaders rather than negative followers of the *status quo*.

We cannot pretend that our community is as it was just ten years ago. We cannot oppose all change. We cannot afford to be a divided community, one that loses all civility with screaming and cursing at one another as has taken place at some SHCA meetings.

SHCA now plays a major role in keeping our community safe, clean and thriving. SHCA pays for sidewalk cleaning, tree planting, Town Watch, this newsletter, street lamp pole painting, and much more. We lead the fight for our interests in zoning and liquor license issues. We are the leaders in bringing a library to our neighborhood. We do all this, despite the fact that less than a third of households pay the nominal annual membership to SHCA. Even fewer attend our regular General Membership meetings.

We need new members! We need members who are positive and creative and are willing to get involved in the life of our neighborhood. Residents with young families are especially encouraged to join. Why not a Charter School in our neighborhood? We seek members who will help guide SHCA.

We need the energy, the creativity, and enthusiasm that I know exists in our residents. I, and your Board of Directors, welcome your thoughts, concerns, and ideas.

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Studio, high floor, bridge & river views, 528 sq.ft.....\$69,900

Corner one bedroom, town- house view, S/E corner.....\$94,900

Two 2 bedrooms combined with a one bedroom to form a large three bedroom with study, eat-in-kitchen panoramic views to the North, East and South, 2,656 sq.ft, customized kitchen and bath.....\$485,000

Hopkinson House
604-36 S. Washington Square

One bedroom, balcony, South view, 778 sq. ft. **SOLD**.....\$82,500

One bedroom, high floor, balcony, park view.....\$92,500

New! **SOLD** Deluxe one bedroom, park view, 1,061 sq. ft.\$97,500

Two bedrooms, 1 1/2 bath, terrace southeast view.....\$119,900

Independence Place
233-241 S. 6th Street

One bedroom with alcove, 1 1/2 baths, high floor, city view, in excellent condition.....\$159,900

Two bedroom, 2 bath, lower floor, sunny southwest exposure, balcony, eat-in-kitchen, 1387 sq.ft.....\$164,900

Three bedroom, panoramic view southeast corner, high floor, in excellent condition.....\$469,900

Abbotts Square
530 S 2nd Street

One bedroom, 1 1/2 baths, excellent value.....\$84,900

Deluxe corner one bedroom, 1 1/2 baths, balcony.....\$104,900

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