

Foxwoods: The Ghost From Christmas Past

Foxwoods Gaming License Revoked

Part anti-climax; part “is this all a dream?” were the reactions of Society Hill residents when they learned in mid-December that the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) had revoked Foxwoods’ gaming license. Four years ago, in December 2006, the Foxwoods investors’ group was awarded a license to build a casino with 3,000 slot machines at Delaware Avenue and Reed Street, just blocks below Society Hill’s southern border. For the Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA), which has long opposed building any casino on the waterfront or near residential neighborhoods, the revocation came as big news. (At the time of this writing, the PGCB had not released a written adjudication outlining its reasons, nor had Foxwoods decided whether it would appeal.)

A book could be written about the ups and downs and twists and turns of the Foxwoods debacle. There were lawsuits, neighborhood demonstrations, and countless dialogues with state and city leaders and lawmakers. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court made numerous rulings upholding the law that introduced legalizing gaming in Pennsylvania — even though the law had never been approved by a statewide referendum nor sustained by any hearings. The Supreme Court also quashed a citizen’s initiated ballot question regarding casinos that was twice approved by City Council. Then it was discovered that the tribe that owned Foxwoods Casino was led by a convicted felon, and that Foxwoods was on the verge of bankruptcy. Throughout this time, protesting

continued on page 6

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Should We Be a City of Horseless Carriages?

As the old year gives way to the new, the holiday season lingers. One can still walk the streets of our neighborhood and see windows filled with lights and candles, signs of joy and expressions of people’s faith. But some windows have been displaying signs of a different kind.

Is this becoming the protest season? At a time when some people call for peace on earth and goodwill towards men, others are saying “let’s not forget the animals, too.”

There is a movement afoot, as evidenced by the signs in people’s windows, to end the use of carriage horses in Philadelphia. We are going to see if this movement has any traction at our upcoming SHCA General Membership Meeting, which will be held on January 19th, 2011.

Are carriage horses treated humanely? Is it even possible to treat carriage horses humanely? The organization Horses Without Carriages International would argue that the answer to both questions is a resounding “No.” Its members distribute flyers and posters asserting that horses don’t belong on the streets of Philadelphia — nor on the streets of any other city around the world. They believe that noisy conditions in the city are stressful to the horses and may cause one to bolt, that walking on cobblestone and

continued on page 7

WEDS	MARK YOUR CALENDAR
January 19	Society Hill Civic Association Meetings Wednesday, January 19th, 2011
5:45 p.m.	Board of Directors Meeting Pennsylvania Hospital Grand Court Room All SHCA members are welcome.
7:30 p.m.	General Membership Meeting Pennsylvania Hospital Zubrow Auditorium All neighborhood residents are invited to attend.
Topic:	Horse Drawn Carriages
Speaker:	Dara Lovitz , Director of Media Relations, Peace Advocacy Network



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Submission Deadlines

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 February 10th

Website

www.societyhillcivic.org

Submissions

We want to hear from you. Our goal is to print news of interest to Society Hillers – happenings in and around our community for residents, businesses and professionals. Direct your editorial submissions and/or queries to Matt DeJulio by phone at 215-629-1288 or email mattdejulio@aol.com. To publicize an event, submit all press releases directly to Sandra Rothman. (See contact information above.)

Materials must be submitted in writing – via mail or email – and must include the name of a contact person. Edited submissions will be considered for publication if the subject matter is community-related and if space allows. Otherwise, upcoming events of interest may be listed in the Community Calendar. Letters to the Editors will be considered for publication only if signed and the writer provides contact information.

In This Issue...

Page 5
 Social at Plough & Stars

Page 8
 'Valentine to Market'
 Makes a Comeback

Page 9
 St. Peter's Church
 Concert & Fundraiser

Page 11
 Zoning and Historic
 Preservation Report

Page 12
 Penn's Landing Revisited

Page 15
 Exploring the City:
 Liberty 360

Page 20
 Society Hill Playhouse Free Tickets:
 'The Men of Mah Jongg'

Page 22
 Nifty Neighbors:
 Margarita and Donald Montanaro



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P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

BY ROSANNE LOESCH

SHCA Celebrates Its 45th!

Society Hill Civic Association is 45 years old this year! I recently reviewed the mission statement in our Articles of Incorporation drafted in 1966. The 12-member committee wrote that the SHCA was established:

“To promote the improvement of the Society Hill area of Philadelphia, including its cultural, educational, and civic activities, and preservation and restoration of its historic buildings;

To represent the residents of Society Hill in matters affecting the City of Philadelphia generally and Society Hill in particular; and

To interpret the value and significance of Society Hill to the public.”

I was pleasantly surprised at how accurately this 45-year-old mission statement describes what SHCA still strives to accomplish in 2011. Thanks to the generosity, dedication and creativity of dozens of volunteer boards, committees, and association members, Society Hill has grown and thrived as a community. This success is a credit to the foresight and initiative of those founding members. We should be inspired by their achievement and dedicate ourselves to continuing to fulfill their mission.

Society Hill Civic Association closed 2010 with two successful events: an enthusiastic Fall Clean-up the weekend before Thanksgiving and a festive holiday party for members in early December. Many thanks are due to Bob Curley

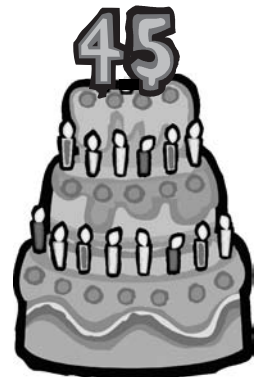
and Spencer Finch, the volunteers who chaired the Clean-up Committee with the guidance of long-time volunteer and former chair Wally Wing. I want to extend special thanks to the Block Coordinators who help with our bi-annual Clean-ups — hanging up and taking down parking signs and placing clean-up instructions in each neighbor’s mailbox. Your participation is so important to keeping our neighborhood as tidy as it is! And congratulations to Mary Purcell for her efficient organization of the successful holiday party hosted by The Plough & The Stars restaurant.

Our association also owes a debt of thanks to Zaineb Ainuddin-Zekeria, our new treasurer; and Lorna Katz-Lawson, our new Zoning & Historic Preservation Committee Chair. Zaineb, a CPA, as well as a Certified Internal Auditor, has devoted a very significant amount of time to upgrade SHCA’s accounting methods. Lorna, an architect, has spent many hours reviewing and giving feedback on the City’s voluminous proposed new zoning code, looking for its potential effects on our neighborhood. This has required attendance at many Zoning Commission and “Neighborhoods Matter” (our neighborhood association coalition) meetings. We are lucky to have their skills and dedication.

I encourage all Society Hill residents and businesses to join our association. Membership forms for 2011 went out to members in November. If you haven’t renewed yet, do so today. You’ll find the membership form on page 21. Please support our many beautification and improvement programs. Your membership is the backbone of our success! I look forward to greeting you at the January General Meeting.



Rosanne Loesch, President



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SHCA Gets Its Groove On — At The Plough & The Stars

BY MATT DEJULIO

More than one hundred SHCA members gathered on December 6th at The Plough & The Stars restaurant and pub for some holiday festivities. The partygoers raved about the delicious food — an impressive selection of hors d’oeuvres, including duck confit and smoked salmon over crispy sweet potato pancakes. The interior was beautifully decorated in the spirit of the holiday season, all the way down to (or, rather, up to) the twenty-foot decorated tree. At its height, our social event took up most of the space on both levels of the establishment. It was an occasion to remember — well worth the short walk in the chilling cold to 123 Chestnut Street, where The Plough & The Stars is located in the historically preserved Corn Exchange Bank Building.

In hopes of saving more than \$500 in printing and postage costs, Mary Purcell, our Social Committee Chair, suggested that we promote the Holiday Social online this year, via email invitations and reminders. That the total in attendance this year was nearly the same as last year indicates that the new method worked. The money saved can be redirected toward more worthwhile uses, such as street cleaning, street lighting or sidewalk improvements.

We are still concerned that we may have missed people at the party because they missed their invitations. If you are an SHCA member and you did not see your invitation, then something went wrong. Either you are not opening emails marked as coming from info@societyhillcivic.org or our emails are going into your spam folder or your junk mail box. If you didn’t get the email

invitation at all, then it was lost in transmission or you are not on our email list. If you are not on our list, email mattdejulio@aol.com and ask to be added. If you are on our email list then you might also check to see if you are receiving our weekly e-newsletter. If you aren’t, check your spam folder and set our email address as “safe” to allow our emails to hit your inbox. SHCA tries its best to keep its members advised of all important neighborhood happenings. Don’t be left in the dark!



Carol Colabelli enjoyed hors d’oeuvres on the balcony. That’s the 20-foot Christmas tree behind her, rising from the ground floor and still towering over her!



Carmela & John Infanti



Marie Scarpulla & Ramonita



Fred Manfred



Jane Biberman

Foxwoods: The Ghost From Christmas Past *continued from page 1*

residents filled overflow hearings at City Council, the Planning Commission and in Harrisburg. Next the investors made a surprise switch in location to the Gallery on Market Street, then to the historic Strawbridge building and finally back to Delaware Avenue. Unexpectedly, a new casino operator appeared on the scene. This Las Vegas casino tycoon promised that his casino would be “dandy” for the area Jews, Italians and other ethnic groups that “like to play craps and gamble,” but he pulled out of the deal a few months later without explanation. Finally, the investors made a last-ditch effort to find a financial savior with a third casino operator.

Of course, this is the Cliff Notes version. As many of our residents know, there was a whole lot more that happened. But for now, the good news is that Foxwoods, as we knew it, is dead. There is much speculation about the road ahead. Even though the state gaming law called for two casinos in Philadelphia, lawmakers in both the house and senate are preparing legislation, as of this writing, to open up the competition for the former Foxwoods license to the entire state — good news for Philadelphia.

A spokesman for Chester County Republican and State Majority Leader, Dominic Pileggi, is open to “possibly not reassigning the license at all.” (reported on CBS Philly December 20, 2010) The spokesman continued, “Senator Pileggi is willing to have a conversation about the location of the license, and, in fact, he’s willing to have discussions about whether or not there’s even a market for the license at this time.” Considering the underperformance of Philadelphia’s only other gaming venue, the recently opened SugarHouse Casino, Senator Pileggi has a point.

But many questions remain about the direction the licensing will take: Will the Foxwoods investors appeal and, if yes, what are their chances of succeeding? Is the Reed and Delaware Avenue parcel finally dead as a site for a casino? Is the waterfront completely off the table? Could Philadelphia be lucky enough to lose this second casino for good? With the roller coast we’ve been on the last four years, we know that anything is possible. Our board, Casino and CDAG (waterfront planning) Committees promise to remain vigilant as plans develop regarding Foxwoods’ former license. Stay tuned!

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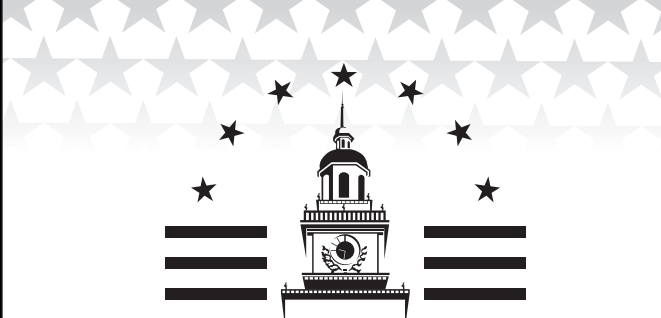
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Should We Be a City of Horseless Carriages? *continued from page 1*

even paved streets causes lameness and that breathing automobile exhaust further injures the horses.

The city, which extensively regulates all horse activities within its jurisdiction, counters that running on streets is bad for horses, but walking is not, and carriage horses walk. One carriage company, responding to our inquiry, told us that they not only meet, but exceed, all city regulations regarding the care and treatment of their animals. (Their complete reply will be available at the meeting.) In general, carriage horse owners point out that their animals are well fed and well maintained. They say that their horses are trained to be accustomed to the flurry of activities that surround them on city streets, long before they are put to work on them.

Our speaker at the General Membership Meeting, Dara Lovitz, represents the side with the protest signs. Ms. Lovitz is an Adjunct Professor of Animal Law at both Drexel University and Temple University. She is also the Director of Media Relations for the Peace Advocacy Network (PAN). PAN is a non-profit group promoting veganism, social justice, and respect for the earth's inhabitants and

resources. It is also a member of Horses Without Carriages International. PAN's goal in coming to this meeting is to get people to express support for an immediate ban on horse-drawn carriages by contacting their councilman, Frank DiCicco.

The future of this issue will affect Society Hill, its businesspeople and its residents, because carriage horses do walk our streets, but SHCA is not taking sides. This meeting is aimed at promoting education and discussion. The General Membership Meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. in the Zubrow Auditorium at Pennsylvania Hospital, right after the SHCA Board of Directors Meeting at 5:45 p.m. in the Hospital's Grand Court Room.



Dara Lovitz, upcoming General Membership Meeting speaker



TREE TENDERS PLANT 10

Society Hill Tree Tenders, in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and Fairmount Park, planted 10 new trees in Society Hill under the Treevitalize program. The volunteers pictured planted a tree at 717 Pine Street, free of charge.

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH

'Valentine to the Market' Gala Makes a Comeback!

After a fifteen-year hiatus, Reading Terminal Market reintroduces its "Valentine to the Market" event on Saturday, February 26th, 2011. Popular for several years in the 1990s, the black tie (optional) event will feature hundreds of patrons gathering to share their love of the Reading Terminal Market, located at 12th & Arch Streets. It will be an evening of dancing and dining, with celebrity chefs and live entertainment on three stages. Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell and Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter will serve as honorary co-chairs.

"The 'Valentine to the Market' provides our loyal customers with a chance to have fun in the market while supporting its long term preservation," says Paul Steinke, general manager of Reading Terminal Market. "It is a unique evening, where merchants and patrons alike gather to celebrate and take part in all that makes Reading Terminal Market special."

Tickets may be purchased online at www.PartyTicketsOnline.com/valentine or in person at the Reading Terminal Market. Proceeds benefit the Reading Terminal Market Preservation Fund and will be used to preserve and enhance the historic Reading Terminal Market for future generations. Specifically, the event will support the planned renovation

and expansion of the eastern third of the market, which will include expanded and modernized rest rooms, new leasable space and a new demonstration kitchen and food theater.

Attendees will have the opportunity to support the event at various levels. Tickets are priced at \$45 for the Dancing and Dessert Party, from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m.; \$125 for General Admission, from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.; and \$300 for a pre-Gala party, starting at 6 p.m., featuring champagne tastings, hors d'oeuvres, celebrity guests and a commemorative gift (while supplies last). All food offered during the event will be provided by Reading Terminal Market merchants.

One of America's largest and oldest public marketplaces, Reading Terminal Market serves as a public trust, providing a venue for independent local businesses to showcase Philadelphia's culinary bounty and cultural diversity. Housed since 1893 in a National Historic Landmark building, and managed

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH

Celebrate St. Peter's 250th Anniversary With Concert and Reception

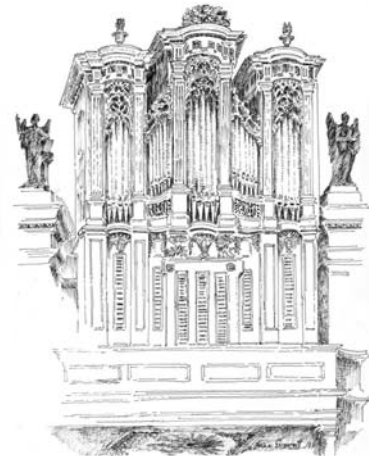
In conjunction with the ongoing celebration of the 250th Anniversary of St. Peter's Church, the St. Peter's Choir will present a concert on Sunday, February 27th, 2011, at 5 p.m. The concert, titled "Lo! What a Cloud of Witnesses" will commemorate the saints who are memorialized on the church walls and/or buried in the churchyard. Since it opened its doors in 1761, St. Peter's Church has included in its membership many people of military, cultural, and political significance. The concert will include brief biographical sketches along with music relating to their lives and times.

Works to be performed include anthems by Francis Hopkinson, who was a signer of the Declaration of Independence; and Rayner Taylor and Benjamin Carr, who were both early American musicians and music directors of St. Peter's Church. In addition, anthems by 20th- and 21st-century composers Barry Rose, Debra Scroggins, David Shapiro and Maurice Duruflé will be sung.

A benefit reception with proceeds going to the Historic St. Peter's Church Preservation Corporation will be held after the concert. While the concert is free and open to all, you will need to make a reservation to attend the reception, which will be held at an elegant private house near the church. To receive an invitation to the reception, please contact Kate Randall at randall@stpetersphila.org.

All are invited to enjoy the music, help celebrate the parish family's first 250 years, request an invitation to the reception and make a contribution to the preservation of historic St. Peter's Church.

St. Peter's Church is located on the corner of 3rd and Pine Streets. Free parking is available in the church lot on Lombard, between 3rd and 4th Streets. SEPTA buses 12, 40 and 57 all stop alongside the St. Peter's campus.



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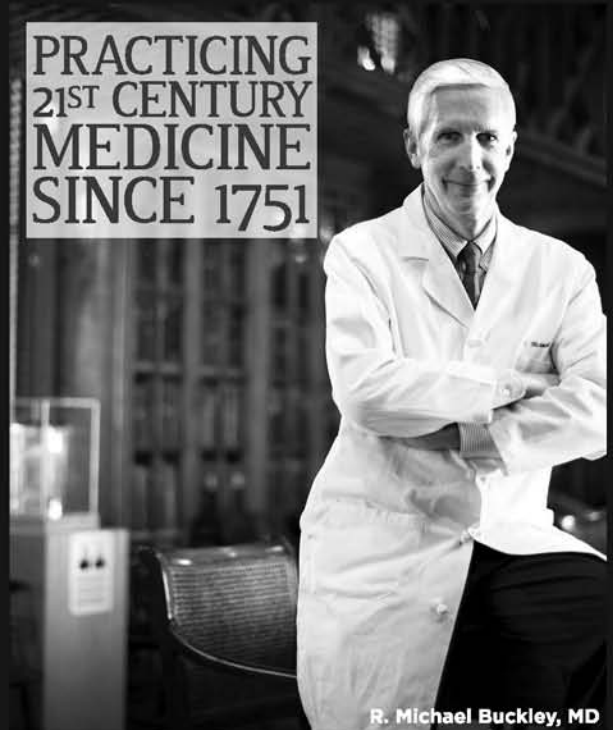


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ZONING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

BY LORNA KATZ-LAWSON

Renovation, Revision & Citation

Society Hill is alive and constantly changing. The Zoning and Historic Preservation Committee (ZHP) helps neighbors who would like to make changes to the exteriors of their properties understand and be prepared for the process of approval by the Philadelphia Historical Commission (PHC), which is required for exterior changes, and for any zoning variance which may be needed. We urge you to submit your plans or ideas to the ZHP committee before submitting your plans to the PHC.

341 Pine Street

Once again, ZHP provided a venue for the owner and applicant of 341 Pine Street to present the design for a third-story rear addition and roof deck. Unfortunately, a few of the residents who live on the same block as the property (a.k.a. near neighbors) were still apprehensive about privacy issues and technical construction details. They asked the owners to delay processing their application until mock-ups of the details could be reviewed. However, the owners have been involved in discussions with both the ZHP and near neighbors since last May, and they want to have all the permits in place for spring construction. They opted to proceed with their filings, but also agreed to review details with the neighbors as the construction documents develop. The Philadelphia Historical Commission (PHC) felt the design had changed substantially enough to require a new, full-blown review, first by the Architectural Review Committee and then by the PHC itself. Subsequently, the design was accepted unanimously. Development details will continue to be reviewed by the PHC staff for approval.

734 Addison Street

At the December 13th ZHP meeting, near neighbors had the opportunity to hear the applicants present revised plans for a new parking area and access gate for 734 Addison Street. The two near neighbors who attended the meeting supported the application. As recommended by ZHP in the preliminary review and subsequently by the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the design was revised to preserve the large existing tree and to use a solid wood swinging gate, rather than an overhead rolling door, to enclose the parking space. The committee also discussed the significant loss of residential on-street parking caused by the changeover of Pine Street from a two-lane to a one-lane thoroughfare (parking spaces near corners were changed to turning lanes on every other block) and restricted parking near the district's perimeter where it is close to commercial and entertainment

venues. Also, with a parking space added to the rear yard, the amount of open space on the property was considered to be reduced to a level slightly below the required percentage. But it was such a small amount that the committee found it inconsequential. Given all these reasons, ZHP decided unanimously to revise its previous opinion and offer a new letter of non-opposition to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

636 Pine Street

Signage and occupancy violations at 636 Pine Street that ZHP has been tracking with L&I for over a year have resulted in the following: The commercial sign has been removed, and a citation from L&I has been forwarded to the court system for prosecution. The building is being used for activities that are not consistent with existing use permits.

Revision of the Philadelphia Zoning Code

On the revised zoning code front, the Zoning Code Commission continues to review comments from the public, including comments from SHCA and the Crosstown Coalition, of which SHCA is a contributing member. To date, we are still unconvinced that there are enough protections in place to assure that the character of Society Hill and other neighborhoods will be preserved.

Some pieces of the proposed code do not yet exist, and others, such as the Administrative Manual, are only at a first-draft stage of development. The Crosstown Coalition and several other organizations, which have different interests from SHCA but share our concerns, also share our apprehension that pushing this document through City Council — on the Zoning Code Commission's proposed schedule — will either kill the bill or pass a bill that has unintended consequences.



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Penn's Landing Revisited

BY ROSANNE LOESCH

Penn's Landing could undergo dramatic changes, according to the new waterfront plans presented to the public last October. We in Society Hill have closely followed and participated in Philadelphia's waterfront planning process for several years now. It started with the community meetings organized by Penn Praxis, which probed the wishes and desires of Philadelphians for six miles of the Delaware waterfront — and has continued through last year's work on more detailed designs executed by Cooper Robertson, the New York-based planner, Olin, the Philadelphia-based landscape architects, and others.

Although Society Hill, through its delegates to the community advocacy group Central Delaware Advocacy Group (CDAG), has been monitoring all aspects of the emerging plan, we were particularly interested in the proposal for Penn's Landing because this publicly owned parcel is directly adjacent to the Society Hill neighborhood. The Penn's Landing design is divided into three major components — a model is pictured on the following page.

The dramatic centerpiece of the plan is a six-acre landscaped park between Walnut and Chestnut Streets that starts at Front Street in Old City, arches over Columbus Boulevard and then slopes down to the riverfront. Pedestrians would never have to cross a busy street in order to go from the city to the water, although the park would contain a couple of low-traffic access streets. This park would be one of a string of 10 parks every half-mile along the six miles of the Delaware. The planners have recommended abandoning the original Penn Praxis idea of a 100-foot-wide public access area next to the river, and instead propose to link larger public parks

with pedestrian and bike pathways, considerably narrower than 100 feet. Some of the paths may be designed for commuting bikers and some for recreational walking and biking. Another change for Penn's Landing — concerts and other similar events would be moved away from Penn's Landing to a new 5,000-seat facility, possibly open air, that would be built on semi-industrial land just off the Girard Avenue interchange along I-95.

To the north of the six-acre green space, the planners envision a bridge that would arch over I-95, joining Market Street to the northern piece of Penn's Landing. This area would feature mixed-use development, possibly low to mid-rise condos, a hotel and a public sports facility. The details of this mixed-use space would come from particular projects proposed by private developers. Although Penn's Landing is publicly owned land, the planners propose private development through possible long-term leases, in order to animate the space and draw the public, as well as to assist the City in financing the necessary infrastructure and public space that would be created. The exact mix of public/private space has yet to be determined and is one of the most controversial aspects of the proposed transformation of Penn's Landing.

The existing Seaport Museum and Hyatt Hotel would complete the area to the north of the ramped centerpiece park. A very important logistical change to the northern portion of Penn's Landing: the "scissor ramps" — that currently connect with Market Street and allow city bus "turn arounds" and idling areas — would be eliminated. City buses would be routed through Dock and Front Streets, although definite plans are still to come once a comprehensive traffic plan for the waterfront is completed, which will include a light rail system.

Penn's Landing can be developed in stages as financing becomes available.



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Penn's Landing Revisited *continued*

The plan's third component involves the southern end of Penn's Landing, where a connecting bridge would arch over I-95 from South Street to the marina area. Again, mixed-use, privately developed low- to mid-rise condos with street level shops and restaurants would surround the marina. The planners propose that the ship currently docked there might be moved to an area outside the marine basin to create more open space and allow for additional docks for recreational use. The rendering accompanying this article shows possible fountain jets animating the marina.



Architect's model of the proposed plan for Penn's Landing

One of the big advantages of the Penn's Landing plan is that it can be done in stages. Each component is independent and can be developed when the necessary public/private financing becomes available. And there are certainly many features of the plan that have been widely praised, including the connections made to Center City and the effort to truly animate the rather moribund space we experience today.

Some of the questions raised involve: how much development of publicly owned land should be allowed, how high is "low- to mid-rise" (we've heard that mid-rise can be

from 8 to 12 stories), how much should the views of the river from Front Street be blocked by development, how does the elimination of the scissor ramps affect bus traffic in Society Hill (on Front and Dock Streets), and how will the light rail proposed for Dock Street interact with other traffic patterns? The final plans of the Cooper team, which won't include the traffic component, will be presented sometime in the spring. We encourage you to keep completely current by visiting planphilly.com.



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EXPLORING THE CITY

BY JIM MURPHY

Surround Yourself With History: ‘Liberty 360’ Adds a New Dimension to Learning

A few steps from Independence Hall, state-of-the-art technology is making Philadelphia’s history come alive in powerful new ways for young and old alike. Liberty 360, a dazzling 15-minute, 3-D, visual tour de force, is now showing daily in the newly renovated, high-tech, custom-built PECO Theatre at 6th and Chestnut Streets. The program, hosted by Philadelphia’s favorite son, Benjamin Franklin, and viewed on a giant wrap-around screen, 8 feet high and 150 feet in circumference, celebrates America’s history through its most important symbols.

Extraordinary Video and Sound

As you stand in the middle of the 65-person capacity theater, you are surrounded by 3-D images presented in 9.5 million pixel resolution, while an original music soundtrack with 65 musicians and 128 audio tracks envelops you, enriching your experience. I thought the program was a little slow at first, but quickly picked up the pace. During the short presentation, you are whisked from Philadelphia to Baltimore, San Francisco, St. Louis, Paris and beyond. All this while focusing on some of our nation’s most important symbols — and problems.

The video pyrotechnics reminded me a bit of the fabulous animation at the Radio City Music Hall Christmas Show. That’s not surprising, since Liberty 360 was developed by David Niles, whose previous works include programs at Radio City Music Hall and the Comcast Center.

But like all new technology, there can be glitches. The day I attended Liberty 360 in early December, the equipment malfunctioned and



Visitors to Liberty 360 wear comfy 3-D glasses and are surrounded by high-definition 3-D images.

I had to come back later in the day. While there, I learned similar problems had been occurring for several weeks. That may also be why I was the only person at the early afternoon performance of the show, which runs three times an hour.

The 3-D glasses were comfortable, and the visual experience was more realistic than last year’s 3-D Comcast Christmas Show at the Comcast Center. In short, the show is interesting, educational and even provides a surprise ending. Be sure to experience it.

Coming Soon

This summer, Historic Philadelphia, Inc. will debut its new 3-D Lights of Liberty evening one-hour show. It’s designed to take visitors on a starlit journey through Independence National Park with head-turning surround-sound and high-tech imagery. The previous shows were excellent, so I can’t wait to experience the new one.

WHEN & WHERE

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All contractors on the list have been highly recommended by Society Hill homeowners. When looking for a contractor, reading the list gives you an advantage by helping you to find someone with a track record in our neighborhood.



To receive your copy by mail only (not available by email) contact Martha Levine at marthalev@msn.com or 215-629-0727.

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If you see graffiti or stickers on a light pole, please report the location by contacting Matt DeJulio at 215-629-1288 or mattdejulio@aol.com.



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LIMITED TIME OFFER

'Fix the Brix' Before April 30th, 2011

BY MARTHA LEVINE

**Be a good neighbor.
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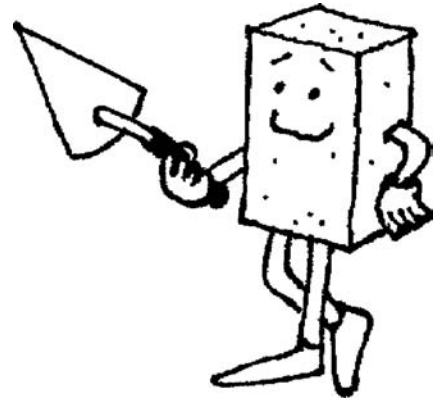
It is a homeowner's responsibility to have safe sidewalks. Uneven sidewalks can cause tripping and falling. A homeowner may be liable for injuries incurred due to an uneven and hazardous sidewalk.

Uneven sidewalks can be caused by loose or missing bricks and by tree roots pushing bricks up. SHCA's "Fix the Brix" program helps improve sidewalks in two ways:

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- 2 By offering a reimbursement to each homeowner who chooses to "Fix the Brix" — 40% of the total cost, up to a maximum of \$300.

**How to "Fix the Brix"
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- 1 For information, or to get a list of masons and/or arborists, contact Frank Signorello at fsignorello@gexchange.com.
- 2 Call several contractors to get estimates.
- 3 Select a contractor who meets your needs and budget.
- 4 After work is completed, make a copy of your invoice and mail it to SHCA, P.O. Box 63503, Philadelphia, PA 19147.
- 5 Receive a reimbursement check from SHCA.
- 6 Deposit the check.
- 7 Enjoy that even sidewalk!



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SAFE AND SOUND IN SOCIETY HILL

MARILYN APPEL

Same old, same old — with a twist: When the police report “taken without permission,” it means stolen. That’s been true of cars and bikes lately, but, more and more, windows are smashed and items are removed (without permission) from the cars. This is because there’s “stuff” in plain sight — stuff like GPS units, Sirius radios, cell phones and small change. Don’t leave anything in sight in your car. If you want to keep it, put it in the trunk.

Packages: Packages are also being “taken without permission,” this time from doorsteps. FedEx and UPS will now leave packages at your front door without a signature and expect that you’ll get them — that is, unless some opportunist comes along and takes them first. If you are expecting a delivery, leave a note on your front door asking the carriers NOT to leave the package on the steps if no one answers the door, or give the address of a neighbor who will accept the package for you. Of course, you should be sure that the neighbor will be at home.

Beware: Look at your credit cards. If any one of them has a sign, like a series of curved lines indicating sound, that card has a radio frequency identifier (RFID) chip. Hi-tech thieves can intercept that card’s RFID signal and use that information to

purchase merchandise. So be aware and beware. If you must carry an RFID-chipped card with you, carry it inside an RFID-blocking card sleeve.

Correction: In the last issue of the *Reporter*, I told you that motorcycles cannot be parked against your building. I was wrong. In the Society Hill area, it is permissible. However, in some other sections of the city you may have to park your motorcycle in designated spots on the street.

Children’s Christmas Party: Each year the Sixth Police District Advisory Council helps the police put on a big party for all the first-graders in the district. Usually, the children are treated to gifts, food, fun and games — two gifts per child, candy, ice cream, potato chips, pretzels, a magic show, dancing and, of course, Santa. This year, much of the party was curtailed due to the lack of funds. I hold myself partially responsible, because I did not ask enough people to contribute early enough. So, for next year, fundraising has become a major priority. You can even start donating now. Make out a check to the “Sixth District Christmas Fund” and send it to Officer Tanya Brown at the Sixth Police District, 235 North 11th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107. Your donation will be used for next year’s party.



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MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Got a Free Evening? We Have Free Tickets!



The Society Hill Playhouse

SHCA is giving away 100 tickets to the Society Hill Playhouse for its performance of 'The Men of Mah Jongg.'

We are delighted to report that the Society Hill Playhouse has donated 100 tickets for their Wednesday, March 9th performance of "The Men of Mah Jongg" to SHCA, to be given to members of our civic association. According

to Deen Kogan, the theater's director, "These 100 free tickets have been awarded as a way to thank our community for its many years of support, as well as to introduce new neighbors to the Society Hill Playhouse."

To get your free ticket(s), simply contact SHCA's Matt DeJulio. You can reach Matt at mattdejulio@aol.com or 215-629-1288. He prefers email correspondence on this topic.

We have decided to make a 70/30 split of the tickets between current SHCA members and new members, favoring our current members, of course! Tickets will be limited to a maximum of two per member household — but don't ask for more than you need. If you are a current SHCA member, all you have to do is contact Matt, and be quick about it, to get your one or two tickets before the 70 allocated to our current members are taken. If you are not yet a member and would like to become one, take advantage of this great opportunity to join SHCA — and to attend the March 9th performance at no extra cost. Just join and then make your request before

all of Matt's new-member tickets are gone. There are only 30 of them, so don't wait!

If Matt has run out of free tickets for the March 9th performance by the time that he gets your email, he'll apologize profusely, but you will still have a chance to see the show. This comedic play runs for six weeks, March 8th through April 17th. Weeknight performances are Wednesdays and Thursdays at 7 p.m. Weekends feature Friday and Saturday night shows at 8 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Weeknight performances are \$40 and weekends are \$45. For tickets, call the Society Hill Playhouse box office at 215-923-0210.

About 'The Men Of Mah Jongg'

This hit comedy, written by Richard Atkins, tells the story of a recent widower, Sid Weinberg, who tries to convince his buddies to replace their Friday night poker game with the more famous game of Mah Jongg. (Apparently, he's received a "sign" from his dearly departed wife.) The play, which is both funny and poignant at the same time, will touch your heart in a profound way. A "feel-good" evening is guaranteed.

A Brief History of the Theater

Now in its 51st season, the Society Hill Playhouse has been a pioneering force in Philadelphia's theater community since its inception. Co-founded by Deen Kogan and her late husband, Jay, this theater showcases first-run and contemporary repertoire. Several long-running works have premiered at the playhouse over the years — including *The Threepenny Opera* by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, which opened in 1962. The Society Hill Playhouse is located at 507 S. 8th Street. Read more about it on their website, which is www.societyhillplayhouse.org.

IMPORTANT WINTER TIPS FOR YOUR HOME

Chimney Linings

There is a city ordinance requiring that chimneys must be lined properly before their fireplaces are used. Fires can start in unlined chimneys due to eroding mortar and debris. Also, every chimney should be cleaned annually. For a list of chimney contractors who can assess your chimney to see if it needs cleaning or lining, contact Martha Levine at marthalev@msn.com or 215-629-0727.



Snow Removal

If you are planning to be away this winter, make sure you have arranged snow removal for your sidewalk. The city will issue citations, with fines of up to \$50, for sidewalks that are not cleared. Plan ahead! Ask a neighbor or arrange for a service to clear the snow from your sidewalk if you are planning to be away.



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

2011 Membership Drive On Pace With Last Year

The 2011 membership drive, which began on November 1st, has started off successfully, with more than 500 renewals received as of our mid-December press deadline. It is anticipated that there will be at least 600 renewals by the end of the month, on pace with last year. For 2010, we ended up with 1,025 paid members.

Those who respond by the end of the month have a chance to win one of two free dinners for two at a local restaurant. Winners will be announced in mid-January and reported in the March issue. If you have misplaced your renewal envelope, wish to join for the first time, or would like to re-institute a lapsed membership, we have included the adjacent renewal form for your convenience. Alternatively, you can go to our web site, societyhillcivic.org, learn more about our organization and download an application form. We accept credit card charges by mail and PayPal payments over the internet. Don't delay if you wish to be included in the drawing.

As you may know, our regular operating budget comes primarily from member dues. *Reporter* advertising revenue, while substantial, only offsets *Reporter* expenses. Your membership dues pay for sidewalk cleaning, the planting of new trees, graffiti removal supplies, the planting of flowers and general improvement of Washington Square, and our general administrative costs. Without member dues, SHCA would cease to function. Protect your neighborhood and your real estate investment by maintaining your membership or becoming a member.

Call 215-629-1288 or email mattdejulio@aol.com if you have any questions.

JOIN THE WALKIE-TALKIES!

Bundle-Up to Exercise & Socialize

Every Tuesday and Thursday morning, an ever-changing, hearty group of Society Hill gals, and occasionally one black dog, spend about an hour walking throughout the community. This informal and free exercise activity fosters good health and is also a great way to meet neighbors. So, if it's not raining or snowing, just "bundle up" and show up at Three Bears Park sometime before 8:15 a.m. Newcomers are always welcome. Questions? Call Bernice Hamel at 215-925-4363.

SOCIETY HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

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IMPORTANT: Today most everyone communicates via email. Please be sure that we have your current email address — so that you can receive important updates between publication of our community newsletter. All SHCA emails will be judiciously screened, and rarely will we send emails more than once a week. Nor will we share your email address with anyone else. This convenient, 21st-century system helps save our civic association postage costs while keeping you regularly informed.

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| \$ _____ Sidewalk Cleaning/Graffiti Removal | \$ _____ Tree Tenders |
| \$ _____ Zoning and Historic Preservation | \$ _____ McCall School |

Total Enclosed \$ _____

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editors

NIFTY NEIGHBORS IN MY OWN BACKYARD

BY JANE BIBERMAN

Margarita and Donald Montanaro

Making
beautiful
music
together



Philadelphia is a music lover's town. We have our own world-class symphony orchestra, several first-rate opera companies and numerous excellent chamber music groups. We can also brag about our prestigious schools, among them the Curtis Institute of Music, which both Margarita and Donald Montanaro attended.

After Margarita left her native Cuba, she studied the harp at Curtis. Don also attended Curtis to study the clarinet, but they didn't meet until they were both members of the Philadelphia Orchestra. That's where they found that — I can't resist the cliché — they made beautiful music together.

A native of South Philadelphia who attended South Philly High and the Settlement Music School, Donald was naturally attracted to a nearby neighborhood when he and Margarita married and were deciding where to raise a family. "It wasn't known as Society Hill when we moved here in the '60s," he says, explaining that it was the period of redevelopment. "We love the area with its historic landmarks," says Margarita. "Both of our boys — Gregory and Alexander — went to St. Peter's School.

The one thing the neighborhood was lacking, in their opinion, was chamber music, a serious oversight that they soon corrected. With the aid of some friends, they established The Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble, the oldest continuously performing chamber ensemble in the Delaware Valley, which is now celebrating its 34th anniversary.

Donald retired from the orchestra in 2005, but still teaches at Curtis. Margarita continues to be the orchestra's co-principal harpist. They both perform with the Chamber Ensemble, which presents six concerts a year. When they're not working, the couple loves to travel — a passionate hobby. Before their children were born, they went on a trip around the world in six weeks. But even when they had toddlers, the couple took them along on orchestra tours. "We stuffed their diapers into the tubas," relates Margarita.

One trip the kids didn't make was to China in 1973, when the Philadelphia Orchestra was invited to perform. "It was an experience I wouldn't trade for anything," says Margarita. "Beijing had no cars and everyone wore Mao suits." Don recalls that Margarita wore a skirt, not trousers "and the people couldn't stop staring."

Today, as empty-nesters, the Montanaros travel as much as their busy schedules permit. Their home is filled with carefully chosen souvenirs, like Chinese porcelain, unusual small tables and Middle Eastern carpets. Both Don and Margarita enjoy foreign languages and cuisine. Don speaks Italian and French and once gave a master class in Paris. Great hikers abroad, they also enjoy walking in Philadelphia when they're home — to center city or to their favorite neighborhood restaurants — Las Bugambillas on South Street and La Boca off Washington Square.

In early December, the two were off to their favorite destination — Argentina. But they returned well before their upcoming Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble concerts to be held February 11th at 8 p.m. and February 13th at 2 p.m. at the Old Pine Street Church, 412 Pine Street. The audience will have a chance to mingle with the musicians — all current or retired members of the Philadelphia Orchestra — at the reception afterwards. It seems fitting that Eugene Ormandy, past music director and conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, is buried in the historic graveyard of the church.

Reflecting on the musical riches of the city, Don says, "We have a great orchestra and I think many Philadelphians take it for granted."


Let's not take our neighborhood chamber ensemble for granted. For tickets, call 215-542-4890 or write PCEConcerts@gmail.com. In the meantime, visit www.PCE.org and listen to excerpts from the ensemble's three CDs.

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Kathy, Patrick and the Conway Team

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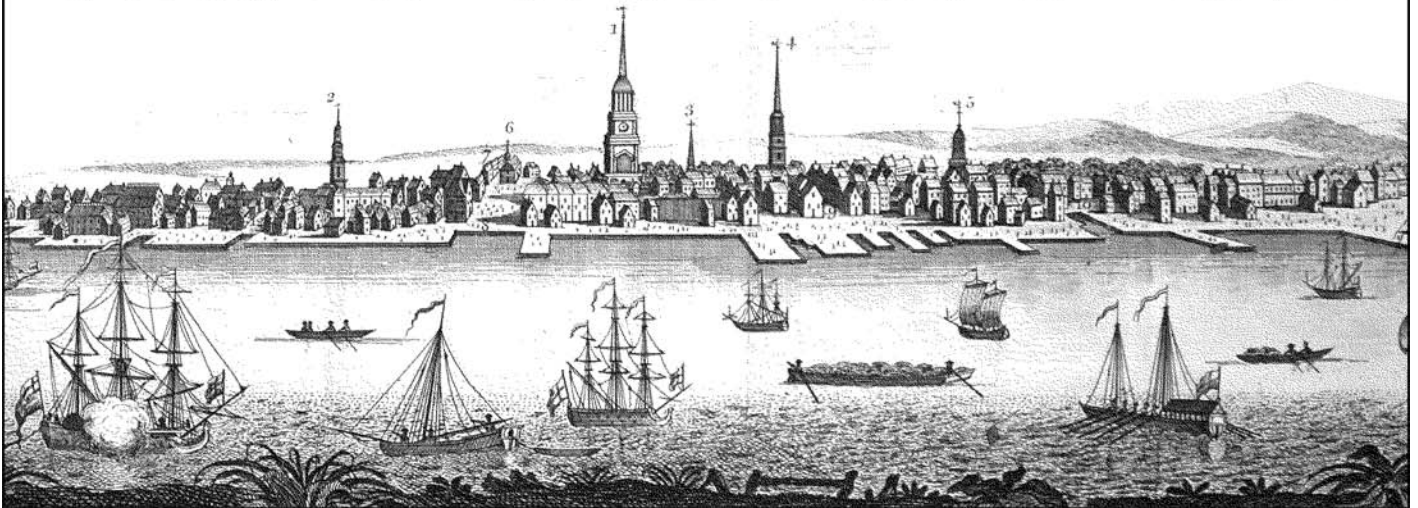
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wednesday, January 19

SHCA Meetings

Pennsylvania Hospital
8th & Spruce
5:45 p.m. Board Session
Grand Court Room
7:30 p.m. General
Membership Meeting
Auditorium
See page 1

Friday February 11, 8 p.m.
Sunday February 13, 2 p.m.

Philadelphia Chamber Ensemble Concert

Old Pine Street Church
412 Pine Street
See page 22

Wednesday, February 16

SHCA Board Meeting

7 p.m. Location TBA

Saturday, February 26

"Valentine to the Market"

Reading Terminal Market
12th & Arch Streets
6 p.m. See page 8

Sunday, February 27

St. Peter's Choir Concert

St. Peter's Church
3rd & Pine Streets
5 p.m. See page 9

Wednesday, March 9

'The Men of Mah Jongg'

Society Hill Playhouse
507 South 8th Street
7 p.m. See page 20



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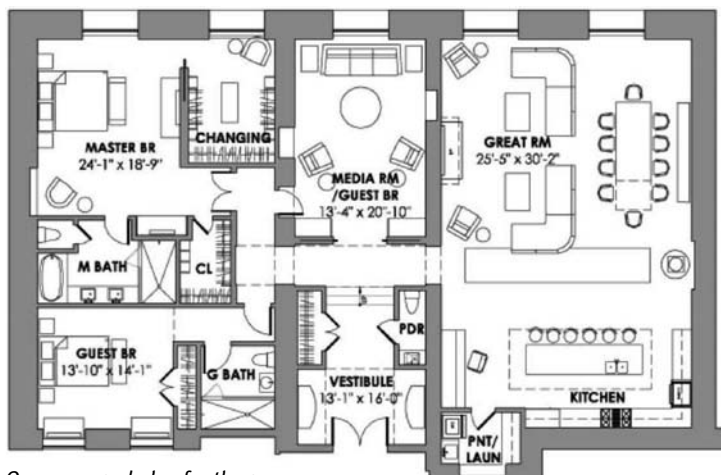
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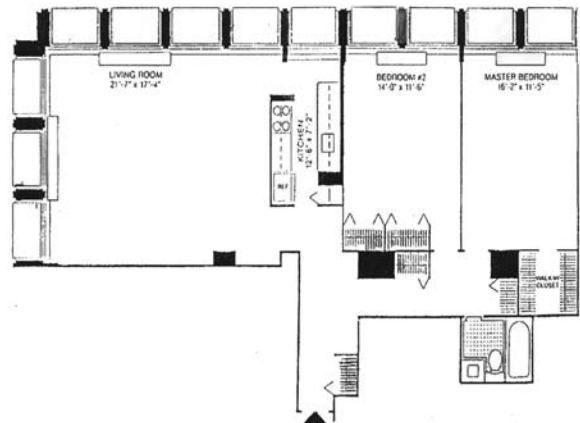
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