

SOCIETY HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

THE RESIDENT NEWSLETTER

313 Pine Street

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

October 1973

GETTING SPOOKED BY I-95

Halloween came early to Society Hill. On the evening of October 17th, SHCA held a meeting to vote on a new proposal for the I-95 ramps. The membership had to decide whether it was a trick or treat. It wasn't easy and the vote was close.

The ramp controversy dates back to 1971, when the Crosstown Expressway was cancelled after a public hearing. Although the Crosstown was wiped out, the off and on ramps that were to connect it with I-95 were left intact. Early this year, as the State and City moved to complete the interstate highway, communities south of Vine Street realized that the ramps, which emptied onto Front Street, posed the threat of delivering immense amounts of traffic onto residential streets that couldn't accommodate it.

A neighborhood coalition of 20 civic associations was formed to fight the ramps, taking federal court action if necessary. City Hall resisted the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition's attempts to get the ramp design modified. However, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) came up with a compromise plan (see illustration on page 2) that would remove on and off I-95 traffic from Front Street to Delaware Avenue. The plan would still create traffic problems in the neighborhoods, but they would be of lesser magnitude.

The various civic associations in the Coalition were asked by PennDOT to approve the new plan.

The October 17th SHCA meeting was informed of the proposal and asked to vote on it. John Hunt, the attorney hired by the Coalition to represent its interests, asked SHCA members for guidance on the compromise.

Three other civic associations in the Coalition (Queen's Village, South Street Renaissance, and Fourth Street Businessmen) had rejected the compromise and called for complete elimination of ramping between Vine Street and the Walt Whitman Bridge.

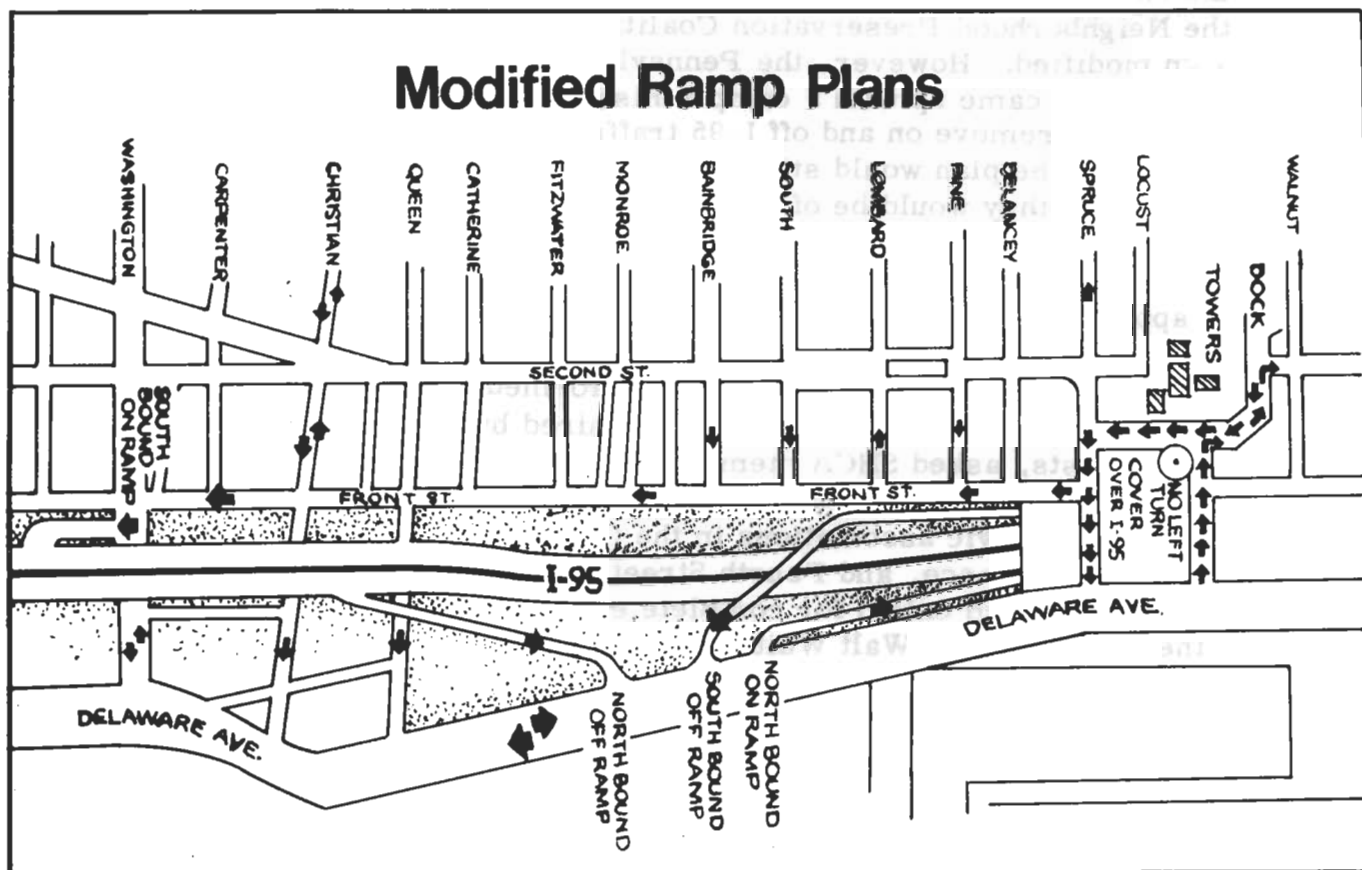
SHCA discussed the compromise. Its acceptance was recommended by the SHCA I-95 Committee with two modifications:

1. Traffic leaving Delaware Avenue westbound on Little Dock Street must not be permitted to turn south on Dock Street for the purpose of going west on Spruce Street; and
2. The southbound on-ramp proposed for Washington Avenue must be eliminated.

In a discussion that lasted for about an hour, objectors to the compromise felt it would be politically unwise to go against the vote of other civic associations in the Coalition; that not enough information was available about the traffic patterns the new proposal would create; that the compromise routing seemed likely to create problems on Delaware Avenue; that Spruce Street would eventually get a lot of Delaware Avenue traffic.

Proponents of the compromise felt that the plan effectively prevented the use of local streets for access to the highway and expressed concern that if the Coalition didn't go along with it, the Front Street ramps would be built.

The State compromise was put to a vote, and by a margin of 52 to 42 it was approved in principle and the officers of SHCA were authorized to negotiate toward a settlement of the problem consistent with the plan presented to the meeting. Negotiations with the other members of the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition are now underway to see if modifications of the basic plan can be made that will satisfy some of the concerns expressed by other groups.



DEMOCRACY AFTER WATERGATE

Don't despair! The shining example of the Society Hill Civic Association proves that representative government is alive and well and living by the Delaware River.

In other words it's time to choose a new slate of officers and Board of Directors for 1974. We would like a really representative slate and need your help. If you or someone you know is good fodder for this stable, get in touch with any of the following members of the nominating committee:

- Chairman: Alan Halpern, 113 Pine Street -- WA 5-3431
- George Axilbund, 621 Spruce Street -- LO 3-1252
- Harold Baile, 2816 Hopkinson House -- 928-1446
- Dr. Daniel Barol, 416 Spruce Street -- WA 2-2030
- Estelle Blumenfeld, 526 Spruce Street -- WA 5-0593
- Sally Lou Buell, 119 Lombard Street -- MA 7-1186
- Stewart Dalzell, 200 Locust Street -- MA 7-7427
- Cynthia Holly, 228 Locust Street -- WA 5-8075
- LeRoy Larner, 711 Spruce Street -- LO 4-4733
- Dot Miller, 615 Lombard Street -- MA 7-3543
- Dick Ostrander, 408 S. Sixth Street -- WA 3-1174
- Bill Rouse, 1 Blackwell Place -- MA 7-5484
- Harry Schwartz, 401 S. Third Street -- WA 3-6775

When you suggest nominees, try to include a reason or two why you think they would be good candidates. In every case a committee member will contact you personally to get further information. Try to get your suggestions in within the week, if possible. Don't anyone suggest Archy Cox.

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OVEN COVEN

Men: Want to make Brown Betty, Poire Helene, or Pommes Anna?

Women: Want to make Coquilles St. Jacques or Herb Omelet?

There'll be sinful goings on (since gourmandism is one of the seven deadly ones) at Joan Specter's Men-only and Women-only evening gourmet cooking classes at The Sugar Cone. For more information call GE 8-2622.

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SWEATING IT OUT

"Steambath", the Bruce Jay Friedman play with something to offend everybody, will open the season of the Society Hill Playhouse from October 31--December 8. Tickets \$3, \$4, \$5. Reserve them by calling WA 3-0210. Don't expect to see Helen Hayes or Marlon Brando, but some of the fledgling actors have promise.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE A BICENTENNIAL?

The Society Hill Bicentennial Committee is organizing task forces for planning the neighborhood's participation in the Dispirit of '76. These include subcommittees on Transportation, Sanitation, Tours, Special Projects, and Concessions. Brains and bodies needed. If you are interested in getting aboard call Gretchen Niedermayer (MA 7-7927) early in November.



UP THE DOWN STAIRCASE

Parents of the neighborhood arise! You have nothing to lose but the public school system. To help turn the schools around, join the Parents Union -- a lobby with a program for coming to the aid of Costanzo & Co. For more information, call Jill Shusterman (WA 2-2932).

YANKEE PANKY

On Wednesday November 7th at 8 p. m. noted author and authority of the colonial period, Carl Bridenbaugh, will analyze the rise of American nationalism prior to 1776. The free lecture is sponsored by the Friends of Independence National Historic Park and will be held at Congress Hall at Sixth and Chestnut Streets.

COFFEE, TEA & WHEE

A coffee house for seniors opened in Washington Square West last summer. With seed money and leadership provided by eight churches, a storefront at 248 S. 11th was fixed up. Offering light lunch, coffee, and conversation, the Coffee Cup has become a meeting place for the neighborhood golden oldies on weekdays between 1 and 4 p. m. If you'd like to help pour or chew the rag (Was Alf Landon a more tragic figure than S. Davis Wilson? Who won the pennant in '28? Where did Clara Bow go wrong? What's that whipper snapper Nixon up to?), call Mrs. Melinda Buurma (WA 5-3298) or Mrs. Ebba Brooks (WA 3-7562). Tax deductible contributions may be sent directly to Philadelphia Center for Older People, 1340 Lombard Street.

THE EAGLE ALTERNATIVE

Come root for a winner. This year there are three peanut teams kicking the pigskin in this area who need your cheers, dimes, and dollars:

‡ The Society Hill Bicentennials -- a 70 pound team coached by SHCA member Bob Smith and entered in the Police Athletic League

‡ Queen's Village Rams -- two heavier teams (135 pounds in the Martin Luther King League and 170 pounds in the Pat Laney League) coached by John Nelson and Oscar Hankinson, principal of McCall School

It costs about \$400. to field a team of boys. This covers league fees, transportation, insurance, referees, and equipment replacement. If you'd like to help support these teams and their volunteer coaches, send a check made out to "Society Hill Fund — Football" to Mark Kessler, 242 Locust Street, Philadelphia 19106. Send it in today for the Gipper. It's tax deductible.

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DECK THE HILL . . .

'Twas a few weeks before Christmas, and all over the Hill,
Horticultural elves were at work, decking every door and sill.

Maybe you missed the greens sale last year, but if you're smart you won't miss it this year. Society Hill's elves, working with the Philadelphia Horticultural Society, are once again offering Christmas greenery for outdoor decoration at prices and quality that can't be matched. Delivered to the door yet!

It's really simple. Each block has a neighborhood representative who calls on you and shows you what is offered. You place the order and early in December your greens are delivered. Elegant wreaths are \$4.25; cedar garlands, \$3; great do-it-yourself decorator wreaths that even a black thumb can put together go for \$2.50; and there's smashing English holly for \$1.25. Call Lee Griswold (WA 5-8894) before November 4th if no one has asked you for your order. Also, call Jill Cathers (WA 5-7528) by November 4th to reserve space and material for the wreath-decorating workshop on December 12th, 8 to 10 p. m., \$6.50 per person.

WANTED: SANTA'S HELPERS

There will be plenty of holiday happenings -- the Delancey Park tree trimming, the doorway decoration contest, caroling, the children's party. To help bring them off, call Jill Cathers (WA 5-7528) or Ellen Miller (WA 2-1273). They will tell you how you can get into the spirit of the season.

LETTING IT ALL HANG UP

Somebody told us that Bonnie Wintersteen got \$700,000 for a Picasso she picked up at the Eyes Gallery for \$1.95. We don't believe it, but anything is possible in the wide-open world of art collecting. Actually, the real impetus for accumulating art is the psychic satisfaction. And the best psychic satisfaction is to be your own expert.

Whether you're a seasoned veteran, or merely a would-be collector, you can pick up a lot of useful information on the subject from a panel discussion put together by Phil Baer's SHCA Recreation, Arts, and Culture Committee.

They'll get together on Sunday November 4th at 8 p. m. at Old Pine Presbyterian Church on Pine Street between 4th and 5th. The panelists include three Society Hill collectors -- Bertha von Moschzisker, past director of The Print Club; George Culler, prexy of the Philadelphia College of Art; and Dr. Luther Brady, who's been looking at paintings almost as long as he's been looking at x-rays at Hahnemann. The outlander expert is Ann d'Harnoncourt, curator of modern painting at the Art Museum. Sam Maitin will moderate the discussion. Admission is free and one lucky member of the audience will win a controversial oil, "Nude Car Descending the Ramps."

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MAITIN CALL

A **prime neighborhood** exhibitor will be opening **his raincoat shortly at the Langman Gallery** in Jenkintown. We're referring, of course, to the Matisse of Pine Street, **Sam Maitin**, whose recent works will be on view at what should be a spectacular one-man show. Well worth the trek! It will be hanging from November 2nd to December 1st.

KLATCH AS KLATCH CAN

Sisterhood is **powerfully early: 9:45 a. m. to be exact.** That's when "Women Speak Out -- Resources in Our Community" hold their Tuesday morning lectures at 313 Pine Street. Aimed at helping women become agents for change, they're run by neighborhood women with the support of the University of Pennsylvania. The programs:

- November 13: New Directions in Community Health
- November 20: School Programs in Our Community
- November 27: Developing Our Resources for 1976

For more info call co-chairpeople **Karen Will (732-2328)** or **Sissy Futcher (MA 7-2857)**. Everyone is invited.