*** COVENTRY VILLAGE NEWS ***

January 1979 Newsletter of Coventry Neighbors, Inc.

CNI SPONSORS CDBG HEARING

Suppose you had a couple hundred thousand dollars at your disposal to use for the improvement of the Coventry area. How would you want to see this money spent? On Tuesday, January 9 at 7:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Society building on Lancashire Road, Coventry Neighbors, Inc. will sponsor a public hearing. The purpose of this hearing will be to afford Cleveland Heights residents in general (and Coventry residents in particular) a chance to answer that question.

What money is involved? Money from federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Over $2 million will come to Cleveland Heights next year. Part of the federal program requires the City to receive "citizen input" as to how the money will be spent.

Will your opinion be listened to? Yes. Members of the Council-appointed Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) will want to hear what residents say, so that the CAC can pressure Council to be community-responsive in its spending. Members of City administrative staffs will also be there to answer questions about permissable uses of the federal money.

Will the money actually be spent to implement citizen ideas? Maybe. Citizens first suggested a parking lot on Hampshire, which is presently under construction with CDBG money. Good ideas do have a way of catching on.

What sort of ideas are presented? Coventry residents have already suggested such diverse uses for CDBG money as new garbage cans in the commercial district and the funding of branch library facilities in Coventry. The basic criteria is whether the proposed expenditure will help benefit the City, arrest urban blight, and improve the quality of life.

The meeting will be open, public, and NOT exclusively for Coventry residents. People will probably come from all over the City of Cleveland Heights to talk about their hopes and dreams. This should be one of the more interesting meetings of the year. And we will even have refreshments afterwards!

-- Alan Rapoport

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THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL MEETING OF COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 1979, 7:30 P.M., AT THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY ON LANCASHIRE ROAD, ACROSS FROM THE MUSICIANS' TOWER.

THERE WILL BE A REGULAR MEETING OF CNI ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 1979, 7:30 P.M., AT THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

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NEW CONGRESS TRUSTEE FROM COVENTRY

Editor's Note: At the CNI meeting of December 12, Alan Rapoport resigned for personal reasons as the CNI representative on the Board of Trustees of the Heights Community Congress. The membership then elected David Burwasser as its representative for the unexpired term.

The undersigned was chosen by Coventry Neighbors, Inc. as Heights Community Congress Trustee, following the resignation of Alan Rapoport. Beyond the basic duties of passing information between HCC and CNI, and participating in decision making for the Congress, I intend to use this office to advance the goals of both organizations. It is not my intent in this to try to amplify those activities which Coventry Neighbors already does more than adequately--we do not need, e.g., supplementary effort in making our views known to the Board of Zoning Appeals--but to try to facilitate those activities that Coventry Neighbors would like to do, and has always intended to do, but has never actually gotten around to doing. In particular:

1) I plan to make a special approach to the extant street clubs in the Coventry school district and solicit their input to CNI monthly meetings.

2) Through the street clubs and the PTA I hope to get more single-family homeowners involved in CNI.

3) Working with the Committee to Improve Community Relations, which represents the Black Rights Organization category of HCC, I will try to get more minority interest in Coventry Neighbors.

Obviously, it would be absurdly ambitious to expect success in all of these categories by any date certain--or, indeed, in any one of them at any early date. I am undertaking only to try. If I don't meet with success, I may nonetheless meet with some reasons why all of the above are blank areas for Coventry Neighbors. These are the kinds of involvement that we have always welcomed, always held ourselves open for, and yet seldom achieved.

While I am accountable to the organization, Coventry Neighbors, Inc. for my conduct as a Trustee, I will be accessible in the pursuit of the goals mentioned to everyone in the "Coventry Area" and the Coventry Elementary School District. I hope that everyone to whom this newsletter comes will make appropriate use of me, and of Coventry Neighbors, even if they have never done so before.

-- David Burwasser (932-7676)

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AT THE LAST CNI MEETING ...

... CNI voted to continue its support of Cleveland Public Radio, and to make a token financial contribution (as requested) of $1.00.

... By a divided vote, CNI endorsed the model ordinance regulating the transportation of nuclear waste materials through Cleveland Heights which is now being considered by the City Council.

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TWO NEW STORES OPEN ON COVENTRY

This past month, two new commercial enterprises made their debut on Coventry Road. COVENTRY ART has moved into part of the storefront destroyed in the Water Works fire over a year ago. COVENTRY ANTIQUES has replaced another antique store--and this particular store also marks the return to the street of Lou Kusner, whose Deja Vu store was burned out in the Coventryard Fire.

This creates two less vacancies and a real feel that Coventry is reviving its old image as an art center in Cleveland. CNI welcomes these merchants to Coventry Village.

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MISCELLANEOUS NOTES ON THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF COVENTRY

... Special thanks to the Cleveland Heights Water Department for its prompt repair of a broken water main at the corner of Hampshire and Overlook Roads around Christmas time.

... Congratulations to Paul Salipante on his appointment to a seven year term on the CH-UH Library Board. He is the first Coventry area resident on that Board in a long time.

... And speaking of the Library, the Coventry Library Advisory Committee will be holding a meeting on January 14, 1979 at 2:00 p.m. at the Coventry Village Library. The meeting is open to anyone having an interest in the library.

...A Coventry parent has expressed concern about traffic conditions at the intersection of Overlook Road and Washington Boulevard. A City employee was recently fatally injured in an accident there when a driver alledgedly did not stop at the stop sign in the intersection. Anyone with concerns about such problems or suggestions about improving conditions such as this could address his/her letter to Richard Robinson, the City Manager or to Robert Arnold, the Councilman who chairs the appropriate committee.

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--WANTED: AFS HOSTS--

Does your family like to make new friends and experience new ideas? Why not consider being an AFS host family for 1979-1980? The CH-UH chapter of American Field Service will be interviewing prospective host families in January. It is not necessary to have a high-school age student in the family. The key words are interest and understanding. AFS carefully selects students between 16 and 18 who can accept and appreciate a culture that is different. The foreign student will arrive in July or August of 1979 and be a part of your family until the next June. For more information, call Ginny Hungerford at 371-4038 or speak to any AFS member.

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HCC-CICR MEETINGS

The Heights Community Congress and the Committee to Improve Community Relations (a Cleveland Heights organization largely composed of black residents) have been meeting for several months to plan ways to work together on issues relating to integration. In a series of meetings the following areas of cooperative effort were identified: voter registration of new residents, welcoming new residents, recognition of black leadership, and education of the total community about the black participation in community affairs. A wide variety of community groups have been part of the planning and will continue to be involved in on-going activities.

I attended the group working on Recognition of Black Leadership. We focused on identifying black-owned businesses. They were invited to a meeting at which was planned a brochure identifying and giving background information on each.

Anyone interested in taking part in these meetings is welcome to call me at 321-0246 or the Community Congress at 321-6775 for information. The goal of all this effort is to increase black participation in community affairs, and to increase public awareness of already existing black participation in the community. I was surprised to learn that blacks are generally less informed than white people about black-owned businesses. I was also surprised to find no black-owned business in the Coventry area. (The Legislation Committee's observer to the CICR is Lonnie Newsom. Call him if you are interested - 932-8618.)

....June C. Wortman

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BOARD APPROVES SOHIO STATION DEMOLITION, REJECTS SIGNAGE

Despite strenuous opposition from Coventry Neighbors, Inc., the Cleveland Heights Board of Zoning Appeals voted 4-0 at its December 20th meeting to permit the Standard Oil Company of Ohio to demolish the existing gas station at the intersection of Mayfield and Coventry, and to allow the construction of a self-service facility at that site. The new Sohio station will be of the "kiosk-and-canopy" style, similar to the Shell station at Mayfield and Superior.

The Board, however, wisely denied Sohio's request for permission to place more signage upon the new station than the zoning code permits; in fact, one City official stated that the number of square feet of signage requested by Sohio was ten times that allowed by code. This means that Sohio may equip the new station with an amount of signage equal to or less than that which exists at the present station.

CNI opposed this project in its entirety because of the excessive signage, the construction nuisance, and the fact that the switch from full- to self-serve represents a new decrease of services available in the neighborhood with no appreciable benefit in return. Sorry, but we can't even count on lower gas prices--a casual survey of local markets in which a Sohio self-serve competes with other oil companies' full-service stations showed that, on the average, Sohio self-serve outlets charge 6¢ more per gallon of regular than does the competing station which fills the tank for you. ......F. DAVID GILL

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UPDATE: COVENTRYARD

Developer Lew Zipkin had hoped to get a roof over his Coventryard project before the first snow. His architect, Tom Ziska, has said publicly that another winter of exposure might so damage what remains of Coventryard that rebuilding would be impossible. But we all know it has been snowing this past month. This gives rise to great concerns over the absence of the promised roof.

Increasing tightness of credit markets and the speculative nature of the project have left Zipkin without financing. Yet Zipkin remains optimistic; "I have lost none of my interest", he told CNI. He now seems interested in the venture capital market, and is considering pursuing Industrial Revenue Bonds through the County's Office of Economic Development. There is no reason to believe that Mr. Zipkin has abandoned the project despite obvious setbacks.

Concern about the lack of progress in the project is not limited to neighborhood residents. Unless work is begun by April 1, 1979, the City may exercise its option to raze the building. Even Mr. Zipkin's friend and sometimes partner, Roger Ritley, has expressed deep worry over the threat of his neighboring building posed by a second winter's exposure of Coventryard's walls to the freeze-thaw cycle.

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POINTED QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH:

Why has ABC Appliance not replaced their broken window in three months, and why has the City not cited them for this violation of the building code? Don't we have enough board-ups in ~~Coventry Village, folks??~~

...FDG

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FIRE SET ON HAMPSHIRE ROAD

Fire destroyed much of a first-floor apartment suite at 2749 Hampshire Road early Sunday, December 24th. The occupant was out for the evening, and there were no injuries, but smoke and water damaged other units in the building. Fire Warden Robert J. Maver, interviewed at the scene by C.N.I., minced no words: "This was a set fire." Cleveland Heights Police and Fire Officials are investigating.

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