

AFTER THOUGHTS ON THE TAX ISSUE

"We seem to have a winner." With those words, Cleveland Heights Finance Director James Tierney claimed victory for the special-election payroll tax issue that boosts the city's rate to 2%. Final count (unofficial) was 6106 pro, 3981 con.

About as many residents voted for the issue as in the November election in which it lost 3-2, but only half as many turned out to vote against it. This was no accident; the issue committee's strategy was to concentrate upon those precincts where the November issue ran 40% or better. (Ward 1, covering 3/4 of Coventry, supported the issue by 50.7% in November and 70.7% in March.) This is possible, of course, only when such an issue is the only item on the ballot. The campaign managers can select their targets and be confident that no other election item will draw voters generally to the polls. The same strategy was successful with the streets and sewers bond issues in 1977, when only benefiting precincts were leafleted.

The four income tax issues that have faced Cleveland Heights voters have, in order, failed, passed, failed and passed--an intriguing pattern. The first time out the campaign is understaffed and underfinanced, and the voters see no immediacy; the issue flops. Two consequences follow.

One is an immediate service cutback to match anticipated income. The electorate thus experiences personally the cut-budget environment that had hitherto been only theoretical. They don't like it, and particularly don't like any suggestion that they collectively asked for it, but they can't avoid it.

The second consequence is that the reserve troops marshal themselves for the try-again campaign. People get involved who merely voted for it the first time. Neighborhood leaders on the outs with City Hall leaders shelve their differences for the duration (an essential element in broadening the base of the campaign). The second try succeeds.

The stage is then set for the first-round defeat of the next cycle, because a lot of voters feel bullied and coerced by the service cutbacks. Their consequent anger expresses itself as "no" votes the next time the City asks for operating money, and the cycle turns again. Neither Council nor staff seem able to find the key to diverting or defusing this carry over anger.

Council's finance committee figures that a 3% income tax would carry the city indefinitely; besides raising sufficient revenue it would track inflation adequately, which millage does not. If this is so, we can expect two more cycles, probably in 1982 and 1985.

Dave Burwasser

+++++

## S T R E E T W A L K I N G

Streetwalking this time of year is such fun. So many people are out on the street talking, laughing, making music - you can just feel them waiting for the "Street Fair".

I stopped in to see those fabulous soft sculpture masks that Marion Fischer has at Rainblu and from there was led by my nose into Aribica, next door. I like the new seating arrangement. It's kind of friendly having the bench out in front on nice days. It's a good idea, too, putting the game players in the back it makes it easier to respect their need for quiet. Did you know about the mello music on Thursday evenings from 9:00-11:00 PM and on Sundays from 1:00-3:00. A gal by the name of Lisa Sharp sings a song called Love Me Like A Man that's a fine brand of blues.

I had heard the Laundromat has changed hands and they plan to expand but I can't get a hold of anyone to check with.

All who participated will testify to the fun of the Yam Show. It made up in quality for its other lacks. The high spot of the week-end, I felt, was the mime done by Stew at the Fairmount Center. I just regret that so few people saw this perfect gem of a show.

A resident landlord was the only one who volunteered to help my friend with the clean up. He volunteered the custodians of his buildings in the area and will donate trash bags. Anyone else interested can call me and I'll see to it you make connections. 321-8397.

Over four hundred signatures have been collected against Nukes and in favor of the use of solar energy at Coventry Books. It'll be water colors and fibers at Coventry Art Gallery - till the 28th.

I certainly hope that the drawings of the interior of Coventry-yard, passed around at the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting the other night are just the usual exaggerated architectural rendering and we will not be expected to live with a mini-mall that looks like it belongs in Beachwood or Northfield.

Some of us have taken to sitting on the grass in front of the Fairmount Center of a sunny Sunday afternoon and I have learned the importance of "green space" to an apartment dweller.

Bobbie Littell

+++++

FAME AND CHICKENS ON COVENTRY ROAD

Fame in the neighborhood has been bestowed by the Heights Community Congress on Louis (Crocks' Lou) Collett. Several times the subject of artistic photography, Mr. Collett played a prominent part in the slide show presented by the Congress at its Home Show booth.

On a recent pleasant afternoon, we found Mr. Collett sitting on the rail next to PeeWee's Bike Shop. When we told him of his new prominence, he smiled with pleasure, and recounted his resume of similar accomplishments. Then he told us of the time his chicken was stolen.

He had caught the chicken, ~~a~~ ~~refugee~~ from Coventry Poultry, near the mail box at Hampshire and Coventry. At the time of the theft, Mr. Collett was keeping his chicken in the garage of his Hampshire Road home.

Mr. Collett is not certain who stole his chicken, but he is sure that it wasn't eaten by one of the neighborhood dogs as his landlord claimed. Mr Collett could prove that a man had done the job: he'd found the feathers in a neighborhood trash can.

When asked what he thought of the City's plan to relocate Coventry Poultry when the new Pick-n-Pay is built, Mr. Collett seemed not to understand our question, and went on to speculate about who stole his chicken.

#####

CNI SPONSORS CETA PROGRAM

CNI has offered its services as sponsor to a summer youth program created under the terms of the federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). This local program, being administered by the City of Cleveland, seeks to place economically disadvantaged youth between the ages of 14 and 21 into meaningful part-time work experiences with public service agencies.

Participants in the program are paid with CETA funds, and the basic administration is handled by the City of Cleveland and the Cleveland Board of Education. The major purpose of the program is to help these youths develop sound work habits through structured, well supervised, meaningful work experiences.

CNI will coordinate activities in Coventry, which will consist of utilizing four CETA youths to keep the commercial district swept clean. Coventry merchants and the City of Cleveland Heights will be helping provide leadership and resources for this pilot program.

#####

RTA TO EXPAND BUS SERVICE THROUGH COVENTRY AREA

Many Coventry residents have recently expressed their desire for more frequent bus service on the two lines which pass through their part of Cleveland Heights. In light of this sentiment, CNI President Alan Rapoport addressed a letter to Richard S. Stoddart, Member of the Board of Trustees of the Regional Transit Authority on the subject. Similar communications were sent to Mr. Stoddart by the Heights Community Congress and by the City of Cleveland Heights.

CNI is pleased to report that these communications were received favorably, and that a response was issued by Leonard Ronis, General Manager of RTA. This response said, in pertinent part,

"RTA is presently in the process of developing a range of service improvements to be implemented prior to the end of this year. Tentative plans in the Coventry area call for the addition of three vehicles in rush hour time periods on the #9-Mayfield Express as well as the addition of another vehicle in mid-day time periods.

Our tentative plans also call for expanding the evening hours of service on the #7-Monticello Express to Severance Shopping Center until 9 P.M. these recommendations have been developed as a result of an extensive and continual program of monitoring transit ridership throughout the county. Service expansions beyond that which I have described do not appear to be warranted at this time. However, we will continue to monitor these services and will be prepared to make adjustments as necessary to provide with you the highest quality public transportation available."

Mr. Ronis concluded his letter by offering his sincere appreciation for CNI's suggestions and interest in RTA, noting that if there are other suggestions or comments, CNI should please not hesitate to call on him.

\*\*\*\*\*

CNI TO HEAR SPEAKERS ON FIRE STATION PROPOSAL

At its next regular meeting, CNI will invite members of the City's Planning Department to discuss the recent proposal to convert fire protection in Cleveland Heights to a two-station concept. It is tentatively expected that Cal Caminati of the Planning Department, Fire Warden Robert Maver, and Councilman Al Connors will be attending to explain the proposal and answer questions.

This meeting, like all CNI meetings, is open to the public, and any interested persons may feel free to attend.

=====

THE NEXT MEETING OF COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. WILL TAKE PLACE ON TUESDAY, JULY 10, 1979, 7:30 p.m., AT THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY BUILDING ON LANCASHIRE ROAD, ACROSS FROM THE MUSICIANS' TOWER.

=====

OPINION: WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR FIRE STATIONS

I have to admit that I have not paid much attention to all this business about fire stations. Nevertheless, a bunch of the guys got to talking one night at Bob's Place over on Mayfield, and we decided that there had to be some good sensible alternatives to two and three station hassles. I therefore now take the liberty of presenting some modest proposals of my own.

First, there is the MK Fire Station Concept. It is a one station concept. We simply dig a long trench in the middle of Mayfield Road extending from the top of Murray Hill to Warrensville Center Road. Then we put a rail track down. Then we put one fire station (mobile variety) on the track and cover the track with retractable doors. The fire station can be moved north or south to give protection where needed! (And if the Feds want to check on whether we built more fire stations with their money than we promised, we could open the doors and let them use their space satellites for verification.)

Second, there is the Multiple Fire Station Concept. We build thirty fire stations in every part of the City--but we only staff one on a rotating basis. This way, nobody will be afraid that they don't have a fire station nearby and we can still keep administrative and labor costs down.

I am surprised and deeply disappointed that the City has not come up with these proposals, and I certainly expect that Mr. Robinson and Mayor Wright will give them all the consideration they richly (sic) deserve. Rightly or wrongly.

— Elmer Fudd

\*\*\*\*\*  
NEIGHBORS TAKE ZONING STAND ON EUCLID HEIGHTS BOULEVARD

On June 18, the City Council voted to amend a plan to change zoning on Euclid Heights Boulevard. A section of the boulevard just west of Berkshire Road was all ready to be zoned MF-2 (multiple family), instead of single family, when a determined group of local residents began hard lobbying for a different result.

Under some pressure from these residents, Council opted for a more restrictive form of multiple family zoning called MF-1, which will make development of vacant land possible without opening the door to small apartment units inconsistent with the existing character of the area in the mind of the neighbors.

Observers called the change by Council a victory for the reasoned, persistent, intelligent approach of a group of Cleveland Heights residents who would not take a first no as a final answer. Council, administrators, developers, and residents all seemed to consider MF-1 a fair compromise and a proper land use decision.

\*\*\*\*\*  
COVENTRY VILLAGE NEWS: A publication of the Heights Community Congress and Coventry Neighbors, Inc. Executive Editor: Alan Rapoport. Circulation: 1000. Opinions are solely those of the author unless otherwise specified. Articles for publication should be sent to the Editor, 2667 Hampshire Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, 44106.  
-----