

The Coventryard Disconnection

Just mention Coventry to someone and the first question he or she will probably ask is, "What is going on with Coventryard?" The short answer is, "Not much." In December, this paper reported that developer Lewis A. Zipkin had obtained permission to begin placing a roof over the building. City Council had set a deadline of April 1st for parking variances previously granted. There was no construction begun by April 1 and the parking variances have therefore lapsed, according to City Manager Richard Robinson.

Why the absence of action? There are two different stories being told. The City insists that Mr. Zipkin never presented adequate information about financing, building plans, subcontractors, and the general contractor involved. Mr. Zipkin, on the other hand, insists that he gave the City all the information requested, that he has the money, and that he wants his building permit issued so that he can begin construction "immediately."

All persons questioned state flatly that they want to see Coventryard rebuilt. But in the meantime, there has been delay, poor communications, and increasingly hostile statements made to the press by both sides. Neither side fully trusts the other. The City has filed a legal action with Common Pleas Court to declare the ruins of Coventryard a public nuisance. It can be expected that Mr. Zipkin will file a countersuit against the City.

At the last CNI meeting, the membership authorized its Executive Board to offer the "good offices" of the organization to mediate the dispute. CNI President Alan Rapoport has accordingly initiated shuttle diplomacy in an attempt to force a dialogue. It is Mr. Rapoport's feeling that the two sides are not that far apart--but that the danger of the whole matter degenerating into protracted and vicious legal warfare is still very great. Mr. Rapoport will make a more detailed report on the status of Coventryard at the May CNI meeting.

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The next meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. will take place on Tuesday, May 8, 1979, 7:30 p.m., at the Unitarian Society building on Lancashire Road, across from the Musicians' Tower. It is open to the public, so please feel free--and invited--to attend.

NOTES AND QUESTIONS:

Look for Carroll Drug to begin Sunday carry-out sales of full beer and wine within the next few weeks, thus ending the Open Pantry's neighborhood monopoly.

Some people are wondering why, with the income tax increase now passed, there is still no school crossing guard at Euclid Heights Boulevard and Wilton.

CNI has put in its application for a Coventry Street Fair permit for July 28-29. By the way, does anyone out there know what happened to the banners hung across the street to advertise last year's Fair? The sign company claims they were left in "one of the stores."

STREETWALKING . . .

It's delightful on the street these days, lots of people around, in shirtsleeves and fancy headgear. I saw families - mother, dad and kids walking along, looking in windows, stopping here and there lending a real neighborhood feeling. One thing caught my fancy, a youngster on a skateboard, attached to a dog on a leash. You guessed it - Fido provided the power. The windows are looking festive. Corkscrew's pots of blooming tulips, ABC's amaryllis, and those great bugs in Carroll Drug's windows (which are really kites) all communicate a clear message - Spring is FINALLY here.

Tom Loesch and Ray Taylor at Passport to Peru tell me that they will soon be keeping summer hours. They will be open till 8 p.m. Mon., Tues., Thurs., and Fri. I took some time to browse and, in spite of their name, their imports come from all over, not just Peru, or even South America, but also Israel and India.

Other eye catchers include the satin unicorn in Trapezoid's window, and all that gorgeous brass at Coventry Antiques. The fresh cut wood smell as you pass the boarded up Irv's Deli is encouraging.

Herb Ascherman of the Ascherman Gallery has just gotten a grant from the Ohio Arts Council to fund, in part, 15 summer courses ranging from beginning photography to self awareness for women through photography. Registration begins May 29. For info, call Herb at 321-0054. You might also consider checking out the Gallery's latest exhibit of the works of Robert Asman which opened last week. His work "captures the moment as it happens, it is lineal, graphic and spontaneous."

The most exciting thing happening on the street in May, I think, is the Marilyn Bianchi Kids Playwriting Festival opening at Dobama on May 16th. Marilyn was well known on the street and the Festival is a marvelously creative extension of the work she did with kids before her untimely death in 1977. A group of her close friends who formed the Marilyn Bianchi Fund for Life and People, have been working for months, soliciting scripts written by children through the schools of greater Cleveland. From 164 scripts, a screening Committee chose 16 on the basis of

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OPINION: "THEY PAVED PARADISE AND PUT UP A PARKING LOT"

It appears at this point that the City of Cleveland Heights is most determined to have Euclid Heights Boulevard reconstructed. Not merely repaved. Rebuilt. From the bottom up. I drive my car down that road a lot, and I certainly cannot disagree with the general conclusion that the road needs fixing. As one area resident noted recently, the street looks as if General Patton fought for it--and lost.

But the rebuilding of EHB raises some very serious questions about an ancient Coventry curse. Namely, our parking problem. The City has made it clear that its intention is to ban all on-street parking on EHB when it is rebuilt. Perhaps not immediately, but very soon thereafter.

Please note that I said all on-street parking. Not just parking during rush hours or overnight.

Now the City tells us that they must do this. After all, they say, the County is paying part of the Bill and the County will require the City to sign an agreement to ban parking as a pre-condition to getting the funds. The County tells us that they must get this agreement from the City because the Federal Government insists on such a ban when some Federal money is involved (which it will be, in this case.)

Parenthetically, one can question the use of County money on this project. Remember that "Streets and Sewers" bond issue we voted recently? It was promised that EHB would be taken care of. If that money had been used, there would be no County or Federal no-parking requirements to contend with. I wonder why the City used bond money to pave Fairmount Boulevard (no parking allowed anyhow), when they could have approached the County to use County money there instead?

I believe one can legitimately speculate that part of the answer lies in a long-standing policy of the City Council. As Councilman Richard Weigand pointed out at our recent CNI meeting, the City intends to eliminate on-street parking where possible and when possible. (He lives on EHB himself, and he feels it is a good policy.) After having lived on EHB myself for over five years, I must respectfully dissent from the City view that on-street parking is a health hazard. The majority view at City Hall, of course, holds otherwise.

So the City wants to ban parking on EHB. As it did on Cedar Road near Fairmount. As it did on Superior Road near the East Cleveland line when it decided it could sell permits to park in the Pavilion lot. As it did in the apartment district near its new Cedar-Norfolk permit lot.

But where, one might well ask, will people park now?

Opinion: "They Paved Paradise"--continued

The answer is deceptively simple. The City will build new parking lots in the Coventry area. This is in addition to parking on Hampshire (under construction) and parking on Coventry and on Mayfield (being planned). But exactly where will the lots be built?

The City is looking at several locations. There is an empty lot on EHB's south side between Coventry and Mornington Lane, another empty lot on the corner of EHB and Lancashire, and a lot on Hampshire Road between Hampshire Lane and Overlook on the south side of the street.

Putting aside for a moment the question of whether these locations are suitable for parking, I ask one question of the City. Will these lots adequately substitute for the 227 spaces on-street on EHB between Coventry and Edgehill? These spaces now provide convenient, free parking for residents, visitors, and a not insubstantial number of customers for the commercial strip.

It is my opinion that the City plans to eliminate parking on EHB are shortsighted, costly in economic and aesthetic terms, unnecessary, and detrimental to the public interest. Other than that, I have no objection. I, too, would like to see EHB rebuilt. But I cannot believe there is no other way to get the result accomplished.

--- Alan Rapoport

Editor's Postscript: CNI has received a communication from the Executive Committee of the Boulevard Neighbors Association, which is also very concerned about the paving of Euclid Heights Boulevard by the County. In his letter, the Chairman of the Committee states, in part:

"We believe that this parking ban would destroy many fine businesses and also injure the many occupants and owners of the large number of apartments on Euclid Heights Boulevard. Many home owners are also opposed to this parking ban."

CNI has not taken an organizational position on the issue yet, but will probably discuss one at its next meeting.

Streetwalking (continued from page 2)

creativity, imagination and humanity. These were then evaluated by the artistic staff at Dobama and a playwright for productibility. The six plays eventually selected are being produced by the Dobama company for this Festival. Tickets for opening night (a Benefit for the Fund) are \$10. The balance of the performances--Thurs., Fri., Sat., and Sun.(2)--are free. This provides a marvelous opportunity for Coventry Neighbors to participate in this festival and demonstrate to Dobama how much we appreciate their contribution to the life of our community.

-- Bobbie Littell

NEW LAW STRENGTHENS LOCAL LIQUOR OPTION

Ohio's neighborhoods have gained a powerful new tool with which to regulate at least one aspect of commercial enterprise within their precincts. On March 11, Amended Substitute House Bill 79 became law, providing citizens the ability to revoke the liquor permit of an individual tavern owner.

Previously, the only way that a community could close down an undesirable tavern was for the precinct in which the business was located and one adjacent precinct to "vote themselves dry." The obvious deficiency of that system was that a dry vote closed down not only the troublesome bar, but also those establishments in both precincts which were desirable assets to the community. As a result, this drastic step was not frequently taken.

In order to put a specific innkeeper out of business, a petition to place the matter on the ballot must be signed by 35% of the number of registered voters within just the tavern's precinct who voted in the last gubernatorial election. In addition, the Liquor Control Commission must furnish a statement that the permit holder has violated Ohio liquor law within one year prior to the requested election. The owner has the right to contest the validity of the petition.

If the subsequent election results in the ouster of the bar owner, his permit must be surrendered within seven days of the certification

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New Law Strengthens Local Liquor Option (continued)

of the vote. If the owner is not voted out, no similar election can be held for four years.

It is important to note that, if the former permit holder wishes, he or she can sell the business to another individual holding a separate permit. This means that the pub in question could be reopened under new management.

Reaction from local proprietors has been mixed. One Cleveland Heights permit holder disliked by neighboring residents is known to have called City Hall in horror to find out "what they can do to me." Another tavernkeeper stated what is likely to be the feeling of most of his peers: "It is a good way to get the bad guys out of business without penalizing the good ones."

-- F. David Gill

BRIEF NOTES OF INTEREST TO SOMEBODY (or me at least!)

-- Record Revolution, a Coventry veteran, is celebrating its Tenth Anniversary. Located at 1830-28 Coventry Road, it is also sporting a brand new awning and sign. Best wishes for the next ten!

-- We hear that Coventry Books has received a shipment of the current issue of "American Heritage" magazine containing excerpts of a book written by Coventry resident June Wortman's mother about the family's experiences in a concentration camp. Many people have been waiting for the shipment to arrive.

-- Looking for short or long term sitters? You might check out University Sitters at 795-3360.

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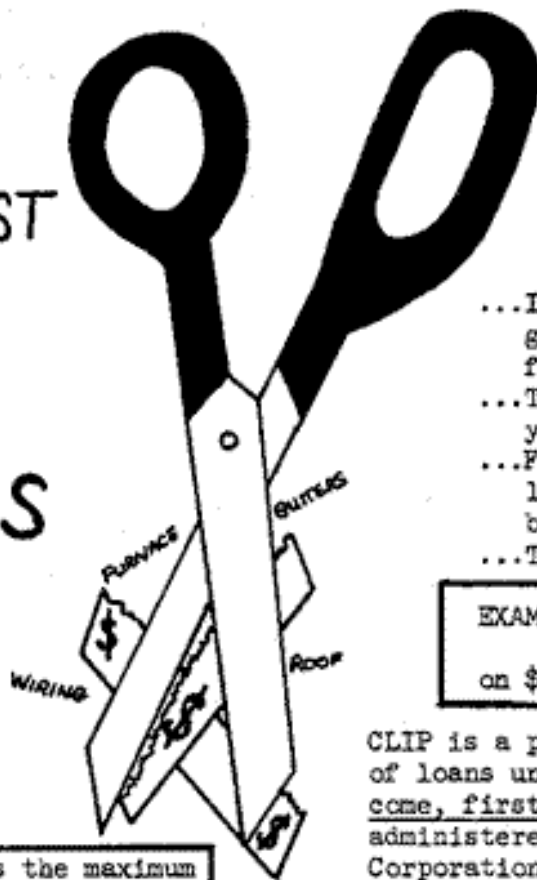
QUOTE OF NOTE: "Chuckholes are just something we're going to have to learn to live with." Dominic Tomaro, Cleveland Heights Service Director.

ANNOUNCING

C.L.I.P.

CHALLENGE FUND
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OF
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CLIP is a pilot program permitting a limited number of loans under the funding available, on a first come, first to qualify basis. CLIP will be administered by the Forest Hill Church Housing Corporation. The funding is provided by Community Development dollars allocated by the City of Cleveland Heights.

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THE CHALLENGE FUND is an ongoing program of the Forest Hill Church Housing Corporation. It has assisted residents since 1974.

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