



Coventry Village News

March, 1991

The Newsletter of Coventry Neighbors, Inc.

City Planning Director Responds to Consensus

Thank you for your well-written and comprehensive letter of January 21, 1991. I am pleased Coventry Neighbors, Inc., is taking an active interest in the future of the Coventry Village Business District.

I believe both City Council and the Administration share CNI's view of the Coventry neighborhood -- that it is a unique, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood with strong ties between its commercial district and surrounding residential areas. It is our hope that through the comprehensive development plan, services and shopping opportunities for Coventry Village residents will be improved and enhanced rather than reduced.

At the same time, we have to take steps to improve and expand the retail base and infrastructure in the district to allow Coventry to maintain its position as a shopping district with regional appeal. Otherwise, Coventry will become just what CNI fears -- a neighborhood retail district like Lee and Taylor roads.

The challenge here is to reconcile these interests, which at times may be conflicting, without changing the Coventry's basic "chemistry." Please be assured that City Council and Administration knows this and will consider these issues very carefully.

To that end, allow me to take a closer look at Phase II of the plan, which calls for construction of a parking garage adjacent to Rock Court. Although

the consultant has called for this facility, no decision has been made on whether it will be built or where it will be built. Councilman Phil Bart at the last public meeting correctly represented the views of the City on this, namely that need for additional parking will have to be demonstrated before any commitment to construction is made. Second, there is no commitment as to where a parking garage would be built. Third and last, when and if the City goes forward with a parking facility, it will be done with the neighborhood's knowledge and participation.

CNI's suggestion to implement Phase III before Phase II is well taken. Please know, however, that the sequence of events in the plan are not "engraved in stone." It is likely that during Phases I and II, staff will be investigating any and all opportunities to improve Coventry's northern gateway, including and involving parking.

Continued on Page 2

Coventry Theatre To Open Again --

Plans for the renovation of the Coventry Theatre are underway, once again. The theater, built in 1919, was acquired in November, 1989 by Charles Zuchowski. Since then, a number of plans have been proposed for the 25,000 square foot building.

The latest involves a multiple cinema, a restaurant, and office space. Many of the theater's original features, such as high ceilings and plaster moldings, will be restored as part of the project.

Come to the next CNI meeting, Tuesday, March 12, 7:40PM, at the Coventry Village library for further information.

CVR -2-
March, 1991

City Planning Director Response...
(from page one)

In fact, Planning Department staff has actively advocated finding a new owner or tenant for Raj Mathur's building as soon as possible. It has been suggested that a major, full-service bookstore would be a particularly strong anchor on the north-east corner.

CNI asks where financing is going to come from while the nation is in recession. I would respond there is money available for implementation from both the public and private sectors. As you know, a group of investors led by Tom Fello is negotiating a loan from a private lender to purchase the Center Building between Hampshire and Lancashire roads. To facilitate the sale, the city is willing to lend those investors additional funds for rehabilitation and repairs. Last year, the City approved a \$75,000 loan to Hyde Park Grille to help the owners of the restaurant purchase and rehabilitate three buildings on the east side of Coventry.

I mention these items to demonstrate funds are available for plan implementation, and that the City can find ways of helping projects move forward. This help can be in the form of loans, as mentioned above, or through technical assistance.

Regarding the S-2 district on the east side of Coventry, there are no plans for developing this area. Please recall that the S-2 district was created over 20 years ago in anticipation of a rapid transit line on Coventry Road. The expansion was scrapped, but the zoning classification was left on the books in recognition of the development possibilities

Coventry presented. We are, of course aware that Cadwell Road residents are very concerned about the S-2 District and potential development.

Last, I would like to address the points initially raised in your letter. Yes, some, but not all, of the district's problems -- in terms of maintenance or retail mix -- have been created by the "lethargic, intractable landlords." However, numerous market forces and other variables, e.g., the construction of malls, suburban migration patterns, unforeseen fires, bad business decisions, etc., have combined to make Coventry what it is today. The plan recognized these conditions, identified new opportunities and recommended strategies to create a retail environment to be enjoyed by neighborhood residents and outsiders alike--without changing the spirit of Coventry.

I hope this letter answers CNI's questions and concerns about the Coventry Development Plan. I look forward to CNI's continued participation in the planning process and a continuing dialogue between the neighborhood, its residents and the City.

Very truly yours,

Cheryl L. Stephens, Director
Department of Planning and Development

Copies of the Coventry Village Development Plan are available in the library. These can be borrowed for 3 days. Also, two reference copies are on hand to look at in the library.

Barbara Angell -- Poet, Painter and Neighbor

Barbara Angell, poet, teacher and painter, died after a long battle with cancer on July 10, 1990. She was 60 years old.

Barbara lived in the Coventry area for many years, and brought to the neighborhood a wit, grace and humor that will be sorely missed. She was active in the Poets' League of Greater Cleveland, and organized the Sunday afternoon poetry readings at the Coventry Village Branch Library. Coventry was the subject of many of Barbara's paintings and drawings. The first painting sold at Barbara's show at the Garden Center in October 1989 was a winter scene of Coventry at night.

Barbara spent a good part of her last year completing a poetry manuscript. Cleveland State has generously agreed to publish Barbara's manuscript if \$1,500 of pre-publication orders can be guaranteed. The book will be available in spring of 1991.

To order: Contact Daniel Thompson, or send a check made out to CSU Poetry Center, to Meredith Holmes; 2213 Bellfield Avenue; Cleveland Heights OH 44106. Books are \$10 a copy; books after the fifth copy in any one order are \$7.50 a copy.

Letter To The Coventry Village News

February 18, 1991

Coventry Village News
2745 Hampshire Road Suite 2
Cleveland Heights, OH 44106

Dear CVN:

As much as I love your little sheet and rely upon it for the real dirt about Coventry, I feel that it's time you stopped whining about Raj Mathur's Taj Mahal Restaurant and the building it's housed in.

The restaurant itself is a clean, warm and inviting place, the best of its kind in Cleveland, but its business has been unfairly hurt by CVN's constant carping and - I believe - actionable reportage.

The building is no beauty, but is better than the one that houses Coventry Pizza, and the one opposite Taj Mahal, and is of far greater charm, at least, than the blobs that contain the convenience store and Revco.

Mathur has put more of himself and his money into Coventry than most of the people who sit in such sanctimonious judgment of him.

He's an asset to Coventry and I hope we never lose him.

Saul Isler

CVN -4-
March, 1991

RTA To Meet Neighbors To Discuss Transit Concerns

A public meeting will be held to give residents of Musicians Towers and local residents an opportunity to discuss the services of the Regional Transit Authority. Representatives of RTA will be there to listen to any and all comments regarding their system and service.

Mark your calendar:

Wednesday, March 20th
7:00 P.M.
Musicians Towers
2727 Lancashire Rd.

Sponsored by the Heights Community Congress.

Neighborhood Groups Attend Summit At HCC

Representatives of 13 neighborhood groups met at the Heights Community Congress January 19. The goal was to learn more about each other and to discuss possibilities for one or more group projects.

There was talk of co-sponsoring a social event, perhaps this summer, to promote the groups and to encourage greater participation.

Coventry Neighbors, by far the oldest of the neighborhood groups, was represented by Marilyn Pryor, President.

A note from the gardeners around Coventry...

Spring is just a few weeks away. Soon we'll be working in the yard on our hands and knees, making the garden ready for new growth. Please remember that your pet may void excrement and urine only on your own property or between the curbs of city streets. You must pick up and properly dispose of fecal matter left by your pet. (City of Cleveland Heights, regulation 505.08)

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The deadline for each month is the 18th day of the preceding month. While no unsigned material will be used, names may be withheld from publication at the writer's request.

Phone: 321-1835



CH--UH Public Library Celebrates 75th Year

The Cleveland Heights - University Heights Public Library system is celebrating its 75th anniversary year. Throughout 1991 a variety of programs and events will focus on the library's rich history of service in the community.

The library is more than a good source for the latest fiction or non-fiction book. Think of the library for doing research, browsing through a magazine, finding a video, photocopying documents, listening to CDs, reading current foreign-language newspapers, getting simple tax-form assistance, studying U.S. foreign policy, learning to read, seeing a movie, taking an "armchair trip" and a whole lot more!

Please enjoy this cultural, recreational and educational jewel for people of all ages and interests!

Speaking of CDs...

Compact discs have arrived at our Coventry Village library!!! Selections may be made from Jazz, Show Tunes, Popular, Classical, and more! And the news gets better. ...CD's may be borrowed for 21 days!

And, just a reminder...videos are available, too. They may be borrowed for three days. This beats running back to the video store early the next morning. Not to mention the price!

Mary Ann Rodewald

Join CNI today...

Membership form is printed
on the back of this newsletter...

Big Move For Big Fun

A blast from the past! That's Big Fun, a new retail store in Coventry Village.

Big Fun proprietor Steve Presser is a local resident who has over the years accumulated a collection of odd lot novelties. The stroll down memory lane with the smoking dog, invisible ink, whoopee cushions and original 60's posters. And Big Fun is very affordable. The stuff is great for party favors, class reunions, or gag gifts.

Temporarily located in the Center Building, Big Fun will move to its permanent location next to Hyde Park. That place is being renovated now with architectural pieces from the owner's personal collection, including such pieces as cherry wood cabinets and a bar from a long gone restaurant to showcase the merchandise. And the new location will be easily accessible by wheelchair.

Mary Ann Rodewald

Coventry Neighbors, Inc. is looking for a new logo. Our current logo depicts a light fixture purchased by CNI for Coventry Park some time ago. That fixture no longer exists.



Send your design to:
Elsa Johnson
Logo Design Contest
2753 Hampshire Rd. Apt. #1
Cleveland Heights, OH 44106

The winner will be awarded a \$50 cash prize. The deadline has been extended to April 30, 1991.

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c/o Heights Community Congress
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DATED MATERIAL---PLEASE DELIVER BEFORE MARCH 12

The next regular meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. will be held on Tuesday, March 12, at 7:40 PM at the Coventry Village Library, Euclid Heights Blvd. & Coventry Rd.

If you join Coventry Neighbors, Inc. now, your membership will continue through the end of 1991. Membership includes a subscription to The Coventry Village News.

Please indicate the kind of membership you want:

_____ Individual Membership (\$7.50) _____ Family (\$10.00)
_____ Senior Citizen (\$5.00) _____ Newsletter Subscription Only (\$5.00)

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

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Are you now receiving the newsletter by mail? _____

Please return this form with your check to:

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