

COVENTRY

VILLAGE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF COVENTRY NEIGHBORS INC.
September, 95

Zipkin Report

New Building Finally Underway

You know that hole in the ground on the corner of Euclid Heights Boulevard and Coventry Road? Yes! That pit we've all grown so tired of. We know you've been wondering for a long time, like the rest of us, when and what would be built there. Well, this is where you find out.

At our August meeting local lawyer and real estate developer Lewis Zipkin spoke about his plans for that site. It's been a long struggle, and there were brief moments of temptation to just throw in the towel, Zipkin told the attentive crowd of some 30 plus people. After the building was destroyed by fire several years went by while Zipkin negotiated with the insurance company about whether the back wall foundation could be reused. No settlement could be reached until this was resolved. Finally, in 1992, the insurance company hired its own engineer, The engineer verified that the wall could not be reused.

Since then much time has been spent designing an economically viable building, and seeking, unsuccessfully, financial backing. "It's been very frustrating," said Zipkin. Reminding the audience that it took two years to achieve financing for the Center Building (Tommy's, High Tide, etc.), an already existing building, he explained that the financing of new construction in mature neighborhoods is extremely difficult.

Despite the fact that loaning the money would be a good solid, business transaction, as the anticipated rents would more than cover the mortgage, all banks approached wanted signed leases "forty pages thick" from the new building's tenants. Although he did finally get some tentative commitments, Zipkin said that negotiations between lawyers protecting the legal interests of each party involved could have incurred thousands of dollars in fees. Zipkin cited receiving considerable help from the city during this struggle to obtain backing. He expressed particular gratitude to Council persons Ed Kelly and Bonny Caplan (who almost always attends CNI meeting) for the extra hours of help they gave.

"It's a very desirable site," Zipkin explained, "My family and I finally decided to restructure our other holding. We're going to build this out of our own funds, for cash." This decision has freed the time table. "There should be equipment on the site by Friday (August 12th)," Zipkin said, "and they should start

digging on Monday (August 15th). If they don't, you're going to see me out there next week with a shovel."

The new building, which will cover more of the site's area than the previous building, is based on "the Newbury Street model." This is a building in Boston with split level access which allows all tenants to have street exposure. "Tenants don't want to be hidden in the basement" said Zipkin. "In this design you will look into two sets of store windows from the street." Originally designed to have three stories, the build for cash decision has forced the removal of the top floor.

The result is a 100% retail use building. The lower level, called the "Courtyard Level," will have 7000 square feet of restaurant area. Although he couldn't disclose the name, Zipkin promised that a major "very interesting" restaurant would be at this level. Also likely is a coffeehouse-bakery type operation. Both will have outdoor garden seating in the rear (facing Maracas, which used to be Fandango). Also on this level, in the front, will be 1500 square feet of retail space. The second floor will have either a major bookstore or women's clothing store; "something on the order of Banana Republic, but more suited to Coventry." It seems that some of the building's former tenants also want to come back. Who will be in the building will become public as leases are firmed up, assured Zipkin.

While Zipkin could not give a completion date -- "We don't know what kinds of problems we will run into" -- he thought that the reduction of the building to only two floors would allow work to continue through the winter. The building, hopefully, should be complete enough "as early in '96 as possible" for each tenant to commence work on individual spaces.

A question and answer period followed during which objections were raised to the aesthetic alteration of the buildings' facade resulting from the removal of the third floor. A series of arches over the three entryways, no longer balanced by the row of third story windows, which function in the three story building design much like a decorative cornice, seemed out of scale (the architect's rendering of this design is reproduced in this newsletter. Let us know what you think. We'll pass the information on to Lew Zipkin). A false facade, such as the one applied several years ago to the front of the

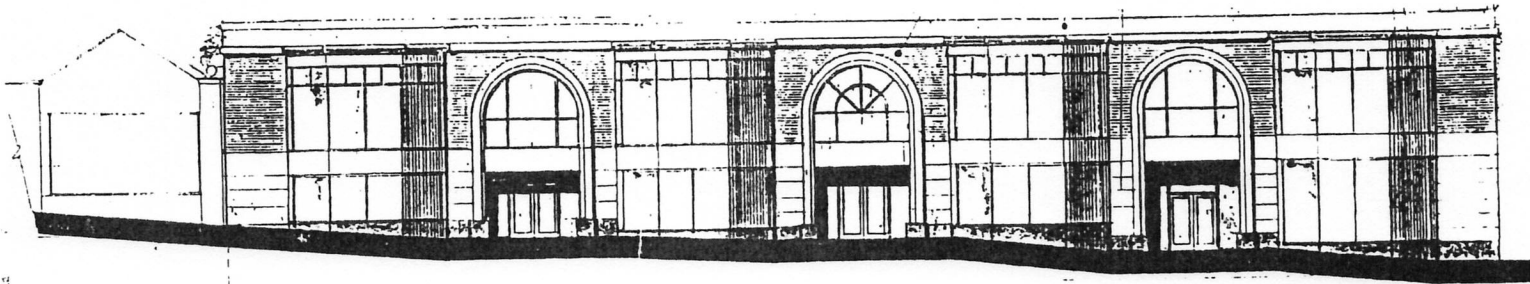
Coventry Building, was suggested. Zipkin thought the idea worth considering.

Other people wondered if there was a saturation point for restaurants on Coventry. "I think not" responded Zipkin. He thought that more restaurants encouraged increased activity on the street, which in turn encouraged more use of restaurants. Although he thinks much of Coventry's street life will continue to be local people, he mentioned that people coming to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame will find Coventry a not too distant extra attraction and dining venue. On his personal wish

list, therefore, he would include a transportation link to downtown Cleveland, to take advantage of the tourist trade. He would also like to see more parking "without loosing housing," and horse drawn carriages.

To the horse drawn carriages, I, for one, say, "I hope not." I don't think Coventry is sleepy enough for that. You and I know what rush hour traffic is like as it files through here. Pity the poor horses. Sorry Lew.

Elsa Johnson



Coventry and City News

Coventry Neighbors had a small table at the Country Folk and Craft Fair. We sold T-shirts and gave out street fair reunion patches and the postcards we'd made up for the street fair reunion. These turned out to be pretty hot items ... among the "old", for nostalgia's sake; among the (very) young, because they were free. We met a lot of people ... some old timers and some new residents too. Hopefully we made some new friends who will become members of Coventry Neighbors. The musical acts at the fair were great, so it was painless duty to sit there for an afternoon.

The stairs at the corner of Cadwell and Euclid Heights Boulevard have been repaired. This issue was brought up at a meeting in early summer. No doubt the city had already planned to make repairs, but we'd like to think that the issue, brought up at our public meeting, helped the repair get done faster.

Thanks to Macs Backs. In one of our newsletters we issued a typo that listed the price of our t-shirts, sold at Macs Backs, as \$5.00. This is below cost, and if we sold them for that price we'd have to be crazy. The staff at Macs Backs sold five shirts at a poetry reading. The next morning Suzanne DeGaetano caught the error. The cost was actually \$15.00. She generously paid us the difference. We gave her a membership in return. Macs Backs still has a few shirts left. They make great gifts, particularly for expatriated (on to the big city or off to school) Coventryites. Our T-shirt says it all - "COVENTRY A Community of Neighbors." If you don't have one, get one; there are limited supplies left.

At our next meeting on September 12th, Shony Long, Coventry librarian, will tell us about the proposed library renovations. These will entail some inconvenience to the community over the coming winter (Coventry Neighbors will have to find a different place to meet). If you are a regular user of the Coventry Library, to find out what this will mean for you, both in temporary inconvenience and future improvements, plan to attend the meeting. It will be held, as usual, in the meeting room at 7:45 PM.

Don't forget the City is sponsoring a meeting at the Cleveland Heights Recreation Pavilion on Thursday September 14, at 7:30 PM. This is your chance to give input on what shape future development at Severance Town Center could take. It's sure to be a lively forum.

At our last meeting the City reported on two pieces of important recently enacted legislation:

#1. It is a misdemeanor in the City of Cleveland Heights to have toy guns that are replicas of real guns.
#2. If you live in a multifamily dwelling (2 families or more) you may not grill within twenty feet of your building or within 20 feet of another building, for fire protection.

Congratulations to former CNI president Chuck Owens and Dumont Gerken. Chuck and Dumont got married last month.

Mark your calendars - the Heights Heritage House Tour is coming up September 16-17. Watch for the brochures.

CNI Elections Are Coming

At our next meeting on September 12, we will be taking nominations for 1995-1996 CNI officers and trustees. Elections will be held at our October 10, 1995 meeting. Our by-laws call for the annual election of four officers, President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and three at large Trustees.

You must be a paid-up member to vote. Check the address label on this newsletter. It has your membership "expiration date" in the upper right corner. That date is approximately one year from the last record we have of your dues payment. If your membership has expired or is about to expire you can drop off you dues at the meeting, or send it to any of the current CNI officers or trustees.

From The President's Pen

At last "Presidents' Pen" from this particular president:
Because of the library renovations, Coventry Neighbors will post notice of its October meeting location on the Coventry Library doors one week prior to that meeting, which will be our officer elections. Why should you get involved?



Because as an organization Coventry Neighbors makes a difference in making Coventry the "Community of Neighbors" we proclaim and want it to be.

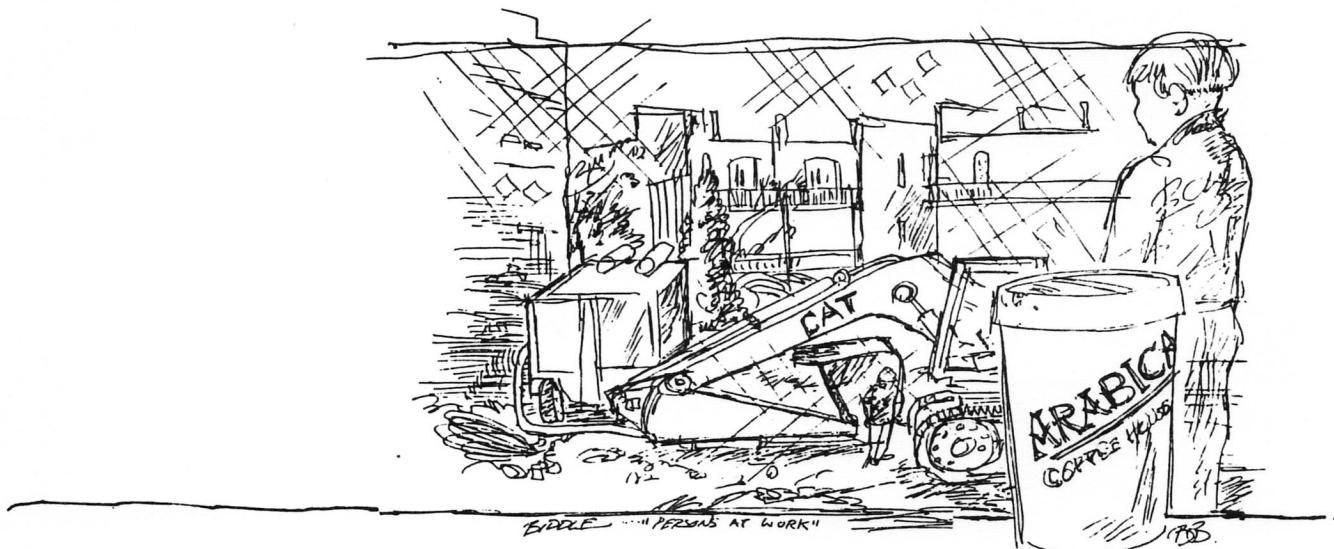
CNI doesn't represent just one particular constituency (merchants, parents of elementary school children, tenants, development interests), as other organizations do: this is both a strength and a weakness. It means we are a place where a broad range of issues can be presented and discussed. It also means that, since our mission is less concrete, it is harder to interest people in getting involved.

The events of the last year that were hits were the Street Fair Reunion, The Ken Montlack ("Irv's") presentation, and the Lew Zipkin ("the pit"; see the main article) presentation. We hope in the next year to bring you some equally interesting speakers and events.

It is my decision not to run for president of CNI for a third term. I feel that two years is long enough, and it is not as though I plan to become inactive. I just want to direct my energies more specifically than one can do when one is trying to keep all the reins of an organization in hand. It's someone else's turn. Maybe yours?

Help keep Coventry strong. Be involved in your community. Involve yourself in Coventry Neighbors. We need you. You need us.

Elsa Johnson.



Regular meetings of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. are held on the second Tuesday of every month at 7:40 p.m. at the Coventry Village Library, Euclid Heights Blvd. & Coventry Rd. When you join Coventry Neighbors, Inc. you can be sure of having a voice in shaping your neighborhood's future. Membership includes a subscription to the Coventry Village News.

Indicate the kind of membership you desire and complete the form:

___ Individual (\$7.50) ___ Family (\$10.00) ___ Senior Citizen (\$5.00)

CNI needs street representatives to communicate with the local neighborhoods and assist with the delivery of the newsletter.

YES, I would be interested in becoming a CNI representative for my street

NAME _____ Phone _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP CODE _____

Please return this form with your check to: **COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC.**
C/O Elsa Johnson
[Redacted]
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118

Schedule of Meetings	
* September 12, 1995	Nominations for 1996 Officers and Trustees
October 8, 1995	Elections for 1996 Officers and Trustees
* November 14, 1995	Regular Monthly Meeting
December 12, 1995	Regular Monthly Meeting
* <i>Newsletter Publication Month</i>	

Coventry Village News is published by Coventry Neighbors, Inc. The newsletter is distributed free throughout Coventry Village. Mailed subscriptions are available (see last page).
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