

# COVENTRY VILLAGE NEWS

FEBRUARY 1976

NEWSLETTER OF COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC.

## Notice to Our Readers

It has recently come to our attention that many of you who are presently receiving the Coventry Village News may not wish to receive it. Accordingly, we are giving notice of our intention to cut down our mailing list.

Past practice has been to create a list of names based on attendance lists from various community meetings. In theory at least, our list includes those members of our community who have cared enough about various problems to turn out on cold, wintry nights and discuss them. We have discovered, however, that our list is overinclusive and underinclusive. It certainly is not--and will not be--exclusive.

If you wish to continue receiving the Coventry Village News, please write to the newsletter or to Coventry Neighbors, Inc. Should we not hear from you, we may take your name off our list. If someone you know is not on our list, but would like to be, please have them notify us as well.

We would like to distribute the newsletter to everyone in the area, but we obviously cannot afford the cost. It remains our sincere desire that everyone who wishes to get the newsletter will get one. With your help, this will be possible.

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OUR NEXT MEETING OF COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. WILL BE ON MONDAY,  
FEBRUARY 9, 1976 AT 8PM AT THE MUSICIAN'S TOWER, 2727 LANCASTER  
ROAD (STREET LEVEL COMMUNITY ROOM). ALL ARE WELCOME.

### AGENDA

1. Minutes of the January Meeting - Janet St. Clair
2. Financial Report - Ester Brodsky
3. Council Report - David Burwasser
4. Old Business: Pick n Pay Status Report
5. New Business: Bicentennial Plans  
Brother Jonas will discuss plans regarding a  
religious community in the Coventry area
6. Other Business
7. Adjournment

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A meeting to discuss DAY CARE III A FAMILY HOME, sponsored by the Day  
Care Task Force of the Heights Community Congress, will be held on  
February 11th at 7:30 p.m. at the Church of the Savior, 2537 Lee Rd.  
For further information, please call 321-6775.  
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*Dobama Theatre - 1346 Coventry Road - presents Veronica's Room,  
a thriller by Ira Levin. Tuesday, January 22 - Saturday, February  
14.*

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COVENTRY LIBRARY - 1925 Coventry Road - 932-3600, Ext. 47  
Wednesdays (weekly): Preschool Storytime: 10:30 a.m. & 2:30 p.m.  
Thursdays (weekly): Stories, crafts, songs for school-age children  
4:00 p.m.

continued

Saturday, February 21: Movies, songs, crafts for children 6 - 10  
2:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 22: Bicentennial Open House at Coventry Village  
Library

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The Ten Dollar License

Again this year, many residents of Cleveland Heights are commanded to apply for a license. No, not for their dog, nor for their cat; rather, for their roommate(s). Two or more persons who are not related and who share a dwelling must apply for a roomer permit for each person in excess of one and pay a ten dollar fee.

In the apartment areas in particular, this law forces unrelated persons who share an apartment to designate one person as the principal tenant and all others as the roomers even if all are co-equal tenants who are designated as such on their lease. For those of us who are tenants and for reasons of economy, safety or companionship choose to have one or more roommates, this law is a humiliation and a harassment.

During the public meeting on the roomer permit issue last spring, the city officials were questioned about the purpose of this law. One reason which was offered was that this law controls density and guards against over-population. However, the city has explicit laws which govern the amount of space required per person in a dwelling. Also, it was suggested that this law is a safeguard against communes. However, the City of Cleveland Heights also has a law which prohibits any more than three persons who are not related from sharing the same dwelling (house or apartment).

Therefore, the question remains, what is the purpose of this law? Perhaps it is an attempt to regulate morals. If so, it succeeds in harassment of numerous persons whose morals, even with the sternest critics, are not in question--elderly persons who share apartments for safety and economic reasons.

The general effect of the roomer permit law is discrimination against the unmarried. The City of Cleveland Heights will allow two or even three unrelated persons to share a home, providing these persons are willing to pay an extra tax for this privilege.

If you find the roomer permit law irksome, I would encourage you to voice your complaint to Mr. Lee Chilcote, the new chairperson of the Planning and Development Committee of Cleveland Heights City Council, c/o City Hall.

- Christine M. Mitchell

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Dear Editor:

*There is a drawing on display at Tommy's showing an idea of how the street and sidewalk area in front of Tommy's could be changed to make it safer and more pleasant. This change is being proposed by the City to be paid for by money from the Housing and Community Development Act Block Grant. The drawings at Tommy's were prepared and offered for our comment by the Planning Department.*

*Everyone should take a look and send comments to Al Vanda, Planning Director, City of Cleveland Heights, 2953 Mayfield Road.*

Sincerely, Kermit J. Lind

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### UPSET OR RESTORATION?

No doubt about it: 1975 was a bad year for incumbents. The ruling Council majority got turned out; Sara Hunter ousted long-time benchholder Kenneth Nash for Cleveland Heights Judge; and while there was no contest for the School Board, the Board was rebuffed on millage. The only incumbent returned in a real contest was Al Connors of Council, who successfully presented himself as out-of-power albeit in-office.

The City Council winners presented themselves to the electorate as seeking an upset, not a restoration. There may have been a psychological temptation to campaign as the rightful rulers of Cleveland Heights, temporarily eclipsed by a band of upstarts. If so, resisting that temptation was the smartest single move made by the eventual victors--and they should know it, because campaigns directed "against incumbents" was how they got beaten originally.

Certainly the present rulers of Council were regarded by their opposition, the now-defunct "new majority" of Citizens for Effective Heights Government (CEHG), as a kind of sinister Camelot--an entity with new faces but an old tradition, still accountable for the political sins that were the issues of 1969, 1971 and 1973. But that perspective did not transmit to the voters.

But today the Mayor of Cleveland Heights is Marjorie Wright, than whom there can be nobody more incumbent. She was the last Vice Mayor in the Old Guard's days of power past, and events that are oral tradition to most Council members are personal recollection to her.

#### TIMEOUT

Congratulations! Political differences aside, Mrs. Wright, you worked for it and you earned it.

#### TIMEIN

And today the Vice Mayor of Cleveland Heights is Al Connors. He was the last of the Old Guard's "appointive incumbents" ever to be returned by election. (Does anyone remember "self-perpetuation?")

1975 was undeniably an upset, but the restoration aspect cannot be denied either.

The new Council officers were elected at the January 5 meeting, at which the standing committees of Council were also established. There are six committees: every Councilmember save the Mayor chairs one and serves on two others. Votes on officers and committee structure were all 5-2, with CEHG survivors Libby Resnick and Dick Weigand in the minority.

Resnick and Weigand proposed Oliver Schroeder for mayor--a mild paradox: Schroeder was the last mayor of the Old Guard's old days, and in the last two years has usually been found with Connors and Wright on the split issues. But he has been phenomenally adaptive and creative in dealing with new issues, as much as any Council member in recent terms, and has lately been by far the most "liberal" of the "conservative" wing. As Weigand stated, he is universally respected and understands that there really are forces working against the community; his nomination by the liberals was not headline material:

By the same token, Wright's nomination by the conservatives is very consistent; she has exercised leadership of that philosophical wing for some time. The only other plausible candidates from that faction would have been Schroeder or Connors, and would have signified either a turn to consensus politics, or patriarchalism, respectively. As it is, Wright's election signifies both an affirmation of the right-of-center ambiance developed in the campaign, and a lack of concern over acknowledging female leadership.

The committee structure was likewise unacceptable to Resnick and Weigand. The Community Relations Committee and Human Resources Committee are gone;

CR functions are transferred to an overall Municipal Services Committee. Human Resources matters were not even reassigned in the organizing resolution-- a clerical oversight, said Wright; an indicator of basic attitude, said Weigand. (An amendment at the January 19 meeting put the social planning responsibilities of HR into Planning and Development, and provided for other HR matters to be assigned under "general guidelines." Passed 5-2.) Committee structure follows.

Committee	Chair	Other Members
Finance & Personnel	Connors	Resnick, Chilcote
Planning & Development	Chilcote	Connors, Resnick
Municipal Services	Schroeder	Chilcote, Weigand
Public Safety	Jaffe	Schroeder, Weigand
Traffic & Public Health	Resnick	Jaffe, Schroeder
Recreation & Public Properties	Weigand	Connors, Jaffe

Most of the titles are self-explanatory. Municipal Services covers Streets and Services matters, utilities, refuse collection, and the like--as well as Community Relations.

Two features of the arrangement are apparent. One is that every committee has one experienced incumbent member of the organizing majority. The other is that the liberal Council members are not in the majority on any committee; put another way, Weigand and Resnick constitute 2/7 of Council but control 0/6 of the committees of Council. One complaint against the 1974-5 majority during the campaign was that it rammed through what it wanted just because it had the necessary number of votes; the people who lodged the complaint, however, do not seem to exhibit a corresponding restraint when the numerical advantage lies with them.

To arrange this 2/7 = 0/6 equation, however, the controlling majority had to put one of the "two" on every committee. This means that a minority report on every committee action is potentially possible.

Resnick and Weigand have the opportunity to constitute a "shadow government" of Cleveland Heights, in the highest and most effective sense of that phrase, precisely as a result of the steps taken by the majority to diffuse their voting power on committees: One or the other of them may speak with total authority on every item of Council business.

I'm not sure what the electorate thought it was requesting in 1975. I campaigned, and I ran into "psychological" voting: denial of the real divisions on Council; prejudice (X is "helping" constituents, Y is "using" them); casting a punitive ballot on personality grounds while assuming/hoping that others would cancel it; and willful refusal to do arithmetic (yes, Virginia, 4 minus anything is no longer a majority of 7).

Council is a good show, though sometimes it looks like The Bold Ones, and other times The Original Amateur Hour. But the real name of the show, folks, now and forever, is: You Asked For It!

- David Burwasser

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**VISIT COVENTRY SCHOOL**

NOW THAT THE NEW COVENTRY SCHOOL IS IN USE, THE PTA IS CONDUCTING TOURS OF THE BUILDING EACH WEDNESDAY MORNING IN THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY. EVERYONE IS INVITED TO GO THROUGH THE BUILDING AND SEE FIRST HAND HOW IT LOOKS AND HOW IT IS BEING USED. ADULTS WHO DO NOT HAVE CHILDREN IN SCHOOL ARE ESPECIALLY INVITED. THE TOURING BEGINS AT 10:00 A.M. EACH WEDNESDAY MORNING FROM THE OFFICE,

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### LANDLORDS & TENANTS - COOPERATIVE EFFORTS

An apartment is a product that a landlord must market. From his viewpoint, he must select his tenants carefully, establish clear agreements as to repairs to be made, keep the building operating in all regards, and work to resolve problems which are literally dumped on him. Consider, if you will, that you've never seen a landlord throw litter on the ground, you've never seen him put a pile of feces on your lawn, and notice that it is his responsibility to cope with totally unpredictable amounts of snow. To do all these things a landlord must find workers who are willing and able and responsible. At the same time, he must cope with the continuing physical problems of plumbing and a million other results of Murphy's Law, "If it can go wrong, it will!"

I'm not asking anybody to feel sorry for the landlord. Those are his problems, and if he is going to stay afloat he better handle them. What I think is needed is a sense of cooperation between landlords and tenant. We are both concerned with the quality of our living standards. We share concern about the shape of our apartments and the buildings we live in. To me this mutual concern is the basis for a unified effort to maintain positive attitudes towards finding solutions to our mutual problems.

I believe that we can work together, and I have seen efforts by both landlords and tenants that go down in my book as being nothing short of beautiful. I refer to apartments which have been transformed from dreary blah to real taste and attractiveness, to new driveways where tenants and landlords both worked at grueling hard labor and accomplished a thoroughly professional job, and to work parties where the tenants join the landlords in a complete building clean-up and shape-up. These merely touch the surface of things accomplished with cooperative efforts.

I can think of many things that I, as a tenant, would like to have and I believe that I would be happy to help the landlord accomplish that for me. A case in point might be the development of a patio, sharing in the effort to put in an outdoor grill, or helping in a landscaping project. From this landlord's point of view, a tenant can have anything he or she wants. It may affect the price of the apartment, and then again, it may not. In many cases, much can be done together that will not increase costs, and which do not put upward pressure on rent levels.

The answers or solutions are out there. We're in this apartment equation together. Let's get together, think creatively and positively, and have some fun in the process.

- Rick Lundquist

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#### Coventry Neighbors, Inc. Minutes of the Meeting of January 12, 1976

The January 12, 1976 meeting of CNI began with a reading of the minutes and a treasurer's report. The fund-raiser for the support of the Weathers vs. Peters Realty lawsuit was formally closed. David Burwasser reported on the City Council meeting, after which Karen Lind reported on the activities of the Coventry Library Advisory Committee.

Bruce Millinger raised the issue of Roomer Permits and a discussion ensued. David Burwasser contributed an explanation of the text of the law. Chris Mitchell suggested a meeting of the Landlord-Tenant Commission be held in February to receive information and make decisions.

Karen Lind gave a presentation on the use of Community Development Block Grant funding for the Coventry area. Other business included comments on the Coventry Village Newsletter, and a discussion on the Pick-n-Pay supermarket. Concern was expressed that Pick-n-pay will vacate the site and leave those in the area without a convenient grocery store. It was decided that a meeting to discuss the situation would be held in February at Musicians Tower. Anyone interested in another Safety Workshop was asked to contact Lana Cowell after the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Janet St. Clair

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### What's Good About Cleveland Heights

There has never been a shortage of criticism of the City in this community. Criticism, of course, is like a grease for the gears of a free society. It helps the mechanism that is city government function better by assuring that it does not function in a vacuum. But if criticism is grease, so is praise. When praise is due, it should not be maliciously withheld. And our city does have reason to be praised.

There are hopeful signs all around us. Plans for a construction project in front of Coventryard are being publically posted in the window at Tommy's and citizen comment on those plans is being solicited. For once, the City is asking its citizens what the neighborhoods should look like, instead of telling them. Credit for this truly enlightened approach belongs to our new City Manager, Robert A. Edwards, and our new Planning Department, headed by Al Vanda.

The openness of city government is another improvement. Mr. Edwards is proving to be both an able administrator and a dedicated public servant. His appointment reflects great credit upon the Council search committee headed by Councilman Oliver Schroeder.

The City is also looking better these days. A remodeling of the City Annex proposed by former Councilwoman Lucille Huston is nearing completion, and there is a definite improvement in the appearance of the building. Tree planting is proceeding under the energetic direction of Emrich Sabo, our City Forester. Moreover, it is evident that the City intends to maintain its healthy concern over aesthetics in the urban environment.

Crime has not disappeared from Cleveland Heights, but the new police chief, Martin Lentz, has managed to make our police department a most efficient force. The same police who cause occasional discomfort with zealous enforcement of traffic and parking laws should be recognized as the people responsible for several notable successes dealing with crimes against persons and property. Crime is down in Cleveland Heights, possibly because criminals know they run a better risk of quick apprehension here. This is something to be proud of.

It is not my purpose to say here that we have created utopia, that all problems are minor or non-existent in Cleveland Heights. We simply must recognize that there is good in this community, as well as bad. Cleveland Heights is a great place to live, and regardless of how much we gripe, it behooves us all to remember that fact, and the fact that on occasion, our public servants really are making it a still better place to live.

- Alan Rapoport

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#### COVENTRY VILLAGE NEWS

A publication of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. and the Heights Community Congress

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David Burwasser

All opinions contained in the Coventry Village News are solely those of the author, unless otherwise indicated. All official pronouncements of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. will be specifically noted. Articles for publication may be sent to the Newsletter, c/o Apt. 301, 2753 Euclid Heights Blvd. 44106.

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