

FAREWELL TO TOMMY'S?

At one time, not so long ago, it was said that Coventry was composed of two groups. One was called the Irv's crowd, and the other the Tommy's crowd. The area of the commercial strip between these two establishments has fleshed out a bit since that bit of folk wisdom was sprouted, but it probably remains true that these two gathering places are focal points of the Coventry Neighborhood. For this reason, the rumors that Tommy's will soon leave Coventry have caused much distress on the street. These rumors appear to have some foundation in fact.

Truth is elusive in this matter, as is often the case. Several facts may be noted. Tommy's has a lease with Lewis Zipkin's Coventryard Corporation. The lease will end in March. As is his right, the landlord has asked for a higher rate. As is his right, Tommy has indicated that he might prefer to vacate the premises. What will eventually happen is anyone's guess. To an outsider, the whole affair appears as a poker game, with both sides at times seeming to call the bluff.

The situation is not amiable. Zipkin has taken the position that Tommy's has an invalid lease. Tommy's went to Common Pleas Court seeking an order declaring the lease binding. A decision will come soon. If the decision favors Zipkin, Tommy's could be evicted on thirty days' notice.

Rumor enters at this point. There are rumors that the landlord wants to relocate Tommy's in another part of Coventryard which does not have a store front. There are rumors that the new proposed location would be smaller than the present location in terms of floor space. There are rumors that Tommy's is considering leaving Coventry altogether and locating elsewhere in Cleveland Heights--the Cedar-Fairmount area, perhaps.

Those of us who have patronized Tommy's over the years have fond memories of good, inexpensive food. But we remember more than that. We remember the friendly people who have worked there, the casual atmosphere, the sense of neighborhood we have felt when we entered the door and saw familiar faces and decor. Coventryard will not be able to replace all that merely by substituting another tenant.

There probably is not much we can do to stop Tommy's from leaving if the parties are committed to that result. But no irrevocable steps have been taken yet. Coventry Neighbors, Inc. would be glad to receive any letters from readers opposed to the relocation of Tommy's. Maybe these letters can be used to persuade the tenant and the landlord to do something about this situation before it becomes too late.

In the meantime, all we can do is watch and wait.

- Alan Rapoport

 OUR NEXT MEETING OF COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. WILL BE ON MONDAY,
 JULY 12th, 1976 at 8:00 p.m. AT THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY ON LANCASTER
 ROAD. SEE YOU THERE!

RENT-A-KID: Tired of extra work? lawn-mowing, errands, babysitting, painting...
 For details call: 321-1087

PARALLELS

The City income tax package failed, at the same election that passed the school levy. Some believe that the voters were only going to accept so much new taxation, and the schools got priority because they were at bat for the second time. There may be something to that, but I can't help noticing a peculiar parallel:

The City campaign for the tax that failed in June was strikingly similar to the School Board campaign for the levy that failed last November. The essential nature of the services to be financed were underscored; an earnest assurance was offered that the entire community, and not just the immediate service consumers, benefit from said services; and the only orchestrated reference to the consequences of failure was an unstated, generalized implication: "You can't not do this!" And in both polls the electorate went into that little booth and not-did it.

In the interim, however, the school levy supporters sharpened up their act. They turned to discourse upon the aversive consequences of not passing the levy. Remember the ad about the old folks who couldn't sell their house for enough money to move to Florida because the community had crummy schools? Or the one about the kids who needed extracurricular activities for their "excess energy" lest they fall into "mischief?" Germane stuff, for a school-security-conscious community with a populous kids-no-longer-in-school generation among the voters. And the school levy passed, the second time.

An intelligent, normally well-informed Coventry friend who voted against the income tax had this post-election response to the police cut-back: "Maybe now they won't pass out so many parking tickets." Dear friend: The cops will always have time between emergencies to ticket as many cars as they want. What counts is how far each cop must go to respond during emergencies. Fewer cops = farther to go = delayed response. A pity no one bothered to tell you that before the election, so you could put the parking ticket you got in the year nineteen- whatever into a more appropriate emotional perspective. Who in Cleveland Heights doesn't have a ticket, an arrogant building inspector, a publicly maintained chuckhole--something in his/her background that casts the City into a less than favorable light? Something that might need to be put into a more appropriate emotional perspective, through comparison with an even less pleasant, but no less plausible, alternative, before the votes are cast?

Some think it ungentle to operate by "threats." That's silly. Which is the greater offense: To warn a person of adverse consequences, or to let him suffer them? In fact, failure to warn is something less than full disclosure.

None of which is to "down" the folks who worked on the campaign, and who by all indications are prepared to try again come November. Quite the opposite; they are the knights-champion of community interest and service, and next time around they deserve a better game plan.

- Dave Burwasser

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COVENTRY VILLAGE LIBRARY 1925 Coventry Road 932-3600, Ext. 47

Tuesday - Weekly "Free Flicks": Movies hardly ever seen on TV - all ages
2:00 p.m.

Wednesday - Weekly Preschool Storytime - Ages 3-5 10:30 a.m.

Thursday - Weekly Super Sleuths: Mystery and detective stories for ages 8-12
7:30 p.m.

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Street Delegates Welcome in New Coventry Neighbors Structure

Coventry Neighbors, Inc enacted at its November 24th meeting a series of by-law changes that create a new category of voting membership in the organization; Street Club Delegates. The organization thus addressed the long-standing twin problems of creating a formal relationship with the street clubs that already exist in the Coventry School District, and providing the "umbrella" link between the Heights Community Congress and the Coventry street clubs.

The key change is in one new sentence: "Each and every recognized Street Club in the Coventry School District shall be entitled to one voting delegate to the Executive Committee, upon payment of Club affiliation dues of \$3.00 per year." Street clubs are free to instruct, remove or replace delegates; right of participation inheres in the delegate office rather than the particular person.

Street delegates are free to participate in all voting and deliberation. The only prerogative reserved purely to individual dues-paying members is running for office in CNI on the theory that one person should not be answerable to two constituencies. (Of course, any individual--including a street club member--can secure this prerogative by taking an individual, dues-paying membership, also \$3.00 per year.)

In addition, the organization mandated plenary Quarterly Meetings, intended to bring together as wide a gathering of Coventry people as possible for program meetings and policy review.

None of the changes infringe any of the rights or obligations of individual members of Coventry Neighbors as previously existed.

-HISTORICAL RIDDLE-

These changes are an attempt to solve at one stroke a nagging riddle imbedded in the history of Coventry: the relationship of street clubs, the Heights Community Congress and Coventry Neighbors, Inc.

Soon after it came into existence, the Heights Community Congress put into effect a plan for confederating street clubs--which are the foundation of the community organization development that HCC does with the City--into "umbrella" organizations, one for each school district. Coventry Neighbors pre-existed HCC (as did many street clubs) and was a "natural" for the Coventry District umbrella group.

But Coventry Neighbors, Inc. came into existence in a different climate and in a different era. It has always been an organization of individual members. The ideal umbrella group consists purely of delegates from street clubs. CNI members come largely from the multi-family and commercial/residential regions; street clubs happen mostly in single-family areas. CNI's attempts at outreach did bring in some valued individual members from single-family areas, but no solid link with street clubs was effected. Nor did CNI's apartment membership show any signs of speciating into street subgroups. CNI's area of concern includes part of Roxboro District.

Meanwhile, existing and new street clubs in the Coventry District were without an effective umbrella group, putting them at a disadvantage relative to clubs in eight of the other nine school districts.

The present measures are an attempt to cut across this historical riddle by, essentially, combining as much as possible of the best of both modes. The

