

The Untimely Death of Tommy's

The C-Saw Cafe is a thing of the past, Dean Dairy's old garage bit the dust to make way for a parking lot. Now another landmark on Coventry Road seems destined to become only a memory. On March 31, 1977, Tommy's will leave Coventry. Its lease expires and there appears to be little chance it will be re-negotiated.

As we reported last year, the problem is a landlord-tenant disagreement. Tommy's is not willing to accept the terms proposed by the person directly responsible for Coventryard--one Lewis Zipkin, attorney, developer, entrepreneur. A spokesman for Mr. Zipkin claims that four options were given to Tommy's for a new lease. Tommy Fello retorts that none were deemed reasonable. According to the Zipkin spokesman, "six or seven" other applications for the store front space occupied by Tommy's have already been received.

One option offered to Tommy's would have relocated Tommy's in a basement space accessible via a doorway on Coventry Road. This space would be 1,400 square feet (as opposed to the 2,500 square feet Tommy's presently occupies). Cost of the space would be about \$6 per square foot per year. By comparison, space at Cedar Center reputedly sells for \$4.50 per square foot and under.

Not one of the options offered to Tommy's by Coventryard would have provided the shop with its present street front location and size. Speculation is that the present store will be split down the middle to create a "mall" effect with shops on either side, in the style of the main Coventryard mall.

The news of Tommy's departure has sparked activity among groups in the University Circle area, which are presently working feverishly to arrange a location near Euclid and Mayfield for a new Tommy's. To date, no new location has been found there or anywhere else. Tommy himself states that he wants very much to stay on Coventry Road. Every option is being thoroughly investigated.

Street opinion is unanimously behind Tommy's. An ad posted in Coventry Books asks readers to support Tommy's because "you can't eat a boutique." In a street paper called the Coventry Shopping News, people were exhorted to vigorously oppose the action being taken by Coventryard. The Zipkin spokesman worries that this street paper might have been the cause of some \$800 worth of vandalism recently occurring at Coventryard. For the most part, however, the attitude seems one of resignation, regret and bitterness.

Tommy's has been more than a commercial enterprise. Under the friendly, neighborly management of the Fello family, Tommy's has been a Coventry institution. It has served as a gathering place, as a landmark, and--not incidentally--as a damn fine inexpensive restaurant. The store has vigorously supported three Coventry Street Fairs and its window notice board made inter-neighborhood communication possible between offerors and acceptors of all sorts of goods and services. No boutique will truly replace Tommy's.

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 THE NEXT MEETING OF COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. WILL TAKE PLACE ON TUESDAY,  
 MARCH 8, 1977 AT 8:00 P.M. AT THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY ON LAWCASHIRE ROAD,  
 ACROSS FROM MUSICIANS' TOWERS. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DROP IN.

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(Tommy's continued)

The death of Tommy's does not bode well for Coventryard and the entire commercial strip. One nearby merchant voiced a common concern when he stated that his store does considerably less business on days when Tommy's is closed. Without Tommy's as a draw, many shops now barely making a profit on Coventry due to high rents may be forced out of business. Mr. Zipkin's inability to come to terms with Tommy's may thus have disastrous consequences for all of Coventryard.

Tommy's has announced a "close-out" sale from March 21 to March 31. Everything will be sold at a discount, except beer and wine. This will ease the task of moving. The sale will provide a last opportunity to say good-bye to one of the few Coventry stores that had the guts and stamina to survive the turbulent 1960's and the economic boom of the early 1970's. On March 31, the store will close its doors forever, a victim of what some would have us believe is called Progress.

- Alan Rapoport

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We're Having a Square Dance...

The Coventry Cadre of the School-Community Relations Program is sponsoring a Square Dance on Friday, March 18th at 8:00 p.m. at the Coventry Elementary School. Elsie Jaffe will be the caller and the event is open to all Coventry residents. Admission at the door will be \$2.00. For further information, please call Carol Brown at 371-7230. And bring your dancing shoes!

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3 - 5 a.m. PARKING BAN EXTENDED - Now 3 - 6 a.m.

At the January 17, 1977 session of City Council, the overnight parking ban for the City was extended one hour. Formerly in force from 3 a.m. to 5 a.m., it now is in effect from 3 a.m. to 6 a.m. In the course of debate, Council member Joseph Belfer, appointed in 1976 to fill the fraction of retired Council member Don Jaffe's term remaining until the 1977 elections, took a key stand on a controversial issue for the first time since his appointment.

The original form of this ordinance would have extended the ban from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. Coventry Neighbors, Inc. went on record in opposition to this. The extension was requested by the City administration for reasons of law enforcement and of debris and snow removal from city streets. The Council committee handling this item was split on the issue. Dick Weigand, Chair, conceded that both police and street-cleaning problems correlated strongly with those residential streets having a shortage of off-street parking, but noted that most such streets have for that reason been exempted from the overnight ban altogether and will remain exempted, or are adjacent to such streets; while in the part of the City that has adequate offstreet facilities, the overwhelming majority, most cars have been off the street by midnight under the old arrangement. Thus, Weigand reasoned, the extended ban would have little effect either where there now is a problem or where there is not, and would merely create a nuisance for the occasional person who has legitimate need to park on the streets past midnight. Committee member Oliver Schroeder leaned toward Weigand's position.

Libby Resnick, third member of the committee, was strongly impressed by the anti-crime aspect of the proposed change, and reasoned that even the slight

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