



Coventry Village News

JULY, 1985

NEWSLETTER OF COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC.

VOL 9, NO. 7

North Coventry streets will be resurfaced

Five residential streets in North Coventry will be paved this summer. The streets are Glenmont, Belmar, Eddington, Hillcrest and Avondale. All are north of Mayfield and west of City Hall. The other street in that area, Coventry, was paved last summer.

Curbs will be replaced where necessary.

The work will be done by Cleveland Trinidad Paving under a \$195,000 contract. That contract also includes the paving of two streets in the Caledonia school district.

Costs will be paid with funds from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. No assessments will be levied against property owners.

According to Mayor Alan Rapoport, the decision to do the work at this time, and to pay for it with CDBG resources, arose from City Council's "Two Family Strategy." The aim is to encourage private investment with public spending. Rapoport describes the strategy as "an effort to do, in two-family areas, something that has worked very well in commercial areas. We will be coordinating the efforts of all major City departments to achieve tangible results in a particular geographic area."

Street Fair

This newsletter will go in the mail to its nearly 700 subscribers on the Friday before the 1985 Coventry Village Street Fair. By the time the Coventry Village News reaches its readers, the Fair will be over.

We will have a report on the event in our September issue.

ABC Appliance gets on the renovation bandwagon; is the pizza shop next?

ABC Appliance, 1782 Coventry Road, has announced plans for a thorough facade renovation. Their present storefront is among the least attractive on the commercial strip here. Discussions of facade renovation at Coventry Beverage and Pizza, are progressing.

The first step in the renovation of ABC Appliance will be the removal of the building's present false front, which was applied in the 1950's. Plans for the building's new front cannot be developed until the condition and appearance of the original one, which is now hidden, can be studied.

Val Katz, the semi-retired head of ABC, told an official of the City of Cleveland Heights that he's noticed the large number of new facades and signs here, and would like be part of that action.

Jackie Corsun, Vice President and day-to-day manager of ABC, told us that she'd realized the building had become an eye-sore, especially with so many other buildings undergoing renovation. Her business recently joined the merchants association, and, she says, would like to participate fully in the business community of Coventry. She spoke of feeling at home in Coventry, and safe on the street, even when she works late.

Up to now, promoters of facade renovation in Coventry Village have viewed ABC as an unlikely participant in the neighborhood's renaissance. ABC enjoys little walk-in trade; they service large appliances in peoples' homes, and do business almost entirely by telephone. They seem, therefore,

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ALL opinions and statements are strictly those of the respective writers, except when clearly identified as formal positions of CNI, CVN, or HCC. Circulation: 2000.

ANYONE wishing to submit copy for the September issue may do so by sending it to the Editor, *Coventry Village News*, 1811 1/2 Coventry Road, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118, no later than August 16. While no unsigned items will be published, your name may be withheld on request. Phone 371-6095.

Meeting notes

From Heights Meeting

A. Calisto Caminati and Joyce Braverman, of the Planning and Development Department, City of Cleveland Heights, presented plans for the expansion of Municipal Parking Lot 14, and new Lot 31. CNI resolved to support the zoning variance the City will seek regarding this project.

Mr. Lewis Zipkin presented plans involving the razing of a certain garage building on Lancashire Road, behind Coventryard. CNI resolved to support Mr. Zipkin's variance request.

We want art

The Editor of the *Coventry Village News* is seeking small, simple line drawings, especially of Coventry Village subjects, for this newsletter.

We have been using commercial clip-art to fill odd spaces, and would very much like to use material of more local interest.

If you can contribute, please call us at 371-6095.

Letters welcome

The *Coventry Village News* welcomes letters to its Editor. Letters to us are an opportunity to reach thousands of readers.

We will print just about anything that's not libelous. We do reserve the right to edit for clarity. The deadline for the next edition is mid-August.

Letters should be sent to the Editor at 1811 1/2 Coventry Road, Cleveland Heights OH 44118.

Coventry Village
in Cleveland Heights
*where we all get along together
pretty well*

Delegation to visit our Russian "sister city"

Cleveland Heights Mayor Alan Rapoport will head a four-member delegation, leaving on July 13, to put the final touches on a "sister city" agreement with Novgorod, USSR.

Accompanying Rapoport will be Dr. Tom Watts, a Professor of Russian History and Literature at the Ohio State University; Dr. Awilda Hall, Supervisor of Elementary Education for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education; and Jill Sheehan-Burke, a professional photographer and instructor of art at the Ruffing Montessori School.

The group will spend four days in Novgorod, and will visit Leningrad and Moscow. They will meet with the International Friendship Society, the Russian body which gives official approval to these sister city arrangements.

The group will discuss future exchanges between Novgorod and Cleveland Heights. These exchanges may include a visit, next summer, of Novgorod's Mayor Markelov to Cleveland Heights.

Funds for the trip have come from the Wolpert Foundation, local business organizations, special fundraising efforts, and individual donations.

Further information may be had by calling Gail Rodgers at 932-2327.

Parking permits available

Permits to park in the municipal parking lots in Coventry Village were very hard to get for many years. Now, with two new lots open, many more permits are available.

The permits, which cost \$45 and are good for three months, are available from a cashier in the Finance Department at City Hall, just inside the main entrance.

**Support your neighborhood
Join Coventry Neighbors, Inc., now**

Coventry shop owner is charged with assault

Mohamad Hasan El Musa, proprietor of Gourmet de France, 1824 Coventry Road, has been charged with assault, unlawful restraint, and possession of an unregistered hand gun. These charges are all misdemeanors.

According to eye-witnesses, Musa ran from his shop, and beat a man several times about the head with a large hand-gun. The victim was Dwane Germany of Cleveland Heights. Seven stitches were required to close Germany's wounds. The episode occurred at about 10:25 AM on May 28. The police Department has interviewed about 14 eye-witnesses in a continuing investigation. Musa has demanded a jury trial, which has been set for July 12.

Musa alleges that Germany stole a six-pack of beer from his shop several days earlier. Based on Musa's complaint, petty theft charges have been filed against Germany.

This episode is apparently not the only time Musa has pursued an alleged shop-lifter. Employees at the neighboring Tommy's Restaurant say that Musa once pursued a teen-aged male into the dining room, frisked him, and led him off. Proprietor Tom Fello says, "I'm just glad I wasn't there. I would have lost my temper. I, too, have a problem with shop-lifters. But you just don't pursue them into a neighbor's business, where you upset his customers."

Other problems alleged

Fello is also upset with the way the the folks at Gourmet de France dispose of their garbage. Fello complains that they regularly dump waste grease from cooking on the pavement behind the shop. That grease has now spread about, forming a very slippery and unsightly layer on the parking lot there. Fello has had problems, he says, with Gourmet de France personnel who place construction refuse and other waste in Tommy's trash bins.

[Continued on next page]

Gourmet . . . (from previous page)

City of Cleveland Heights staff people complain that Musa began work on his store without bothering to get a building permit, that he opened for business without a required final inspection or an occupancy permit. According to complaints, he also ignored repeated requests that he remove a illegal fabric banner he'd hung in front of the shop.

Sandwich offerings, which seem to be a substantial portion of Musa's business, are at the center of further potentially serious problems with the City. Musa never obtained the zoning variance that's required here of businesses that do any very large amount of carry-out restaurant business. --L.B.

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

I have been reading your newsletter for three months now. I must commend you on a job well done. Your latest article on the clean-up effort has inspired me to write.

My husband and I moved here from Milwaukee. The area we lived in was very similar to this one, with two major differences.

The first is that Milwaukee imposes very stiff penalties for littering. Believe me, these stiff penalties are enforced.

The second is the dog problem. I don't have a dog, but each day I am faced with a fresh pile on my lawn. Pooper scooper laws are also rigorously enforced in Milwaukee. Dog owners here never clean up after their pets. People who do not have dogs should not have to clean up after those who do.

Cleveland Heights needs stiffer laws pertaining to keeping the city clean.

Natalie Castellini
Coventry Village

ABC . . . (Continued from page 1)
unlikely to gain as much as other businesses from having an attractive facade. Relations between ABC and Coventry Neighbors, Inc., had been cool for many years. Relations between ABC and the City of Cleveland Heights had been openly hostile since about six years ago, when the City moved to acquire their building, with the aim of constructing a parking lot there.

Financial assistance with the costs of the new facade and sign will be sought from the Cleveland Heights Local Development Corporation (LDC). The LDC has paid a large portion of the costs of other recent new signs and facade renovations in Coventry Village and in other parts of this city.

Other Projects Progress

Slow but consistent progress is being made on other facade renovations here. These include Coventry Discount, Biashara, O'Grady's Professional Dry-Cleaning, and Coventry Village TV.

Less pleasing is the now-stalled work on Coventry Cafe. A committee of the LDC, which oversees the governmental subsidies to the facade renovation projects, has refused to make a payment sought by building owner Raj Mathur. The committee cited low quality of workmanship. --L.B.

Coventry Neighbors, Inc.,
hopes you will support . . .

Heights Heritage Tour 1985

The tour is set for
September 28 and 29.
Call 321-6775 for details
or to volunteer.

AROUND COVENTRY . . .

COOKIES . . . Saunders Cookies and More, 1860 Coventry Road, offers a much wider selection treats than did David's Cookies, whose former space it now occupies. Offerings include chunky cookies (made with Tobler Swiss chocolate), giant muffins (blueberry, apple, and rasin bran), Hungarian pastries, French croissants, jelly-beans, Yodolo, and Tofutti, and forty varieties of flavored and natural coffee.

Proprietors Andrew and Anita Sandor, who came here from Hungary in 1964, began their cookie business with a shop at Shaker Square. They own another in Chagrin Falls.

Baking for all three shops is done, without preservatives, at Shaker Square.

FLOWER POWER . . . Joyce Braverman, of the City's Planning Department, had some money left over from other projects here, and used \$155 of it to plant petunias and geraniums in the planters on the sidewalk in the commercial area. Filled with weeds and litter for more than a year now, the planters had become eye-sores. We had come to the sad conclusion that they should be removed. Now they do much to soften the environment of the street, helping to make Coventry a more comfortable place.

In past years, the flowers have died for want of water and care. This year, we trust, the Coventry merchants' organization will provide water and care.

Several times in past years urban malcontents have vandalized the plantings. This summer, on the second day that the flowers were in place, we found a geranium lying on the sidewalk a yard or so from its home. Cursing the jerks who ripped it out, we stuck in back in the planter. In the weeks since, we've noticed no further such damage.

BEAT COP . . . We welcome Tim O'Haire, a new recruit to the Cleveland Heights Police Department, who is walking the Coventry beat five days each week.

A cop on foot is in a better position than one in a car to enforce several important laws which are now widely ignored, both by the public and the police: those against littering and riding bicycles on the sidewalks of the business area. The quality of life in Coventry Village could be improved if some of the zeal which beat officers sometimes apply to the writing of parking tickets were turned to these other matters.

FAREWELL . . . Hy Herman, proprietor of Quality Quilts, was always generous to Coventry Neighbors, Inc., in allowing us to use his shop as a collection point for donations to the Hunger Center. In early June, Herman moved the business, which specialized in the restoration of down-filled quilts and pillows, to a south-east suburb. He told us that the new location will put him closer to most of his customers.

WELCOME . . . Bruce Madorsky will soon become the new owner of the commercial building at 1807 to 1811 Coventry Road. That building houses Coventry Fresh Fish and Biashara, an import shop. A third shop space, formerly Quality Quilts, is vacant. The property includes an older single-family house in whose front yard the commercial building was built in the early 1920's. The house is in severe disrepair, and the commercial building isn't much better. The old owner milked the property for forty years, spending nearly nothing on its maintenance. Because the house is hidden from view, it escaped until recently the notice of City inspectors, allowing the owner to get away with many violations that would not ordinarily be tolerated in Cleveland Heights. Madorsky plans a thorough renovation of the entire property. He has given consideration to converting the house to offices.

---Ed.

Full-time street sweeper is what's needed here

by Larry Beam

Last fall I began an effort to clean the litter from the sidewalks and parking lots of the Coventry Village commercial district. That effort, which received financial support from the Coventry Merchants Association, has had an immense effect on the appearance and image of this busy neighborhood.

The clean-up effort can and should be expanded and made on-going and permanent. The couple of hours spent each morning on the clean-up are not enough; the street often looks pretty seedy after a day of crowds here. Keeping Coventry clean for a summer is nice—but making that cleanliness an institution, giving it the permanence of the buildings here, is the ultimate goal.

Suppose a full-time, dedicated, and professional worker could be hired to keep the Coventry's commercial area clean. That worker would operate the gas-powered vacuum cleaner and sweep around the curb twice each day. Those tasks are now performed once each day; they take about two hours. The dreamed-of worker could spend the balance of the work-day on such things as washing windows, planting and caring for flowers and trees, and performing minor maintenance tasks in the common areas of the business district.

Were hiring such a worker possible, Coventry could gain a reputation for the sort of cleanliness we associate with most professionally-managed shopping malls—Severance Center, Beachwood Place, and the like. That cleanliness is among the most important elements in the malls' presently large relative advantage in competition for consumer spending.

All this could be paid for through rent surcharges imposed on commercial tenants here.

Coventry Village has something in excess of 100,000 square feet of commercial space. Thus, a rent surcharge of

twenty-five cents per square foot per year could raise more than \$25,000 each year; that's probably enough to hire and equip the full-time worker I suggest. Rents here are typically six or seven dollars per square foot per year, and often higher. So my proposal would mean a rent increase of less than five per cent. It would cost the typical merchant, occupying about 1,000 square feet of space just \$250 each year.

Jay Gardner, a member of the City's Planning Department, and I have spoken already with several of the commercial landlords here. All the landlords we've talked with are willing to impose the suggested surcharge, at least on new and renewed leases. Gardner is working toward a goal of clean-up programs, similar to Coventry's, in the city's other older business districts.

I am confident that the establishment of such an on-going clean-up effort would go a long way toward persuading the City of Cleveland Heights to spend more resources here. Much of the sidewalk here is irregular and broken; it should be replaced. There is dire need for more parking in the business district. The City Council would surely look more favorably towards such projects if an effective and on-going clean-up program were in place.

Bersnak is new Treasurer

Diane Bersnak, who served as Treasurer of Coventry Neighbors, Inc., (CNI) from 1979 to 1982, was again elected to that office at the June 11 regular meeting of CNI.

Mrs. Bersnak, who has worked on seven Street Fairs, serves as Treasurer of this year's Fair.

She has been associated with Passport of Peru, the popular clothing shop at 1806 Coventry, for several years.

City buys Hoyt House, plans expanded parking

Plans that the City of Cleveland Heights shared with Coventry Neighbors, Inc., at the organization's June meeting call for the addition of thirty-six new, off-street parking spaces in the block between Lancashire and Hampshire Roads. Assistant Planning Director A. Calisto Caminati expressed hope that work on the project might be completed before the onset of bad weather this fall.

On June 10 the City became the owner of a vacant and dilapidated house at 2722 Hampshire Road. An out-of-court settlement of an eminent domain action begun last fall resulted in a sale price of \$25,000; the City had offered \$22,500.

The house will be razed, and a new parking lot, with 27 spaces according to the present plan, will be built there. As part of the same project, Parking Lot 14, located just south of the proposed lot and just east of Musicians Towers on the north side of Lancashire, will be expanded. The project will provide a total of thirty-six new spaces.

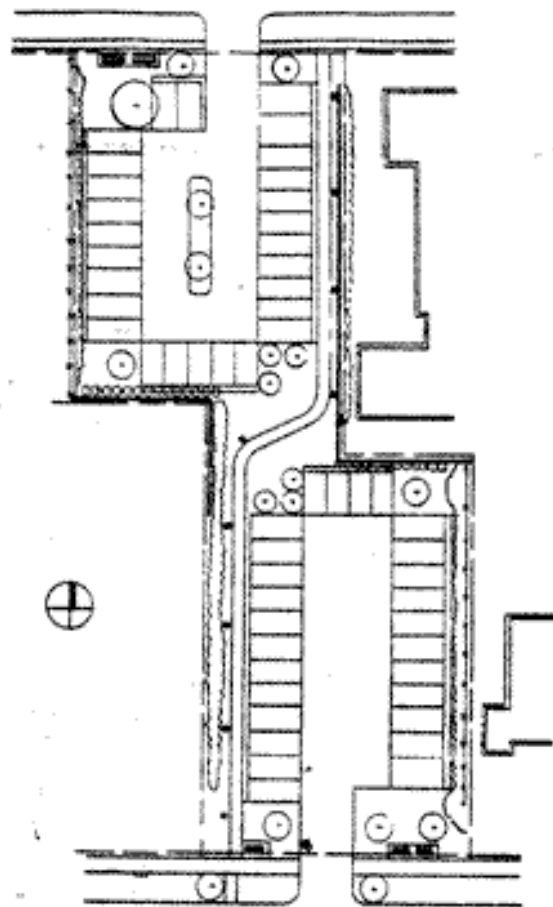
City Council has established a budget of \$120,000 for the construction work. Caminati expressed strong hope that the work could be done for less. He said that the two other new lots here—which together have sixty-seven spaces—were completed for less than had been budgeted for them.

The design of the new lot will closely resemble the other two new lots. The same sorts of plantings, lights, and fence materials are planned.

Michael Benz & Associates, an engineering consulting firm, has been retained to develop final working plans for the project. Planning is complicated by a twelve-foot diameter storm sewer that runs under part of the land.

A probate court has yet to determine just who will get the \$25,000 that the City paid for the house. George Hoyt, who lived in the house for many years, gave it, a few years ago, to a friend, Paul L. Veil. Hoyt's estate

appointed guardian has challenged Hoyt's legal ability to make that gift. ---LB



Parking lot plan. Hampshire Road is at the top, and Lancashire Road is at the bottom. Musicians Towers is to the left. Municipal Lot 14, in the bottom half of the plan, is there already, but now contains just sixteen parking spaces. The lot in the top half of the drawing is new. The drawing was provided by the Planning Department.

Reduced rate loans for improvements available

Cleveland Heights residents with annual household income of \$42,938 or less may qualify for 11.5% loans for home improvement. The loans are from a special State of Ohio program. From \$2,000 to \$15,000 may be borrowed for flexible terms of two to fifteen years.

Contact the Housing Preservation Office at 271 6600 for more information.

Library goings-on

Many Coventry Village children are already participating in the Library's summer reading program. Anyone who is not already participating is welcome to join.

Movies for children will be shown three Tuesday nights in July and August. *Amy on the Lips* and *The Giving Tree* will be shown on July 16. On July 30, the films will be *Sam, Bangs, and Moonshine* and *The Nightingale*. On August 20, *Broderick* and *The Little Prince* will be presented. All showings will begin at 7:30 PM.

The Pre-school storyhours will continue through August, on Mondays at 2:00, Tuesdays 6:45, and Wednesdays at 10:30.

Don't forget the Library when you go on vacation. We arrange for most books—all but current best-sellers—to be borrowed for longer than the usual three weeks.

Low-rate loans available for energy-saving steps

Low-interest loans for home energy conservation measures are again available through the Heights Conservation Program (HCP). The program is a joint effort of the Heights Community Congress (HCC) and the Forest Hill Housing Corporation.

Loans of up to \$2,000, at 5% or 9%, depending on household income, may be used for making furnace modifications, installing insulation and storm doors and windows, and other energy-saving modifications.

Families with incomes of less than \$24,100 qualify for free energy audits through the program. The cost to families of higher income is \$15. The program also offers workshops on energy-saving techniques.

Contact the HCC at 321-6775 for further information.

Keep Coventry Clean

Fence limiting fire exits at theater causes a fuss

A six-foot-high chain-link fence was installed, recently, along the west side of Coventry Cinema. George Fitzpatrick, manager of the theater, believes that the fence, which severely limits emergency egress from his building, could lead to disaster in the event of fire.

The fence was put there by Thomas Frate, owner of the first apartment building west of the theater. Frate contends that the fence will reduce problems his tenants have with young folk who hang out and make noise in the now-blocked passage between the theater and his building. Frate applied for, but never received, a City permit to erect the fence.

For most of its length, the fence is about seven feet from the theater building. At one point, at the base of a fire-escape, the passage way is narrowed to just three and one-half feet. State fire codes require a "public way" at least ten feet wide.

As an apparently temporary solution, Fire Warden Robert Maver has ordered that the lighted signs indicating emergency exits on the west side of the movie house be "removed, concealed, or obscured." In his order, Maver writes that "The remaining [emergency exits] . . . are of sufficient number, capacity, and location to comply with minimum standards described in the fire code."

Saying he feared that litigation may result over the matter, Maver refused further specific comment.

Fitzpatrick says he is sympathetic to Frate's desire to keep the public out of the space between the theater and the apartment building. He has proposed alternative ways of achieving that goal. Concerned about the safety of his patrons, Fitzpatrick points to a 1976 order, also signed by Maver, requiring that the areas in question "be maintained free and clear of motor vehicles

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

I am glad the City has again this summer cleaned graffiti from the swimming pool, play ground, and basketball court at Cumberland Park. Last fall, when I called the Parks Department about graffiti, workers came out the next day to paint it over. The Parks Department is great about it--just let them know what you think about graffiti.

I am also glad that Coventry School cleaned up the graffiti there.

Graffiti, in massive doses, is getting to be a big problem.

There may be social motivations behind graffiti. But who cares? Graffiti stinks. It's visual garbage. It demeans us all.

It's certainly not an art form. New York painter Chip Spear wrote, "Graffiti is a constant, tiresome visual assault, a continual reminder of the irresponsibility, violence and selfishness that is sadly so characteristic on New York City.

He could have said that of Cleveland proper, too.

In lieu of the death penalty for vandals, Cleveland Heights' diligent and quick clean-up of graffiti is the best solution.

Bert Stratton
Coventry Village

Election Notice

Nominations will be accepted, and an election will be held, at the July 9 regular meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc., to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Bob Shields as a Trustee-at-Large.

Faces workers to wed

Eddie Kendel, a waitress at Faces (1876 Coventry), will be married on July 24 to Tibor Sebestyn, a cook there.

A CVN editorial Council should allow owner to raze garage

On June 19, the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approved a variance which will allow a garage behind the apartment building at 2768 Lancashire Road to be razed. In granting the variance, the BZA required screening and landscaping between the parking area where the garage now stands, and the Coventry courtyard, which it abuts.

Coventry Neighbors, Inc., supported that variance request; now we hope that City Council will allow the action of the BZA to stand.

Among other advantages, the razing of the garage will allow the addition of two new spaces to the parking behind that building. That means that two fewer drivers will depend on public parking in Coventry. To us who live--and park--here, every new space is significant.

More than \$5,000 in tax money typically goes into each new, off-street space the City of Cleveland Heights builds. The two spaces behind 2768 Lancashire would cost the City nothing; all that's required is that City Council not act to deny this variance request.

CNI shares the view of BZA member Phil Hart, who said, "I see no way that a garage there does anybody any good." We feel that the screening requirement and other conditions imposed by the BZA in this case are proper, appropriate, and sufficient.

The razing of this garage, with the owner's plans for the remodeling of the rear of this building and the next building west, will be a significant improvement to the aesthetic character of the courtyard behind Coventryard.

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TIME VALUE — PLEASE DELIVER BY FRIDAY, JULY 5, 1985

COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. General Meeting, Tuesday, July 9, 7:30 PM in the Community Room of the Coventry Village Library. The public is invited.

COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. Trustees Meeting: Thursday August 8, 7:30 PM at 2910 Hampshire Road. Chairpersons are asked to attend. The Trustees meeting is open to all dues-paid members of CNI.

NOW is the time to join **COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC.** Membership includes a subscription to the *Coventry Village News*. All memberships expire on December 31 of each year. The form below may be used for renewals.

Please check one of the following:

Class of membership:Individual (\$2.50)Family (\$3.50)Senior (\$1.50)
.....Just a subscription to the *Coventry Village News*--no membership.
(\$5 for 11 months; the *CVN* is not published in August.)
I wish to make a tax-free contribution of

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