



## Zoning, City Charter matters on CNI's March 11 agenda

Supporters of an amendment to the Cleveland Heights City Charter will seek the backing of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. (CNI) at the organization's regular monthly meeting on Tuesday March 11, 7:30 PM, at Coventry Village Library.

Also seeking CNI's support will be landlord Larry Fisher, who needs a zoning variance to build a private parking lot. [See story on page 3.]

CNI's Street Fair Committee will report on its plans for this summer's fest, set for June 28 and 29. Representatives of the Coventry Elementary School, Coventry Youth Center, the Library, the Heights Community Congress, and the City of Cleveland Heights keep those who attend CNI meetings informed of a wide variety of community concerns and activities.

The report on the city government is usually presented by Mayor Alan J. Rapoport, frequently with Council member Barbara Boyd.

Everyone is welcome to attend and to participate in discussions.

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The City Charter amendment, which will be on the ballot at the May 6 primary election, calls for a liberalization of rules governing who may serve on City Council. The present Charter prohibits any employee of the public sector from serving on Council.

Join us for a lively discussion and take part in the leadership of Coventry Village.

Join CNI now!

## The City goofs, sale of City Hall to Honda is off

For the third time in six months, the City of Cleveland Heights will publish a request for proposals (RFP) for one of the most prominent landmarks of Coventry Village, the City Hall building on Mayfield Road. City government will move in the spring to a new home at Severance Center.

City Council had announced at year's end that Motorcars Honda had been selected as the buyer of the site. A scale model, slides, and drawings of the proposed auto dealership were presented at the February meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. (CNI).

Shortly after the decision to sell to Motorcars Honda was announced, Jaguar Cleveland, also interested in the site, filed suit against the City of Cleveland Heights. Jaguar Cleveland claimed, among other things, that the municipal government had failed properly to advertise the sale of the property. The suit asked the court to force the City to sell the property to Jaguar Cleveland.

After studying the facts and the law, attorneys for the City came to believe that the legally-required process had indeed not been followed. The agreement with Motorcars Honda was called off.

City Manager Robert Downey accepted responsibility for the error.

Last fall, in the City's first effort to sell the property, all bids were rejected, apparently because of a lack of clarity in the published request for proposals.

Both times, the same three parties had submitted bids—the auto dealers, and a developer who proposed a strip

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**PHONE:** (216) 371-6095.

**Coventry Village . . .**  
*where we all get along together  
pretty well.*

## Bargain rate loans for home improvements offered again by City

Owner-occupants of two-family houses may qualify for home improvement loans at interest rates as low as 5.5%. Bank One, the City's Housing Preservation Office, and the Ohio Housing Finance Administration have joined forces to offer these loans.

Owner-occupants in the Avondale area of Coventry Village--the area north of Mayfield and west of City Hall--can qualify for loans at 5.5% if their family income is less than \$42,938. Owner-occupants on certain other main streets may also qualify.

Owner-occupants of two-family homes elsewhere in Cleveland Heights may qualify for loans at 11.5% with terms as long as 15 years.

Ilese Hoyniak of the Housing Preservation Office expects the program to begin operation in late March. Call her at 371-6693 for further information.

## Meeting notes

### Regular meeting of February 11

Ilese Hoyniak, from the City of Cleveland Heights Housing Preservation Center, described a low-cost house-painting program for the Avondale area of Coventry Village.

Officials of Motorcars Honda presented drawings and slides of their plans for the present site of Cleveland Heights City Hall.

Larry Beam, in his capacity as Editor of the *Coventry Village News*, was again authorized to shop for improved printing equipment costing not more than \$1,500.

F. David Gill expressed deep concern over threats to public safety arising from valet parking as practiced by Bistrot des Artistes, 1824 Coventry Road. Mr. Beam agreed to speak with Bistrot management about this problem.

## Landlord plans own tenant parking lot and general fix-up

Larry Fisher, owner of several Coventry Village apartment buildings, plans to build a thirty-eight space parking lot just east of his building at 2450 Overlook Road. That building contains forty suites and is now served by just eighteen parking spaces.

At the same time, Fisher plans to refurbish the entire building. He will begin with improvements to its common areas, where he will paint, install new carpet and lights, and tile the lobby.

Individual suites of the building will then be refurbished on an as-needed basis with painting, plastering, floor treatments, lighting, and new appliances.

The entire site will be landscaped.

Fisher will present his plans for the new parking lot at the March 11 meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. (CNI). That meeting will begin at 7:30 PM and will be held at the Coventry Village Library, 1925 Coventry Road.

Fisher will be seeking the support of CNI for a zoning variance he is seeking from the front set back and side yard requirements of the Zoning Code. The variances Fisher seeks are identical to the those obtained by the City of Cleveland Heights for several of the public parking lots it has built recently in Coventry Village.

The City's Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) will hold a public hearing on Fisher's request on March 19.

Fisher plans to spend a total of about \$75,000 on the parking lot and improvements to the building.

Fisher, who is board chairman of the City's Apartment Improvement Program, will seek no government funds for the project. His parking lot would be the first such facility to be built by the private sector here in many years.

--LB

Join Coventry Neighbors now!

## A new restaurant, maybe, in the old book store spot

Just two months after his very popular Bistrot des Artistes opened at 1825 Coventry Road, Alton F. Doody has tentative plans for another restaurant in Coventry Village.

His concept drawings show a 141-seat establishment, to be called Ebbitt's Bar and Rotisserie, at 1824 Coventry Road, where Coventry Books was. In the plan, an open grill would sit near the center of the deep, narrow space. The front portion would contain a bar with about fourteen seats, a standing area, and some tables. To the rear, an elevated platform would provide space for most of the restaurant's tables.

The front facade would extend and complement the stylistic treatment of Bistrot des Artistes, which is directly across the street. The large, high windows of the space would be retained, allowing passers-by to view the inside. Signs identifying the restaurant would be of neon, placed near the top of the windows, on the inside.

Facade and interior were designed by Lajos Szabo, architect of the Bistrot.

The project faces two challenges. First, because of a local option vote four years ago, alcoholic beverages may not now be sold for on-premise consumption there. Doody hopes that the community will support the project by allowing alcoholic beverage sales in the new establishment. Second, there are the usual problems of zoning, which would have to be resolved before construction could start.

The target market for the proposed restaurant is a younger and less affluent crowd than that to which the Bistrot is marketed.

When asked about his reaction to Coventry Village, Doody said, "I could not be more pleased. . . . The response to the Bistrot has been greater than anticipated, and customer comments have been very favorable."

--LB

Selling City Hall . . . from p. 1  
shopping center.

The Motorcars Honda proposal was at first the subject of strong public criticism, mostly because it called for the razing of an historic building. As the proposal came to be better understood, opposition to it had begun to fade.

The incorporation of some elements of the old old brick and stone building into the design of the new, mostly glass auto Honda dealership helped win popular support to the project. But this mix of the old with the new was objected to by the City's powerful, three-member Board of Architectural Review (ABR). Just before the city government announced its intention to start the sale process over again, it appeared that the ABR would, ironically, force the removal from the plan of the elements that called for partial historical preservation.

The RFP now being circulated by the City says, "there is no requirement that any portion of the existing City Hall building be maintained." The document requires that the dilapidated Annex building be razed.

While the Jaguar Cleveland proposal called for keeping the main City Hall building, it made no specific proposal as to what would be done with the structure. At one point, that proposal suggests that the building might be given back to the City, as a home for its Landmarks Commission.

Motorcars Honda says it has made no decision as to whether it will submit its proposal a third time. The firm is under substantial pressure to find a new home soon, and may be forced to leave Cleveland Heights. More, the City's clumsiness in handling the sale has begotten some ill-will.

Meanwhile, at least two developers who did not submit proposals the last two times have expressed interest recently. Both of these plans involve the preservation and re-use of the 1925 City Hall.

---Larry Beam

## Community improvement efforts are honored

Larry Beam, President of Coventry Neighbors, Inc., (CNI) and Editor of the *Coventry Village News*, was honored on February 9 by a joint effort of the City of Cleveland Heights and the Heights Community Congress.

The Community Improvements Awards Committee gave Beam a Special Award "for his personal commitment to the Coventry Road area of Cleveland Heights. [And] for taking on any job, no matter how small or how large, to assure the success of one of Greater Cleveland's most distinctive neighborhoods."

Last summer, Beam maintained street planters, cared for trees, and cleaned litter from the sidewalks of Coventry Village. The impact of his work was dramatic.

Beam also serves as Secretary of the Cleveland Heights Local Development Corporation (LDC). He designed the LDC's present storefront program, which has had immense effect on all the older commercial areas of Cleveland Heights.

Community Improvement Awards are given annually to "those who have improved the physical environment of Cleveland Heights." Most of these awards go to developers and property owners who have made substantial and visible improvements to buildings.

Improvements to the Coventry Laundromat building earned an award for its owner, Gary Biller.

IPC Management, owner of the Hampshire Manor (2744 to 2750 Hampshire), won an award for work that included elegant awnings.

Western Reserve Residences, Inc., was honored for improvements to its Alcazar Hotel.

Improvements made by many many Somerton Road homeowners earned a Street Award.

---Bruce M. Hennes, immediate past President of CNI

Join Coventry Neighbors now!

## Around Coventry

**COULD HAVE BEEN HERE . . .** Mark's Compact Discs is a thriving business in the Old Arcade downtown. Mark's offers compact disk (CD) recordings that are not available elsewhere in this region. Many are imported from Japan and West Germany. Many have not been released in this country. Mark's is the only shop in Cleveland that specializes in this new and increasingly-popular medium. The shop offers a broad collection of operas, many of them obscure.

Hampshire Road resident Mark Kaufman, a pianist and arranger by trade, started the business last summer. His trade kept him focused on the frontiers of recording technology. He foresaw the CD's mass market revolution before it hit the finance pages. His striking success was noted last month in a *Crain's Cleveland Business* cover story. A few weeks later, United Press International picked the story up. There have been several stories on local radio.

A stock broker friend of ours walks five blocks from his office to patronize the shop. Another friend drives in from Beachwood. Both are typical of the devotees Mark's shop draws to the Arcade.

Mark wanted to locate his business in Coventry Village. He wanted to be a part of its exciting commercial vitality.

Last summer, when Mark was planning his business, most of the shop spaces available here were too large for his enterprise. Only Coventryard offered the small space he wanted.

But the management of Coventryard demanded rents substantially higher than those asked for space in the Arcade.

So Mark's business draws shoppers to the Arcade, while Coventryard sits largely vacant. Now Mark would like to open a second shop, here in Coventry Village. But again there's nothing the right size available, except in . . .

**MAKING PEACE . . .** This Coventry Neighbor has made peace, after five years of animosity, with Irv Gulko, proprietor of Irv's Delicatessen and Fat Choy Chinese Restaurant, both at 1789 Coventry Road.

The peace offer came from Irv, and was passed to us by Billy Swan, an employee. It took us more than a month to accept the offer of peace and dinner for two.

Our dinner began with a suprisingly pleasant and hearty hot and sour soup. The flavors, presentation, and textures of the Szachwan chicken entree were, to this diner's palate, fine examples of Chinese-American cooking. The service was attentive, polite, and precise. Portions were quite ample, and leftovers provided our companion with the next night's dinner.

Fat Choy still has to overcome some problems. For example, we had to request a key for the men's room, which was not tidy. Irv's ambience still leaves something to be desired.

Yet Gulko's business is a landmark institution of Coventry Village. Its pizza, kosher-style food, and Chinese cooking are all quite good. And many will remember that, for years before Arabica, many of Coventry's most entertaining and philosophical discussions took place at Irv's coffee counter and grill.

Those days can return. Irv's problems can be solved.

**THAT'S SERVICE . . .** When the neighborhood's cover of snow melted for the first time in mid-February, a City crew was here almost immediately to clean up and haul away the dirt and mess which the thaw revealed. It took a street sweeper, a front-end loader, a truck, and a crew of several to do the job. That effort on the morning of February 29 was an early start on spring cleaning for Coventry Village. ---Ed.

## Coventry Village Restorations...

By the time this column appears, spring's arrival ought to be, if not imminent, at least tantalizing. When we planned to reprint the last two issue's columns on ice dams, we were thinking of last year's thawless winter, when ice dams were more common than squirrels in most Cleveland Heights neighborhoods. This year the weather has been much more accomodating. Assuming you cleaned out your gutters last fall, ice simply wasn't much of a problem. During the last few months, squirrels actually were our biggest annoyance -- when they took advantage of the thaws to explore our attic cubbyholes via the eave openings!

This month we'll take a break from the reprints from Hotton's book to talk about a few of the sources available to you if you're looking for tools, hardware and other items useful in housing restoration/fix-up activities. Although this list isn't particularly authoritative, it will likely introduce you to at least a few catalogues and ideas you'll find helpful.

First off, take a tip from Hotton, and anyone else who's made serious attempts at true restoration. Very often, you best source for period hardware and other items is right underneath your nose -- or, as is often the case, under what may appear to be a discouragingly large number of coats of paint in your own home. With a little care, and a lot of paint remover and brass polish, you will frequently find that your home still has much of its original hardware, and that it can be restored to a quality and look that simply cannot be bought.

In our own case, we found that the front doorbell (once stripped of many coats of black enamel) is bright, solid brass and sports an ornate floreat design ... that all of our window hardware (after a similar clean up) is stamped "1906 Geneva, Ohio," and has a superior appearance to the overly-shiny window pulls and locks available today ... and that all of the doorknobs and plates in our home match (also brass, except for the chrome-plated set in the bathroom), and feature a delicate florentine-chain design.

Even an old, run-down barbecue behind our garage, cited by Cleveland Heights for removal in an exterior inspection, proved valuable. There were enough of the large red, hand-hewn sandstone blocks it was made of to encircle the oak trees in our front yard, creating space for myrtle plantings, and covering up the grassless, root-bound areas there...

You can also find many period hardware items, fixtures, etc. in the numerous house and garage sales that go on throughout Cleveland Heights each summer.

Back to this month's topic. Many restoration projects are made immensely easier with the right tools and hardware. Here are a few sources for these and other items that you may want to investigate:

The Renovator's Supply, Renovator's Old Mill, Millers Falls, MA 01349

This firm has a wonderful catalog of old bathroom and other plumbing fixtures and offers reproduction porcelain and brass items that will make your claw-footed bathtub feel right at home. Typical are pedestal sinks; walnut, wall-mounted, chain-pull water closets; Parisian style, solid brass shower faucets, etc.

Country Curtains, At the Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge, MA 01262

This firm claims to have been the first mail-order curtain company, and has 30 years of catalogs to prove it. Ruffles, muslim, calico, lace, tassels, ball fringe, scalloped edges, striped lawn shirting, Victorian styles: you'll find them all. Once you compare the prices to what you end up paying even in discount stores (once you add the tax and find out there's only a single curtain panel per package,) you'll find some real bargains. The photos of interesting window treatments are more than enough to warrant several pleasant browses.

Leichtung, Inc. 44944 Commerce Parkway, Cleveland, OH 44128

This outfit is right here in Cleveland, and few people seem to know about it. Their "Handy's" catalog is full of woodworking, picture-framing and workshop tools ... and there is an outlet store up a ways on Mayfield Road. They also sell shaker pegs, wooden wheels for toys, white birch turnings, solid brass numbers, and other useful items.

Constantine's, 2050 Eastchester Rd., Bronx, NY 10461

The cover lines on my current copy of this catalog really do say it all: "Everything for Better Woodworking for the Discriminating Craftsman" ... "Reference Guide for Woodworkers, Hobbyists, and Homeowners," ... "Since 1812." Especially good source for veneers and veneering supplies (they also offer low-cost veneering starter kits). Constantine's sells kiln-dried hardwood and rare wood by the length, a wide variety of woodworking tools, embossed wood carvings (dress up your fireplace mantle!), picture mouldings, wood finishing supplies, Japanese saws, handtools and hardware. Enjoy.

Next issue: We'll continue this list and mention a few local sources. If you know of any Cleveland-area sources for restoration supplies, drop a note to the Editor, *Coventry Village News*, 2776 Hampshire Rd., #1-B, Cleveland Heights, OH 44106 -- JBL

## House-painting program offers cost reductions

A new City program is designed to provide cost reductions of 10 to 25% from the usual contract cost of painting the exteriors of houses. The program offers to design customized three-color painting schemes which are consistent with the design and history of each house. Called the Bulk Purchase Painting Services Program, it is available only in the Avondale area, north of Mayfield Road and west of City Hall.

Unlike most other neighborhood preservation programs, this program does not use subsidies to reduce prices. Instead, it seeks to bring a group of homeowners together to give them greater negotiating power with painting contractors. At the same time, contractors are saved the cost of selling their services and the nuisance negotiating separately with each homeowner.

The City of Cleveland Heights Housing Preservation Office (HPO) is seeking commitments from at least ten homeowners in the Avondale area who are interested in having their homes painted. The HPO will prepare specifications, including color schemes, and cost estimates. These services will be free to participants.

Painting contractors will then bid on the entire package of at least ten paint jobs. For more information, contact Ilese Hoyniak at the HPO, 371-6693.

## NOPBA seeks gifts

The Northern Ohio Policeman's Benevolent Association (NOPBA) is seeking contributions to support activities for the elderly, the poor, and children who are handicapped, mentally retarded, or crippled.

Donors receive a car window sticker. Call 842-8100 for further information.

Participate in CNI

## Library goings-on

The elderly can get help in filing income tax returns. Trained counselors sponsored by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) are available on Thursdays, 1:00 to 5:00 PM, at the Coventry Village Library. The program is also available at the City Hall's Office on Aging, and at other branches of the Cleveland Heights-University Library system. Make an appointment by calling the library at 321-3400, or the Office on Aging at 371-6535.

A slide show and talk about our national parks will be presented at the Coventry Village Library on March 13 at 7:30 PM by John Fleshin and George Tomusko. Both are teachers at Heights High School. Children are welcome if accompanied by an adult.

Spring Film Fling, a special program for children, will offer *Really Rosie* and *Aesop's Fables* on March 22 at 1:00 PM. *Cricket in Times Square* and *Dorothy in the Land of Oz* will be shown on March 29 at 1:00 PM.

Preschool Storytime is offered on Mondays (March 3, 10, 17, and 31) at 2:00 PM; on Tuesdays (March 4, 11, and 18) at 7:00 PM; and Wednesdays (March 5, 12, and 19) at 10:30 AM.

School-age Storytime is offered Tuesdays (March 4, 11, and 18) at 2:30.



**LIBRARIES:**  
Learning for Life

## Play Memory at Dobama

*Play Memory*, by Joanna Glass, opens on March 22 at Dobama. It's about the family relationships of a Scottish-born hustler salesman in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan between 1930 and 1963. Cast of the drama includes Jeff Griggs, Jan Bruml, Lesley Ann Rush, and Peg Buerkle.

Call the box office at 932-6838 for further information.

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COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. General Meeting, Tuesday, March 11, 7:30 PM in the Community Room of the Coventry Village Library. The public is invited.

COVENTRY NEIGHBORS, INC. Trustees Meeting, Thursday, April 3, 8:00 PM at 2929 Washington Boulevard. Committee 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 (\$5.00) .....Family (\$7.00) .....Senior (\$3.00)

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