



Coventry Village News

February, 1988

The Newsletter of Coventry Neighbors, Inc.

Volume 12 No. 2

Membership meeting: Tuesday, February 9 at the Library, 7:30

Coventry Neighbors, Inc. (CNI) meets on the second Tuesday of each month, unless that day is a holiday or Election Day (as it happens to be in November of this year).

CNI has been operating for months now with two of its officerships vacant. We tried to elect new vice president and treasurer at our meeting of January 12, but no candidates were forthcoming. We will try again at the February 9 meeting. We also hope that night to elect someone who will serve as CNI's representative Trustee of the Heights Community Congress.

That meeting of January 12 was over in just 45 minutes—a record for recent years. The February meeting appears likely again to be short. Anyone—whether a member or not—is welcome to bring up any matter of neighborhood importance at that meeting.

If you haven't paid dues yet for 1988, please do so soon. All memberships and subscriptions to this newsletter expired at the end of the old year.

Jaguar's expansion plans

We had hoped to have presentations about the proposed new Jaguar dealership on the agenda this month. That was not possible. We now expect to have that matter, with presentations by the developer and the municipal government, on the agenda for the March 8 meeting.

Jaguar Cleveland proposes a very substantial expansion of its facility on Mayfield Road east of Superior. The proposal is controversial because it involves the demolition of eight houses, the truncation of Preyer Road, and the use of a bit of what's now park land for a cul-de-sac. The complex project also appears to offer many very substantial benefits to the neighborhood and to the larger community.

Lengthy public process faces the Jaguar proposal. City staffers expect that

City Council will introduce legislation detailing some rezoning necessary for the project at the meeting of Monday, February 1. That legislation will not be adopted for several weeks at least.

Council is expected to hold a public hearing on the rezoning, probably in a session with the Planning Commission. Such other matters as the vacation of the Preyer Road right-of-way, and the sale of some public land, will likely be included on the agenda for that meeting. Review by the Board of Zoning Appeals will follow, several months hence. No date has yet been set for any of these meetings.

The City may hold at least one additional meeting with residents of the area most impacted by the proposed expansion of the auto dealer.

CNI usually takes positions on proposals like this.

Liquor Department denys new carry-out license to Coventry Beverage & Pizza

The Ohio Department of Liquor Control has denied an application from Coventry Beverage and Pizza (1815 Coventry Road) for a new beer and wine carry-out license.

According to the Department, the old license there was suspended indefinitely last May for failure to pay \$45,064.54 in sales taxes. Then, on August 1, the business was charged with "illegal sales" and "sales while under suspension." Revocation of the license followed. Other charges included "sales and/or furnishing [alcoholic beverages] to a person under the age of 19."

An application for a new license was made in September by Colleen Marie Cusick, who proposed to do business as Colleen's Pizza. Ms. Cusick is the daughter of James D. Cusick, a Cleveland police officer who is President and sole shareholder in Coventry Beverage, Inc.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir:

I found the recent issue (January, 1988) of *Coventry Village News* disturbing.

It is disillusioning to read that CNI proposes to spend its "reserve fund" of \$10,000 for "some special sort of amenity" in the park in front of Coventry Yard, perhaps a "decorative water fountain." I had presumed, from periodic appeals for membership renewals and contributions, that CNI operated a little closer to the bone. A \$10,000 water fountain seems, somehow, a rather frivolous expenditure.

The offhand manner in which the Jaguar dealership expansion was reported made me wonder whether the Coventry community is, in fact, indifferent toward this issue. According to the newsletter, Preyer

Road is to be closed at Mayfield, eight houses are to be demolished, and the street made into a cul-de-sac "on some land that is now part of Cumberland Park." Shouldn't CNI have opposed this sort of intrusion or, at the very least, reported on Jaguar's intentions in greater detail?

—Carol Poh Miller
Coventry Village

The Coventry Village News is published monthly, except in August, by Coventry Neighbors, Inc., in cooperation with the Heights Community Congress.

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Opinions expressed in these pages are strictly those of the respective writers, except where clearly identified as those of CNI, CVN, or the HCC.

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Anyone wishing to submit copy to the *Coventry Village News* may do so by sending it to the Editor, *Coventry Village News*, 2776 Hampshire Road, Apt. 1-B, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, 44106.

The deadline for each month is the 16th day of the preceding month. While no unsigned material will be used, names may be withheld from publication at the writer's request.
Phone: 371-6095.

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

A bus shelter for the Towers

Marge Crutch and other residents of Musician's Towers want a shelter added to the bus stop for west-bound busses at Lancashire Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard.

All that's there now is grass—and frequently just mud. The Senior Citizens of Musician's Towers use the west-bound bus a lot, for trips to the Office on Aging and other things at City Hall, for shopping trips, and for other purposes.

CNI has campaigned for years for a new bus shelter just across Euclid Heights Boulevard, for the west-bound riders. The shelter there now is an eyesore, and offers less protection than the more modern shelters.

The matter will be discussed at the CNI meeting of February 9.

Anyone interested in this issue is invited to call Ms. Crutch at 371-3324.

Poetry readings at Mac's Backs Books

Daniel Thompson, Michael Salinger, Mary Faith Bonney, and Bill Polak are the scheduled readers at Mac's Backs Books, 1785 Coventry Road, on Wednesday, February 10, at 7:30 PM. An open reading will follow. The event is free.

Join
Coventry
Neighbors
Today!

Assisted living project delayed as property lines are re-drawn

A 105-unit assisted living facility, to be called Kenilworth Park, has been delayed while property lines are re-drawn. The site is land between the Margaret Wagner Home (2373 Euclid Heights Boulevard) and Waldorf Towers (2300 Overlook Road).

An initial plan for the property lines was rejected by the City's Planning Commission on January 13 because the proposed lines would have run through a swimming pool.

The project's developer has met with the City's planning staff to draft a new set of property lines. Staff members feel that the project can now proceed smoothly. The project is set to go before the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals in February.

Behind the project is Joe Shafran, whose projects in Cleveland Heights have included the conversion of the old Temple on the Heights, on Mayfield Road just east of Lee Road, into the Civic, which now houses numerous small businesses and a theater. He also developed the new strip shopping center on the east side of South Taylor Road, across from Superior Park Road.

A meeting of neighbors concerned about the project has been set for February 2, 7:30 PM, at City Hall.

Home energy audits, loans, and grants are available to residents

If your home is like most others, the first sign of winter is not only seen, but heard as well. The sound of the furnace firing up is good news to most of us. We know that while the weather may be frightful, our gas or electric heating system will keep the inside delightful.

Or will it? Your furnace is the one thing between you and cold nights. Will it hold out?

One way to find out is through a home energy audit. These are available at low cost—free to some—from the Heights Community Congress (HCC). The HCC offers these in-depth energy audits to residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

The energy audit is an analysis that takes about two hours. Your home will be

gone over from top to bottom, in search of loss, and inefficient use of, energy. With the aid of a local computer company, information about your home is analyzed, and recommendations are made as to how you can save energy with small, low-cost additions such as caulking, plastic storm windows, and door sweeps.

Not only does the HCC auditor make recommendations as to what you can do as an owner or tenant, but he is also equipped to guide you to various grants ranging from \$500 to \$1,100. Some loans of up to \$2,000 are also available, at zero interest, through the Forest Hill Church Housing Corporation. These loans and grants can be used for insulation, storm windows, a new furnace, or other energy-conservation measures.

For more information, call the HCC at 321-6775.

Local poets publish a collection, with art

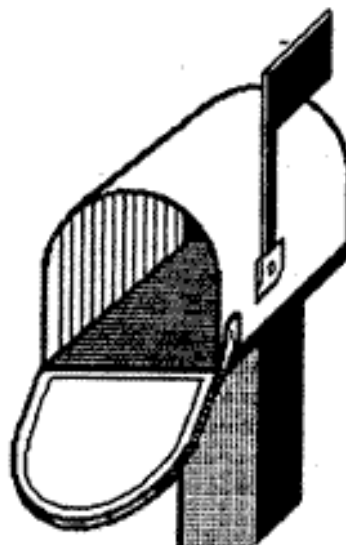
Here is a sample from *Artbark*, a recently-released book of poetry and drawings edited by Daniel Thompson, the Poet Laureate of Coventry Village:

Winter Birds

Over the Cuyahoga
in the slate November sky
seagulls fly in aimless patterns
like snowflakes in the wind.
A thousand hungry hawks
searching winter waters
for flecks of frigid fish.
They write elaborate script
in our muted Cleveland heavens.

—Sarah Crowley

The 64-page book is available at Mac's Backs Books, 1785 Coventry Road.



Coventry Beverage . . .

[continued from page one]

In her application for a new license, Ms. Cusick stated that she was the sole owner of the business and its equipment, and that no one else had any financial interest in it.

The City of Cleveland Heights, objecting to the issuance of the new license, pointed out that a Business Occupancy Permit had been signed by Mr. Cusick as "business owner." The vendors license wasn't in Ms. Cusick's name, either.

At a hearing on November 24, Ms. Cusick admitted that Coventry Beverage Inc. still owned the equipment and inventory of the business.

Ms. Cusick said at the hearing that she could not recall the details of the sale of the business to her by her father. She claimed to have filed a copy of a lease agreement with the

"Applicant misrepresented material facts"

Department of Liquor Control. The Department said that it had no such agreement on file.

The City of Cleveland Heights argued that "this application is subterfuge to enable the applicant's father to maintain and control the business ... [with] the ability to sell alcoholic beverages." William J. Flaherty, Director of the Department of Liquor Control, said in an order dated December 30 that the "Applicant has misrepresented material facts in applying to the Department ..."

Once one of the most prosperous businesses on the area, Coventry Beverage faced severe difficulties even before the liquor license was lifted. There was harsh competition from numerous new convenience stores and pizza businesses that offer to deliver. The shop's windows and walls haven't been washed in years, and the business has refused to participate in the neighborhood's program of facade renovation. Its appearance keeps many from doing business there.

One area teen said that he found it quite easy to obtain alcohol from the business—either directly, or by having other hangers-out in the neighboring parking lot get it. The business was quite aggressive in the marketing of cheap wines, the sort of stuff favored by the most derelict alcoholics. A case of Mad Dog 20/20, in pint bottles, was kept on the check-out counter and sold for about \$1.00.

Coventry residents and merchants noticed a sharp decline last summer in the amount of trouble in the parking lot next to Coventry Beverage. Gangs of youths, whose favorite pastimes included the verbal harassment of

passers-by and patrons of area businesses, largely disappeared. The Cleveland Heights Police Department reports that it was called to the business twenty-six times in 1985, thirteen times in 1986, and just seven times in 1987.

—Larry Beam

Glenmont Road man fights to save garden

Glenmont Road resident Doug Wist has invested a lot of sweat and emotion in the garden behind his home. Each fall for fifteen years, he has composted leaves along the side of the house, and each spring he's used the compost to improve the soil of his neatly-managed vegetable garden.

Tending the garden is the focus of many summer evenings for Mr. Wist. Each fall, the harvest is shared with neighbors and friends.

Now the City of Cleveland Heights wants him to replace a two car garage, which was razed recently, with a three car garage. The larger garage would occupy much of the space where the garden is, and would put the rest in shade much of the day. With the expanded driveway, most of the rear yard would be devoted to automobiles, leaving little space for green life and people.

The Board of Zoning Appeals will hear Mr. Wist's case on the evening of February 17.

Library Goings-on

Black History Month will be marked by the appearance of the Shaw High School Concert Choir in a program called "How I Got Over: Black Gospel in America," on Thursday, February 18, at 7:00 PM. This program is funded by Friends of the Library.

Snow Trek, the winter reading program, will continue through February 20. Children who read and report on six books will be invited to a recognition program on Saturday, February 27, at 2:30 PM.

Tax counseling is available to senior citizens on Thursday afternoons from one to five. Call the Library at 321-3400 to schedule an appointment.

James Lang and Christopher Franke will participate in an open poetry reading on Sunday, March 6, 2:30 PM.

A Deaf Awareness Expo will be held Saturday, April 16, 10:30 AM to 5:30 PM, and Sunday April 17, 1:00 to 5:00 PM.

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

Around Coventry . . .

Mr. Hero . . . Steve Howard, operator of a bright and clean Mr. Hero outlet on Chagrin Boulevard between Lee and Avalon, in Shaker Heights, is negotiating with landlord Lewis Zipkin for the vacant shop at 1860 Coventry Road, where a "gourmet" pop corn store was once located, near Coventry Yard.

Tentative plans call for a restaurant with forty to sixty seats.

It is not yet clear what public process, if any, will be faced by this project. A parking variance of 118 spaces was given to the building about eight years ago, in the emotional aftermath of the fire that destroyed the original Coventry Yard project. The City has still to rule on the continuing validity of that variance.

If the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) determines that a "substantial" proportion of the business that Mr. Hero is likely to do will be carry-out, a public hearing before the BZA will be necessary for a conditional use permit.

Several months ago, Raj Mathur was denied a variance and conditional use permit he needed to install a Mr. Hero in his building at the opposite end of Coventry's business district. The BZA based its denial on the belief that the supply of parking at the north end of the business district could not bear another carry-out food operation. Public opposition to Mr. Mathur's proposal was based, mostly, on his derelict performance as a property owner. Mr. Zipkin, in sharp contrast, has made huge real investment in this neighborhood, and his performance as a building manager has been about as good as can be expected.

Trees . . . The City Forester and his staff have been busy in Coventry Village. They've planted fifteen new trees in the business district, replacing ones that died or were vandalized.

The new trees are ash and honey locust. The Forester believes that these species will have a better chance for survival than the little leaf lindens, once the only variety planted here. The new trees will also be less likely to grow to block the view of signs and commercial facades.

The boulevards, too, have new trees: 180 on Euclid Heights, and thirty on Washington. Some of these are flowering species.

Last cowboy . . . Daffy Dan's T-shirt Shop moved out of its long-time home at 1812 Coventry Road just after Christmas.

It was the last of a generation of shops that came to a very severely depressed and troubled Coventry Road in the mid- and late-

1960's, usually with minimal capital, to sell wares that fit the fashions and fads of that era—leather goods, bell-bottom jeans, beads, and long haircuts. We called them the cowboy capitalists. They were the first wave of the revitalization of Coventry Village.

With some slick promotion—including the slogan "If it doesn't have a DD on the sleeve, it's just underwear"—proprietor Dan Gray built his Coventry shop into sizable chain, with many outlets in the metropolitan region. He sold the chain near its peak—and regained control after the buyers defaulted.

Seven Daffy Dan outlets remain, including a very substantial operation on Superior at 21st Street. That shop offers much more than printed shirts—they print mugs, make trophies, and much more.

A sign in the window of the vacated space promises the opening of a new store in Mayfield Heights next April.

Cleaning up . . . The gasoline-powered vacuum cleaner used to gather litter from the business district failed at the peak of the fall's natural litter season. Its eight-horsepower engine now has no compression, and problems with the machine include a worn-out frame that's now been welded back together five times.

It cost about \$1,200 when new five years ago, and must be replaced. The Coventry Merchants Association (CMA), which owns the machine and funds its operation, does not now have the resources to replace it and continue its operation.

Only about twenty of the area's ninety (or so) merchants and landlords pay dues—just \$100 annually—to the CMA. The rest of the merchants benefit from these activities, but contribute nothing. In addition to the clean-up effort, CMA dues support the planting and maintenance of flowers each summer, and a variety of other tasks in the common areas of the business district.

Hunger Center needs help all year long

The problems of poverty and hunger receive more attention in the holiday season, but they continue all year long.

Contributions to the Hunger Center (an effort of the Greater Cleveland Interfaith Council) may be left at Mac's Back Books, 1785 Coventry Road, or at Metropolitan Savings, 1865 Coventry Road. Canned goods other non-perishable foods only.

Coventry Village News
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DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE DELIVER BEFORE FEBRUARY 5

The next regular meeting of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. will be held on Tuesday, February 9, 7:30 PM, at the Coventry Village Library.

The next meeting of the Trustees of Coventry Neighbors, Inc. will be held on Thursday, March 3, 8:00 PM, at 1641 Hillcrest Road. The meeting is open to all dues-paid members.

Join Coventry Neighbors, Inc. Today! You must be a member for at least 30 days to vote at our meetings

Please indicate the class of membership you want:

Individual (\$7.00) Family (\$10.00) Senior (\$3.00)

Just a subscription to the *Coventry Village News* (\$5.00)

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