



Summit News

May 2004

A Right Size For Miriam

Is there a right size for Miriam Hospital in Summit Neighborhood? The hospital's Summit Avenue complex has grown from a single 32,000 square foot building in 1952 to seven buildings with 430,000 square feet today. As Miriam begins a new cycle of growth, it is more important than ever to answer this question.

At a press conference before SNA's annual meeting on February 11th, Representative Gordon Fox, Senator Rhoda Perry and Councilman Kevin Jackson signed a statement calling for Miriam Hospital to "do no harm" to the neighborhood and urging the city, the hospital and its neighbors to work together to find a "right size" for the hospital and to establish "limits to growth."

In the meantime, hospital officials have chosen to move forward with an alternative to their original plan that decreases the total height by ten feet, but increases the number of new patient rooms from 72 to 102, requires the demolition of two additional buildings, and increases the total project cost from \$96.3M to \$114.5M.

"Option E," as Miriam's consultant dubbed it, is half a new hospital. That is, half of the old hospital will be demolished, and a brand-new half-a-hospital erected in its place. Four buildings would be razed: two along Seventh Street at Summit Avenue, and two along Fifth Street at Summit.

Miriam Hospital must not begin rebuilding until it has pub-



The old orphanage building is the next to go under Miriam's newest plan.

lically declared where it will end. Neighbors have repeatedly asked what the hospital's long-term plans are, and the hospital has steadfastly refused to say. They say they cannot see that far into the future, that they just don't know what the hospital's needs will be in ten or twenty years.

Well that is not acceptable. The hospital's neighbors know what *their* needs will be in ten or twenty years. We will need streets that are clean and safe. We will need quiet at night, and a parking spot during the day. We will need property values we can count on. We will need green space. We will need not to be overwhelmed by industrial-commercial architecture across the street or down the block. We will need our homes, our neighbors' homes, all our homes to still be here.

We need a limit on Miriam Hospital's growth. The Institutional Zone (see page 2) establishes dimensional boundaries around

and above the hospital that are inappropriate for our neighborhood. And the hospital is on a trajectory of growth that will ultimately collide with those zoning limits. Miriam's parking lots can be added to their I-Zone as easily as they were removed a decade ago. Yes, it's true, they're not building much beyond their current footprint...for now.

What is the right size for Miriam? It's your neighborhood. We want to know what you think. Today we begin a neighborhood-wide discussion of the future of Summit Neighborhood and Miriam Hospital. Within this newsletter you will find a survey. Fill it out and return it to us by May 8th. On May 24th we will host a public meeting to discuss the results of the survey and to develop a neighborhood-wide consensus that we will present to the city and the hospital. Take a moment and lend us your voice - together we can protect our future.

Tree Planting at Collyer Field

Friends of the Moshassuck will hold its annual Tree Planting at Collyer Field on Saturday, May 22 at 9am. Friends of the Moshassuck is involved in a long term project to restore the health of the Moshassuck River. Restoring areas right near the river helps the quality of the water as well as the wildlife that depends upon it. Everyone is welcome to participate in this community endeavor. For more information or to get involved, email Friends of the Moshassuck at gerritt@mindspring.com or call Greg at 331-0529.

In 1986, the Providence City Council approved a zoning ordinance amendment that established "floating" institutional zones for existing hospitals and college campuses. For the previous 34 years, hospitals had been entirely free of zoning constraints, with disastrous results. (Prior to that, from the 1920's to the 1930's, hospitals were subject to zoning that would not have allowed a hospital to move into a neighborhood like ours.) Today, Miriam Hospital is zoned R1 or R2 (low-density residential) with a floating I1 zone overlaid on top.

For most of Miriam's I-Zone, buildings must be set back from

the street 20 feet. Along the street, the maximum height is 50 feet. That maximum rises, at a 45-degree angle, toward the interior of the I-Zone, until it reaches an overall maximum of 75 feet. There is no maximum lot coverage, so Miriam is permitted, within the setbacks, to build on 100 percent of its property.

For homes zoned R1 and R2 that surround the hospital, the

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STATEMENT BY REPRESENTATIVE GORDON D. FOX, SENATOR RHODA PERRY, and CITY COUNCILMAN KEVIN JACKSON

The Growth Of Miriam Hospital and The Future Of The Summit Neighborhood

As elected representatives, as neighbors to Miriam Hospital and as Board members of the Summit Neighborhood Association, we wish to state our support for the Summit Neighborhood Association as it seeks agreement with the Lifespan health care system on the closely linked futures of Miriam Hospital and the Summit neighborhood.

We recognize the excellent reputation for care enjoyed by The Miriam Hospital. We value our access to a broad range of medical services in our neighborhood. We must point out that Miriam's location in the heart of a low-density urban residential area is unique in our city. The hospital's location creates special hardships for neighbors and may pose serious risks to the long term health of the Summit neighborhood.

Lifespan and Miriam must recognize that their choice to invest in and improve a facility surrounded by one- and two-family homes and accessible only by narrow streets designed for low-volume traffic places special obligations upon them. Chief among these is to do no harm to the surrounding neighborhood. Indeed, Miriam must remedy existing negative impacts whenever possible.

This means finding the "right size" for Miriam within its present setting and establishing limits to growth within the Summit Avenue site. Continued utilization of commercially zoned areas should continue to be a priority for Miriam Hospital. Doing no harm also means working with neighbors to establish clear benchmarks and standards for other quality-of-life impacts in the neighborhood and a long term commitment to maintain those standards.

We look forward to close consultation between Miriam and its neighbors in the months ahead and to an outcome that will protect the interests of both Summit and Miriam for many years to come.

Signed February 11, 2004

The Institutional Zone

Summit News is the official newsletter of the Summit Neighborhood Association. It is published three or four times a year and distributed for free to households in the Greater Summit Area.

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Summit Neighborhood Association
Miriam and Summit
A Neighborhood Survey

How much hospital is too much? We want to know what you think. Please take a moment to fill out this questionnaire and return it to us by May 8th (see instructions at the bottom of this page). We will publish the results on our website and in our next newsletter, and we invite you to discuss those results and the future of Miriam and Summit at a public meeting on May 24th at 7pm at Hillside Health Center.

For an explanation of the Institutional Zone (I-Zone), see the article on page 2 of this newsletter.

For each question, please circle one answer.

1. Which of the following statements best describes your opinion?

- A) Hospitals are not compatible with residential neighborhoods. Miriam must commit to relocating to a more appropriate site and the city must do everything in its power to cause them to do so.
- B) Miriam is here for now. However, the hospital is already bigger than it should be within its present residential neighborhood location. They should be allowed to build no more new buildings here, but should be permitted to renovate existing ones.
- C) A small hospital is acceptable in our neighborhood, but the current I-Zone provisions do not protect us. Miriam and the city must commit to more stringent size and activity limits than the I-Zone imposes.
- D) The existing I-Zone sufficiently protects the neighborhood. Miriam should be allowed to build within current limits.
- E) Hospitals are compatible with residential neighborhoods and Miriam should be permitted more latitude to expand than the I-Zone currently allows (including abandoning Seventh Street and building on their parking lots).

2. How concerned are you about Miriam Hospital's construction plans?

Extremely Concerned Very Concerned Somewhat Concerned Not Concerned

3. What effect does Miriam Hospital have on the quality of life of Summit residents today?

Strongly Negative Negative Neutral Positive Strongly Positive

4. What effect will the proposed expansion of Miriam Hospital have on the quality of life of Summit residents?

Strongly Negative Negative Neutral Positive Strongly Positive

Comments?

Your Name (optional): _____

Your Street: _____

Please return your survey by Saturday, May 8th.

Drop off your completed survey at the reference desk of the Rochambeau Library or at the Yard Sale on May 8th, or fold it, stamp it and mail it to us at the address on the back.

37¢
Stamp

Summit Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 41092
Providence, RI 02940

May Day Fair & Sidewalk Sale

Drop by the Rochambeau Library on Saturday, May 1st from 10am to 2pm to learn about healthy landscaping, organic gardening and protecting pets from toxic chemicals. The Less Toxic Landscaping May Day Gardening Fair is sponsored by the Toxics Information Project.

Meanwhile, down the block, Hope Street merchants are planning a sidewalk sale that day, with some offering special discounts. Among the participants will be Ye Ol' Book Shoppe, Studio Hop, Flourishes, Blooming Blossoms, Fountain Apothecaries, DeFusco's Bakery & Deli, The Camera Werks, Hope Street Pizza and Garrison Confections.



The Blue Cottage on Hope Street is among the first of our new "Local Business Profiles" on our website at <http://sna.providence.ri.us/biz/>

Business Scene

Verbatim / Angell Street Typing, has moved from 769 Hope Street to 239 Rochambeau (behind **Vanity Fair Salon**).

Paradise Boutique has closed at 738 Hope Street.

DeFusco Bakery & Deli has opened at 774 Hope Street, where Kay's New York Deli was. Look for a Local Business Profile of DeFusco's on the SNA website.

Apsara Palace, serving Thai, Cambodian, Chinese and Vietnamese cuisine, has opened at 783 Hope Street.

West Bay Aestheticare - Non-Surgical Skin Care is renovating the former Kenneth Cote Salon at 800 Hope Street.

CreaTOYvity is coming soon to 808 Hope Street, formerly Uncle Sig's, promising "toys and creative fun." Activities for kids, birthday parties, and a toy store, too.

Garrison Confections, advertising "Handmade Artisanal Chocolates" and cakes including wedding cakes, has opened at 815 Hope Street, replacing Petals & Stems. They also have a store downtown at 17 Washington Street.

Not Just Handicrafts will open at 837 Hope Street to join the other family-owned businesses, "Not Just Snacks" next

door, and "Not Just Spices" across the street.

Restaurant Oak will open soon at 959 Hope Street, in the former Opia space. Owner Paul Shire also owns DownCity Food and Cocktails on Weybosset Street. Longtime East Side residents will be interested to know that Paul has been in the food serving business since he started working, as a teenager, at Lloyd's when it was at Hope and Chace. According to Paul, a drink and dinner should cost about \$20. He will be serving lunch, dinner and Sunday brunch.

Down on North Main, a newly renovated **Dunkin' Donuts** has reopened at number 1245. We are happy to report that part of the renovation involved the removal of the hideous billboards that were perched on either side of the building. By city ordinance, billboards are not permitted anywhere in the city, and signs that were grandfathered in cannot be moved or relocated. Let's all have a donut to celebrate!

King Rentals has opened at 1282 North Main Street, next to **JavaSpeed Scooters**, offering "Appliances, Computers, Electronics, Furniture."

Yes, I'm joining Summit Neighborhood Association today.

My dues of \$10 for 2004 are enclosed.

Name: (please print clearly) _____

Street Address: _____

Telephone: _____ **Email:** _____

Family Membership - list other adults living in your household who wish to be members:

I can leaflet

I am concerned about: _____

Please enclose a check for \$10.00 made out to: **Summit Neighborhood Association** and mail it to **SNA, P.O. Box 41092, Providence, RI 02940**

YARD

SALE

9am - 3pm / Saturday, May 8th, 2004
Church of the Redeemer / 655 Hope Street

Donations Needed

Toys Working Appliances Furniture
Clothing Household Goods Books&CDs

**Dropoff Dates: Thursday & Friday,
May 6th & 7th, 6pm to 8pm**

Bring items to the front door of the church. It is helpful if you can estimate the price of each item. Already-tagged items are especially welcome.

Volunteers Needed

Pickup Day of Sale Sorting
Trucks/Vans Setup Cleanup

The Yard Sale is the Summit Neighborhood Association's annual fundraiser. It provides most of the association's budget for newsletters, events and activities. For more information or to volunteer, call Bonnie at 521-0568.

Rain Date - Saturday, May 15th

Institutional Zone

Continued from Page 2

maximum building height is 30 feet. The minimum setback from the street depends on lot size, but is no more than 20 feet. The maximum lot coverage is 35% in R1, 40% in R2 (so you must have more yard than house). Many homes in Summit exceed these limits and are grandfathered in.

Hospitals and colleges with

I-Zones must submit an institutional master plan (IMP) to the city. The IMP "is designed to provide a basis for rational decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the institution." IMPs look ahead at least five years, and must be approved by the City Plan Commission. There is no requirement for public hearings and no opportunity for the public to

comment, except at the regular meeting of the Plan Commission, at which the members determine if an IMP complies with the city's Comprehensive Plan and, if so, approves it.

For more information, see the Providence Code of Ordinances, Chapter 27, Sections 101.8, 305 and 503. The Code is available online at <http://www.providenceri.com/ordinances/>.