



Summit News

January 2005

Fast-Track Zoning Rankles Residents

The Cicilline administration's efforts to revamp the Providence zoning ordinance have run up against opposition from neighborhoods citywide. At meetings hosted by SNA, residents and neighborhood advocates from across the city agreed that the city must follow through on long-promised consultations and planning in each of the city's 25 residential neighborhoods before making decisions that will shape our city for the next 50 years or more.

Last year, responding to a successful lawsuit challenging the Downcity Zoning District, the city set about to amend the zoning ordinance. The process quickly grew. A Zoning Commission appointed from the community in October is now revising the whole zoning ordinance. The zoning ordinance protects neighborhoods by defining limits to the dimensions and use of buildings in residential zones and adjacent commercial areas. The Commission's aggressive schedule calls for a completed draft ordinance by the end of March and adoption by the City Council before June 30.

SNA and other neighborhood groups hastily called a citywide meeting. Organizers were surprised when 50 people packed into the community room at the Rochambeau Library on November 30. Residents from almost half the city's neighborhoods were eager to share their views.

Common concerns emerged. Neighborhood associations and

Continued on Page 4

Traffic Calming on Track for Spring

Traffic calming is coming to Summit at last. The bidding process for construction is nearly completed, and a company should have been selected by the time you read this. The work will begin this spring.

Three years ago, SNA, with support and funding provided by Councilman Kevin Jackson and the city, hired a consultant to conduct a traffic study of our neighborhood. The study, which is available on SNA's website at http://sna.providence.ri.us/projects/traffic_study/, was the result of feedback from Summit residents and analysis by the consulting firm. It identified Hope Street, Rochambeau and Summit Avenues, Tenth Street and Hillside and Lorimer Avenues as some of the streets most impacted by speeding vehicles.

Traffic calming slows vehicle speeds by making it difficult or unpleasant to go too fast. Speed bumps, chicanes, traffic circles and curb extensions are some of the calming features in a traffic engineer's palette. In the case of Summit, the most common feature will be curb extensions, also called bumpouts or neckdowns. A curb extension narrows the roadway, usually at an intersection, slowing cars and providing a shorter and safer pedestrian crossing.

It was agreed that the calming work would proceed in phases, to allow the city and residents to evaluate the effect of the traffic calming features. The first phase will implement about one third of the study's recommen-

Continued on Page 4



The fork at Summit and Brewster will become a "T" next year.

Lead Hazard Course Offered at Library

Childhood Lead Action Project will offer a three-hour Lead Hazard Mitigation course at Rochambeau Library in the coming weeks. The class, which owners of pre-1978 rental property are required to attend, provides information to property owners about how to control lead hazards in rental units.

Courses in English will be held on Saturday, February 26th from 9:30am to 12:30pm and on Monday, March 28th from 5:30pm to 8:30pm. A class conducted in Spanish will be held on Saturday, March 19th from 9:30am to 12:30pm. All classes are free. For more information, or to register, visit the Project's website:

<http://www.leadsafekids.org/> or contact Helena Freidmann at educator1@leadsafekids.org or 785-1310 ext. 202.

Support Your Neighborhood Businesses: Shop Locally.

Neighbors Influence Hospital Building Design

Last fall, The Miriam Hospital invited neighbors to participate in what they have called the Architectural Exterior Design Forum. This series of meetings, run by the architects designing the building, is intended to give neighbors a voice in the design process.

Over the course of the first five meetings, nearby residents (including some SNA members), hospital officials and the architects from the firm HOK, have discussed the architecture of our neighborhood and how these new buildings can be made to "relate" to their surroundings. The initial focus was on the overall shape of these very large structures, and how they can transition to the much smaller scale of the houses around them.

The forum has been an exceptionally civil exercise, in which hospital officials have empowered the architects to respond to neighborhood concerns, and neighbors, many of whom opposed the project, have set

aside their differences to help make these buildings as good for the neighborhood as they can be.

The design so far will be presented at a public meeting hosted by the hospital on Tuesday, January 18th from 7pm to 8:30pm at the Fain Building on Fifth Street. Design updates will be presented at future public meetings to be announced.

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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A Letter to Summit

Dear Neighbors,

I'm writing to let you know that I am serving on the new Miriam Board Committee Of Neighborhood Relations as a Summit Neighborhood neighbor. The other neighbor who is serving is Barbara Slater, whom I have yet to meet. The rest of the committee is board members, Dr. Hittner, Sandra Coletta, and new neighborhood liaison Monica Anderson.

I live on 8th Street, between Highland and Summit, and face the parking lot. So, as you can assume, Miriam and what is happening on their campus greatly affect my home life. I am looking forward to my future involvement with the hospital and hope that I can represent my neighbors well. I urge neighbors with issues and concerns to contact the hospital on their hotline. Since I hope to be able to be of some service for the neighborhood, feel free to let me know what you see that you feel needs attention. Below is my e-mail address. I would like to hear from neighbors regarding their concerns and questions that I can bring up at the meetings.

I hope that this is a good and productive relationship and that I can represent the neighborhood well.

All my best,
Michaela O'Donnell-Small
michaelao@gmail.com

Elmgrove Gardens Historic District

The State Review Board recently approved the nomination of the Elmgrove Gardens Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. Mary Kate Harrington, Director of Preservation Services for the Providence Preservation Society, told SNA that the nomination was forwarded to the National Parks Service, and final approval is expected sometime in the next couple of months.

The Elmgrove Gardens district is bounded by Rochambeau and Morris Avenues, Woodbury Street and Cole Avenue and includes 142 properties. Historic District status imposes no restrictions on homeowners, but offers benefits, such as a state tax credit for exterior renovations that preserve a home's historic character.

Yard Sale in May

The success of our annual Yard Sale depends on contributions from neighbors. Please consider donating old furniture, appliances, clothing, books, CDs and other items gathering dust in your attic or destined for the trash. Look for an announcement in our May newsletter.

Business Scene

Cumberland Farms has reopened after replacing its fuel tanks and adding extra pumps. The community-minded folks at Cumby's incorporated landscap-

ing and parking and traffic flow improvements recommended by SNA.

Restaurant OAK, at 959 Hope Street, opened in October after fire at the other end of their building canceled their planned opening last spring.

Next door to Restaurant OAK, at 951 and 955 Hope, **The Art of the Kitchen:** Your Design Center will soon replace Tony's Barber Shop and Best Way Cleansers & Tailors.

Down on North Main Street, **Second Thoughts Bookstore** at 1281 has closed.



Cumberland Farms added landscaping, benches, better traffic flow and more parking at SNA's request.

Become a Member!

Summit Neighborhood Association is your citizen voice. SNA membership has tripled since 2003 because Summit neighbors are active citizens who pay close attention when their quality of life is challenged.

Some of the good things SNA has helped to bring to Summit are trees and plantings along North Main Street, traffic calm-

ing, a greener and safer Cumberland Farms, and you will NOT see an animated electronic sign at CVS.

Summit faces both old and new challenges in 2005, and your help is needed now more than ever.

Use the form below, join online at sna.providence.ri.us, or bring your dues to the annual meeting.

Yes, I'm joining Summit Neighborhood Association today.

I enclose my 2005 member contribution of: \$15 \$25 \$35 \$50 Other: \$ _____

Name: (please print clearly) _____

Street Address: _____

Telephone: _____ **Email:** _____

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

I can help leaflet attend meetings make phone calls canvas my street

I am concerned about: _____

Please enclose a check for \$15.00 made out to: **Summit Neighborhood Association** and mail it to **SNA, P.O. Box 41092, Providence, RI 02940**

Summit Neighborhood Association

Annual Meeting

Monday, January 31st, 2005

7pm - 9pm

Rochambeau Library, 708 Hope Street

Agenda

- 6:30 Refreshments
- 7:00 Welcome and Summary of Activities
- 7:10 Confirmation of Amendments to By-Laws
- 7:15 Election of Officers and Board for 2005
- 7:25 Q & A with City and State Representatives
- 8:30 Q & A with Police Officers

Free and open to all

Memberships and SNA T-shirts available at the door

Members please bring \$15 dues for 2005

Zoning

Continued from Page 1

residents were frustrated that long-promised neighborhood plans have not been done. Residents fear that the city is turning away from neighborhoods to favor institutional spread, Wal-Mart-style stores and high-rise residential in historic areas. The Zoning Commission's expedited process lacks adequate public engagement to address these concerns.

The neighborhood coalition wrote Mayor Cicilline on December 17 asking him to amend only

Residents fear the city is turning away from neighborhoods...

that part of the ordinance needed to fix the Downcity District problem; to refocus the city's efforts on creating a new Comprehensive Plan; and to ensure that all of these things are done in an open process that encourages public participation. The letter was endorsed by 10 neighborhood or business organizations and 38 individuals.

As word of these concerns circulated, the Zoning Commission announced new subcommittees to focus on certain specific topics. Some of the same neighbors who wrote to Mayor

Cicilline have been asked to serve on its subcommittees. Commission documents have been made available on the Web (<http://www.providenceri.com/government/planning/zoning/>).

The mayor will meet three signers of the letter on January 13th. This issue is sure to be a topic at SNA's annual meeting on January 31st, so mark your calendar.

Traffic Calming

Continued from Page 1

dations. The work will be paid for from city bond funds earmarked for this project by Councilman Jackson.