



Summit News

May 2005

“Summit” Meetings to Tackle Neighborhood Priorities

On Wednesday, May 11, Summit Neighborhood Association will hold a community discussion about the state of commercial development in our neighborhood and what residents, merchants and city government can do to provide the best mix of useful and prosperous commercial operations in our neighborhood. The meeting starts at 7:00 PM and will be held in the Community Room at Rochambeau Branch Library, 708 Hope Street.

The purpose of this meeting will be to share information and ideas about the possible futures of our commercial districts and to foster community action to pursue the best results. The meeting will be based on “future search” techniques. In a future search, audiences are free to move to the corner of the room where their own highest priority is being discussed. In many such meetings, the liveliest and best attended discussions evolve into working groups.

This will be the first in a series of SNA “Summit Meetings” on priority issues for community residents. While all SNA board meetings are open to the public, Summit Meetings will focus on a single issue and encourage broad public participation. These public forums will be held every other month starting in May. Like regular SNA board meetings, these sessions will occur on the second Wednesday of the

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Parking meters are coming to Hope Street, see page 2.

Zoning Commission Schedule Extended

Last October, Mayor Cicilline charged the Providence Zoning Commission with producing a draft of changes to the zoning ordinance by March 31st. Critics of the process complained that the time allotted to the commission’s work was too short, and that such dramatic changes as those proposed require more careful deliberation and more public input.

The schedule also meant that the development of a new comprehensive plan would not happen until after the zoning changes were made, exactly the reverse of the way this should happen. According to state law, the zoning ordinance must conform to the comprehensive plan,

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Second Historic District in Summit Approved

Elmgrove Gardens Historic District recently received federal recognition for its contributions to the history of architecture and community planning and development. The National Park Service recently added the four-block district, which is bounded by Rochambeau Avenue, Cole Avenue, Woodbury Street and Morris Avenue, to the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register nomination was prepared by preservation consultant and Summit resident Kathryn Cavanaugh and Mary Kate Harrington, Director of Preservation Services at the Providence Preservation Society (PPS). Funding came from the RI Historical Preserva-

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Parking Meters Coming to Hope Street

That's right. Those parking meters that are popping up all over downtown are coming to Summit. The city intends to install parking meters on commercial streets all across the city, and our own Hope Street commercial district is on the list.

Parking meters will be among the topics SNA takes on at our first "Summit" meeting on Wednesday May 11 at 7:00pm at the Rochambeau Library, 708 Hope Street. The topic that night will be commercial development on Hope Street and North Main Street, and what can be done to protect and improve these vital areas. See the "Summit Meetings" article on page 1.

Summit Meetings

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month.

On July 8 we will open the topic of "neighborhood condition," including sidewalks, parks and green space, tree cover and litter to community discussion. Councilman Kevin Jackson has asked for SNA and residents to help create a fair, open and satisfying process for prioritizing sidewalk repairs. So if you've ever complained about a sidewalk, this is the meeting to attend.

We haven't picked topics for September and beyond yet. SNA members have also cited the safety of our streets, Summit's relationship with Miriam Hospital, the need for more trees and greenspace in Summit and parking as top interests. Citywide zoning revisions and a possible city-led community planning process this year or next are other issues of concern to SNA's board.

If you have suggestions for topics or guests for future Summit meetings, please let us know. I hope to see you on May 11!

A River Runs Through It

Friends of the Moshassuck is a small watershed group started by Summit residents that has been working to restore the Moshassuck River since 1998. Most residents of Summit do not know that a river makes up some of the western boundary of the neighborhood. The Moshassuck River, most visible near the Bonanza Bus Station, in the North Burial Ground, and downtown next to the Citizens Bank building, drains the western half of the Summit neighborhood.

This year Friends of the Moshassuck is applying to the RI Rivers Council to be designated the official Watershed Council for the Moshassuck Watershed. The application describes the educational work we have done with youth in the watershed, our restoration project at Collyer field, and the canoe launches we are developing on Canada Pond in the Wanskuck section of Providence and at Galego Court Pond in Pawtucket.

This spring we will be taking part in two events and neighbors who are interested in a clean and vibrant river and neighborhood are welcome to join us. Fostering cross-border community spirit for the second year, Friends of the Moshassuck will take part in the Pawtucket Earth Day Clean-up on April 23. Assembling at Woodlawn Community Center at 9 AM we will be cleaning up near Galego Court Pond with a neighborhood youth group.

On May 21 at 9 AM we will hold our 6th annual tree planting at Collyer field near Bonanza Bus Station. Out beyond the outfield we are taking a field overrun with an invasive alien weed and returning it, slowly, to a native New England forest.

Anyone is welcome to join us for the May 21 tree planting. For more information or to get more involved, email us at geritt@mindspring.com.

Street Tree Deadline

The deadline for completed applications for the Providence Neighborhood Planting Program (PNPP) is June 1st. Under the program, groups of neighbors band together to plant 5 to 20 street trees, which are provided free under the program. For more information, contact PNPP at 351-5802, or visit the website at www.pnpp.org to download an application.

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.

Editor: John Bazik

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Web Site

<http://sna.providence.ri.us/>

Email

sna@sna.providence.ri.us

Address

Summit Neighborhood Assoc.

PO Box 41092

Providence, RI 02940

Four Reasons For SNA

Three years ago, I was only vaguely aware of Summit Neighborhood Association, despite living here since 1983. This year, I became SNA's new President. Why has belonging to my neighborhood association become important to me? Here are my reasons:

Reason 1. Important government decisions favor people who show up. You can bet that a massage parlor operator, or the guy who wants to pave his whole front yard so his illegal tenants can park there, will always show up at the meetings where their schemes are approved or denied: the Zoning Board of Review, the Board of Licenses, the City Plan Commission. SNA monitors these meetings and shares knowledge of city government to help you head off harmful developments.

Reason 2. Everyone has a lobby except us. City employees have unions. Large corporations and nonprofit institutions have full-time lawyers and public relations staff. They work day in and day out to get the most out of city government. Without volunteer associations like SNA, ordinary residents have no organized voice protecting their interests.

Reason 3. Your idea may not really be so crazy after all. Have

Business Scene

DeFusco Bakery & Deli has closed at 774 Hope Street.

National City Mortgage opened an office at 232 Rochambeau Avenue, next to Sebastian's Salon.

West Bay AesthetiCare hung their sign up a year ago at 800 Hope Street, but are just now

renovating the space.

On the other side of the neighborhood, at 1070 North Main Street, at the corner of Cemetery Street, the former Jazz Masters club, which was most recently Club Jade, has reopened as **Tantric**, a dance club and martini bar.

you ever said "they ought to do something to slow down traffic around here?" A few years ago, SNA discovered that just about everyone in Summit had that very same thought. Working with Councilman Kevin Jackson, SNA got the city to conduct a study, create traffic-calming street designs and finally, this year, to implement them. Without SNA, the city might never have acted. What's your next great idea for Summit?

Reason 4. It's good to be asked - and I'm asking. One reason I wasn't active in SNA for many years was that no one asked me directly. And the only reason I finally did join was that someone did finally ask me. Now, I'm asking you. You can do as little or as much as you want and still be an important member of SNA.

Summit Neighborhood Association is your neighborhood organization. First, join. Then, please come to our next meeting

Miriam Construction

Miriam Hospital's Community Liaison, Monica Anderson recently told SNA that a construction staging area will be set up in their Seventh Street parking lot in May. Shortly afterward, the hospital will seek to have Seventh Street closed to traffic, and it will remain closed for two years or more. Demolition of two buildings on Seventh Street will take place over the summer. Construction will begin in the fall.

The hospital will hold a meeting on April 27th at 7pm in the Fain Building on Fifth Street to discuss architecture, construction and other matters.

on May 11 (see page 1). And if you have an idea for Summit you want to work on, call me (Jon Howard) at 331-2272.

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 made out to: **Summit Neighborhood Association**
and mail it to **SNA, P.O. Box 41092, Providence, RI 02940**

YARD SALE

9am - 3pm / Saturday, May 7th, 2005
Church of the Redeemer / 655 Hope Street

Donations Needed

Toys Working Appliances Furniture
Clothing Household Goods Books&CDs

**Dropoff Dates: Thursday & Friday,
May 5th & 6th, 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 Judy at 861-8980.

Rain Date - Saturday, May 14th

Zoning Commission

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and Providence's comprehensive plan was written more than 12 years ago.

As calls for more time multiplied, including those from members of the zoning commission subcommittees and a commission member, the Mayor recently directed the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) to postpone the submission of a draft ordinance until June 30th. Development of a new comprehensive plan is still not scheduled to continue until after that time.

Considering the scope of the changes involved, and the impact that zoning law can have on everyday life in our city, three additional months are welcome, but are by no means enough. Among the big-ticket items

under scrutiny in this process are plans for the waterfront that will appear after the movement of I-195, high-density residential and commercial development downtown and along streets like Atwells Avenue, and the rules under which institutions like Brown University and Miriam Hospital can build in the future.

As the commission continues its work, public meetings are promised "to solicit comments and feedback from the general public." Momentous changes are in the works, and we will all be affected by decisions being made right now. There is a wealth of information on the Zoning Commission website (<http://www.providenceri.com/planning/zoning/>). On that site you can check on meeting schedules, and even request email notification of future meetings.

Several SNA members have

been following this process for months, and SNA board member John Bazik currently serves on the Zoning Commission Institutional Zone subcommittee. If you are concerned about what all this means for Summit, or if you would like to help SNA speak for the city's neighborhoods, just email us at sna@sna.providence.ri.us or call 331-1644.

Historic District

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tion & Heritage Commission. Much of the house-by-house research and photography was conducted by volunteers assembled by SNA and PPS for the Summit Neighborhood History Project, a joint effort of the two organizations to involve neighbors in the historic preservation process.