

Waterfront, Sugarhouse expansion, Security

By Jeff Rush, QVNA President

Waterfront to get traffic study: A meeting sponsored by the Delaware River Waterfront Corp was held recently with reps from area civics to discuss plans for an upcoming traffic study that will result in adjustments to the signal system on Columbus Boulevard from Oregon to Frankford Avenues. There apparently is hardware and software already present in the system that, with activation, can better link each intersection which the Waterfront Corporation hopes will reduce backups and long vehicle wait times during peak periods. I know many of us who use the Boulevard regularly will be looking forward to these improvements.

Sugarhouse Casino plans to expand: A proposal to effectively double the floor space at SugarHouse will commence sometime next year. The slots will top out at 3,000 from the current 1,500 and the number of table games will also increase significantly. Restaurants and other amenities will be added as well as an expanded parking garage. It is not known if this is the last phase of expansion.

Meanwhile, Foxwoods continues its seemingly losing battle to site a second Philadelphia casino at Delaware and Reed Streets. Talks continue on whether the City even needs another casino on the waterfront, which, in our view, it does not. If and when this fight finally runs its course should Foxwoods fail to make its case in the courts, current alternative planning calls for mixed use development on the waterfront at Delaware and Reeds Streets.

Zoning Update: City Council is moving closer to enacting the new zoning code that's been brewed by the Zoning Code Commission over the last several years. The new code proposes to streamline the permitting process, thereby reducing the complexity of the process as well as the long delays experienced by developers, while also reducing the uncertainty as to what is actually permitted on any given parcel in a particular area.

While mostly agreeing that the code badly needs the update, many civics have expressed concern about a loss of control over lands in their neighborhoods, since many uses will no longer need to be vetted

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October, 2011 • Volume 48, No. 8

QUEEN VILLAGE

Crier



QVNA General Meeting

Thursday, October 20, 7:30 pm

St. Philip Neri, 218 Queen Street

Guest: Maura Kennedy, Director,
L&I Strategic Initiatives

Plus: QVNA Board Candidates Speak

Sustainability Committee seeks your input

After a summer recess, the Sustainability Committee reconvened in September to continue plans for future projects and discuss ways to make Queen Village a greener, more sustainable place to live. Members of the committee range from experts in green industry to those seeking solutions to everyday problems like litter and dog waste. With this wide range of experience and issues in mind, it was decided at our September meeting that the most efficient way to move forward as a committee was to re-prioritize and set new goals.

To do so, each committee member was asked to submit a list of the five issues of sustainability they feel are most pressing.

From these individual lists, the committee will create a master list of topics that will become our main points of focus for the upcoming year.

The committee is interested in you and your ideas. Tell us about your neighborhood and the neighborhood you would like to live in. What's good? What would make it better? As a resident of Queen Village, your list is important!

Take a look around your home, your block and the neighborhood and let us know what opportunities you see for improving the sustainability and livability of Queen Village.

Please submit your list by Halloween, October 31, to lel@greenlimbs.com.

QVNA Board Elections: Second Call for Nominations

Elections will be held in November for positions on the QVNA Board. Elections take place annually, and terms are for two years. Board members are eligible for re-election to the same office for not more than two consecutive terms. This year, officers' positions are up for election. The terms of the eight general directors' positions are staggered, with four of those positions on the ballot every year. Several of the current officers and directors will be running again.

As always, we also encourage and welcome any Queen Village resident to run for the board. The requirements for running are: you must be a resident of Queen Village and you must have attended and signed in at any four meetings within the last year that were convened by QVNA or

a committee thereof. If you are interested in community issues, in working together with other Board members to problem solve, in thinking about the big and little picture, and would like to add your skills into the mix (and can commit to the Board meetings on the first Thursday of every month), consider running for the board.

If you are interested and eligible, send a brief statement about yourself describing why you want to be on the board and your community involvement to date to the QVNA office (info@qvna.org). Nominations may also be submitted from the floor at the October 20 general meeting. All candidates are invited to introduce themselves and say a few words at that meeting. Biographies of all candidates will be in the November *Crier*.

QUEEN VILLAGE NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION

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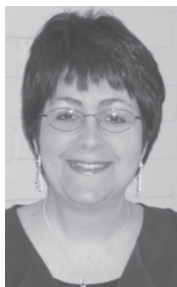
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President's Column

Continued from page 1

by the Zoning Board Authority.

The bill to enact these changes will likely be passed by the end of this Council session. It is hoped that whatever problems that surface with the new code can be straightened out over time.

Curfew Permanent? This year's teenage outbursts on South Street as well as other locations around town have prompted the Nutter Administration to make the new curfew restrictions permanent. Reports from South Street merchants and others that patronize the Street are universally positive, and peace — at least for the time being — has been restored.

The South Street Head House Association (SSHHA) recently sent a letter praising Mayor Nutter and other City officials who enacted the curfew saying, "On behalf of the South Street Headhouse District Board of Directors, business owners and stakeholders, we would report that your efforts are bearing fruit. Nighttime business is on the rise and spending at our local businesses is on the increase. I know you often have to deal only with the negatives, but this is a positive outcome."

An outcome that is also appreciated by QVNA, as are the steps the Headhouse District is undertaking to accept responsibility to improve conditions on South Street, which absolutely benefit the surrounding community.

SSHHA, with support from QVNA, has applied for a special grant to install a pedestrian pavilion on a portion of Passyunk Avenue between Bainbridge and South Streets. The plan, which met with favor with the QVNA board, will be detailed for neighbors at a future QVNA general meeting.

We applaud the new Head House administration, especially Chairperson Joette M. Adams, owner of Le Bistro Romano, and John Foy, Chairman of the Development Committee and owner of Bridget Foy's Restaurant.

Other Security Matters: Several weeks ago, following a long investigation, Federal agents, with support from our local 3rd District Police, launched an early morning raid at Southwark Plaza, arresting at least 15 residents who were charged with drug dealing and other crimes. QVNA will seek to capitalize on the momentum created by this bust by arranging a meeting for members of the Southwark Tenant Council, area residents, Police, and the manager of the housing complex to force eviction of all felons and other offenders as proscribed by Philadelphia Housing Authority rules have routinely been largely ignored.

QVNA MEETING, 7:30 PM, October 20

Maura Kennedy, Director of Strategic Services for the City's Licenses and Inspections, will speak at the QVNA meeting at 7:30 pm, St. Philip Neri, October 20. Also at that meeting Candidates for QVNA's Board will introduce themselves. *Don't miss this meeting!*

Pie in the Sky helps ill people

MANNA (Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Nutrition Alliance) announces Pie in the Sky 2011, the organization's 15th annual holiday pie sale fundraiser, sponsored by US Airways. Proceeds help those coping with life-threatening illness.

Pie sales are in progress; order deadline is Friday, November 18. Apple, pumpkin or pecan pies are available at \$25, and a special MANNA-made signature pie which includes a raffle-entry for a \$1,000 U.S. Airways gift card, is \$50.

Order at www.mannapa.org or at www.mannapiess.org or by calling 215-496-2662. All baked goods are pre-paid and can be picked up November 22 or November 23. Deadline for orders is **November 18.**

Weccacoe: Burying Ground, Garden, Park, Playground

by Terry Buckalew

Weccacoe Playground, on the 400 block between Catharine and Queen Streets, has a rich history. The following is an edited version of a detailed research project on the "Bethel Burial Ground" conducted by independent historian, Terry Buckalew, in City of Philadelphia archives, the Philadelphia Inquirer archives, and other journals and books. Phrases in quotes come from these sources.

Weccacoe* Playground was created from the merger of two distinct lots that included a 19th century African-American burying ground and a block-long row of tenement houses that were home to Irish immigrants, and subsequently Eastern European Jews who fled the Russian pogroms in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The burial ground: The southern half of the present-day playground (the land from Queen Street up to the service line of the tennis court) was purchased by Reverend Richard Allen and



Top: The site of the Weccacoe School Garden in June, 1903. Bottom: The same site in October, 1904, showing the second crop. The photograph was taken during school hours when no children were in the garden in order to show how successful the children were, even with their second crop.

The photo, located by the author, is from *The Playground*, a monthly journal published by The Playground Association of America, no. 15, June 1908, p. 6.

although newspaper accounts implied that this was common knowledge. In July, 1896, the City Select Council directed a portion of "the Weccacoe Park to be opened" and in June, 1899, the city legislature approved \$10,000 for the improvement of the property. A contractor was hired to prepare "Weccacoe Square for promenaders," and only in passing was it mentioned that the property was the site "of an abandoned burial ground for colored people."

Enlarging the Square

By the early 20th century, what is today the northern half of the playground (in effect the south side of the 400 block of Catharine

the Trustees of Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church on April 28, 1810. Described at that time as a "pasture," the plot was put to use as a burial ground. Some 400 burials are recorded, the last dating from 1864. By the time the city of Philadelphia purchased the graveyard in December, 1889, it was described in contemporary accounts as a "hard clay, rubbish-strewn" lot. No headstones or other remains indicated that a burial ground had existed there,

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SHOT TOWER'S ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL will be held from 11 am to 2 pm, October 29 (rain date of Oct. 30) with carnival games, pumpkin painting, arts & crafts, food & beverage, costume parade (optional). Admission is free.

SIXTH ANNUAL TODDLER HALLOWEEN PARTY starts at 4:30 pm on Halloween, October 31 in Mario Lanza Park, between Catharine and Queen Streets, in the 200 block. You've never seen anything as cute! Candy donations are appreciated.

DIAPER DRIVE IN QUEEN VILLAGE: The Greater Philadelphia Diaper Bank, a nonprofit that works with other nonprofits and agencies to help families and individuals, sponsors a Diaper Drive (www.philadelphiadiaperbank.org)

Food assistance programs, such as food stamps and WEC, do not cover diapers, creating a "hole" in the safety net. Through community diaper drives, the Diaper Bank collects and distributes diapers to homeless shelters, food pantries, family service agencies and faith-based organizations. To donate a bag of diapers, contact Queen Village resident Lisa French at Lfrenchfam@aol.com, or drop bags of diapers inside the gate at 612 S. Hancock Street.

CHILDCARE OFFERED: I would like to offer my service to care for your child on evenings and/or weekends in my home or yours. I am a nurse/clinical research coordinator at UPHS. My children are grown – my daughter lives in London and my son is in Colorado. Neither have children of their own yet and so I am waiting to be a grandmother. I got the idea to try babysitting about three years ago and can provide references. My fee is \$10 an hour. I live in Queen Village. Please don't hesitate to contact me at DIwerner0903@aol.com if I can be of any help. —Lynn

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Weccacoe

Continued from page 3

Street) was home to a large Russian Jewish community that had escaped the pogroms of their homeland and had created a place of worship, a literary society, and a school in the Catharine Street area. They were regularly harassed by the proselytizing of evangelical Christian tent revivals set up in the Square to convert the “foreigners” to their religious beliefs. Confrontations and altercations between Jewish residents and the Presbyterian missionaries occurred in the summer of 1903, in which the Jewish community was accused of attempting to start a “religious riot.” The city government saw the need to proceed immediately with their plans to enlarge the park and deemed the demolishing of the homes on the entire south side of the 400 block of Catharine Street as key to this revitalization. The Jewish families were given 30 days’ notice to move out of their homes. Residents of approximately eight row homes, each of which reportedly contained six families, refused to move.

On the morning of July 30, 1903, city officials removed the families from their homes and workmen started to demolish the structures even before everyone was evicted. Furniture was thrown out on Catharine Street, as the “long lines of the occupants carrying their belongings slowly made their way to seek other homes . . .” With the houses demolished, Weccacoe Park was then enlarged to its present-day size.

Weccacoe Park: The School Garden Movement

The “School Garden Movement,” introduced to America in 1890 by Henry Lincoln Clapp, headmaster of the George Putnam Boys’ Grammar School in Boston, was aimed at giving young people industrial training while keeping them occupied and out of trouble. By 1904, 35 cities and towns had established school gardens, including Philadelphia, which boasted the second largest number (after New York City) in the country.

Weccacoe Park was the first selected for a garden by the city government. The site had long been championed by renowned botanist, horticulturalist and long-time city councilman, Thomas Meehan, who lobbied yearly for appropriations and organizational assistance. Two initial plowings of the lot revealed many

Gambling and rioting disappeared from the neighborhood, thanks to garden plots for sixth and seventh graders.

layers of broken bricks with a bottom surface of “hard clay.” The lot was divided into 250 single plots measuring 4.5 ft by 11.5 ft, each tended by a single student. There were also 18 general plots for instruction and growing grain. During the growing seasons of 1904 and 1905, Weccacoe Square was used as a school garden by local sixth and seventh graders. The immediate effect of engaging students was described in contemporary accounts: “Gambling and rioting have disappeared from the neighborhood; there have been fewer arrests than before.” The college settlement house a block away reported that “never had there been a summer so peaceful.” After 1905, the program was moved to a lot located at Porter and Fifth Streets, opposite Taggard School.

Weccacoe: The Playground

Perhaps a longer lasting effect of the School Garden Movement was the mandatory establishment of an accompanying playground attached to the gardens. The rudimentary playground at Weccacoe took up one third of the entire lot and included softball, basketball, ring toss, and a punching bag, with an average daily attendance reported of about 100 children. Fourth of July celebrations, carnivals, pageants and athletic events all took place in the

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Since late 2003, QVNA has contracted with a local company, LRC Services, to pick up litter once a week on sidewalks and curbs for all the north-south streets between Bainbridge and Washington Avenue, including Moyamensing and Passyunk Avenues, from Front to the east side of 6th. LRC's litter pickup is about 2000 bags a year—approximately 31,000 pounds of litter. QVNA spends \$15,000 a year for this weekly service. Senator Farnese has made it possible for QVNA to apply for a \$5000 grant from the state that will help offset the cost of the cleanups, *but we need your help.*

If you like this program, please show your tax deductible appreciation by making a contribution to the clean-up fund (See fundraising coupon below.)

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Discounted Energy Audits are back; available through QVNA!

With heating season around the corner, it's once again time to think about that drafty insulation, old furnace, and those leaky windows. The Queen Village Sustainability Committee and the Philadelphia Energy Works program are excited to offer residents an opportunity to start saving money, energy, and the environment this winter by participating in the second Queen Village Home Energy Assessment Group Purchase. For less than the cost of your December gas bill you can be well on your way to bringing your house up to modern efficiency standards.

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QVNA makes it easier and more affordable for homeowners to get a Home Energy Assessment by organizing a group discount with a local BPI and RESNET certified contractor, Star Energy Solutions. Once nine households have agreed to participate, Energy Assessments will be available for the following prices.

- Homes under 2,500 square feet: \$150
- Homes over 2,500 square feet: \$150 plus \$90 for every additional 1,000 square feet and \$45 for each additional heating and cooling zone.

The Energy Assessments will be performed in May and can be done on both weekends and weekdays.

To participate, email Clayton Bedwell, ctbedwell@gmail.com, by November 1, with your name, address, and preferred method of contact.

QVNA's neighborhood retrofit program is conducted in partnership with EnergyWorks, a public program funded by the U.S. Department of Energy and overseen by the City of Philadelphia and its partners in the Metropolitan Caucus. Under EnergyWorks, Queen Village homeowners will be eligible for \$50 rebates (if efficiency upgrades exceed \$1,000) on their home energy assessments, loans as low as 0.99% fixed interest for 10 years, and independent quality assurance to ensure that work done

Continued on page 7

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Weccacoe

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playground through the first decades of the twentieth century. The park continued to accommodate the summer Christian evangelistic revivals that would occasionally be held in the Yiddish language to attract the Russian Jewish neighbors. No

Summer evangelistic revivals were held in Yiddish to attract Russian Jewish neighbors.

longer were there reports of “religious riots.” In 1912, the Park came under the jurisdiction of the Board of Recreation. By 1914, Weccacoe’s recorded attendance was 66,314 within an eight-month period. In its annual report, the Board of Recreation strongly suggested the acquisition of adjacent land to expand the crowded and popular park. As of 1921, there was an active “Weccacoe Playground Association,” the predecessor to today’s Friends of Weccacoe Playground.

* “Weccacoe” means a “pleasant” or “peaceful place” in the language of the Lenni-Lenape tribe, the area’s original inhabitants. Original spellings included “Wicao, Weccaco, and Wecacoe.”

Energy Audits

Continued from page 6

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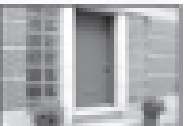
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 Beautiful 3 1/2 B, Heated Flrs, Fin Basement, Nice Yard & 2 Car Prng. RED \$249,900 also for rent \$2700 a month



818 S. 4th St
 AAAA 401 Queen St 600 sq Ft, 6 Level Condo 3 1/2 B & Garden. Low Taxes & Condo Fees \$129,900 or \$1000



113 S. Broad St
 The National Terrific designer unit, 2bedrms, 2 baths, heated flrs, drk & prng. \$499,000



112 Pineater
 Designer, Designed Home 1900 Sq Ft, 2+Over/2Bathrm, Fp, Heated Flrs, Garden & Deck. \$469,000



625 S. American 'A'
 OY Gr Location Designer Trinity + Pastore 2 BR, Heated Flrs, Lovely Front Grdn. \$299,000



812 S. Front
 Large 4 BR/2 BA Hm + a Bonus 2 Story Shell w Floor. RED \$399,000



126 Christian
 Fab Mission Style home w/ Details & Character 41.5 Fp, Dr & 2 car prng. \$149,000



812 S. Howard
 Great Total Rehab! 2 BR, Fp, Heated Flrs W/ Garden, Meredith School District. \$299,000



2200 Pine St #100
 Historic Corner Building Stunning Studio Great Kitchen, Heated Flrs 8-CA. RED \$199,000



803-7 Church #14
 Terrific Deal! 1600 sq ft, 22, 12' ceilings exposed brick, heated flrs & great kitchen. \$499,000



798 S. 2nd St
 Corner Property w/ Owner's Restaurant as 1st Flr (rent) + two lg 1 BR Apts. \$399,000



718 Redman
 Lovely 3 + Den, 2 baths, Fp, Heated Flrs, w/ Stunning St, mature grdn (15x25) & 1 Car Prng. \$484,000



2044 S. 3rd St
 Beautiful Corner Property 32, Heated Flrs, High Ceilings & Private Deck. \$299,000



728 Kimball
 Terrific 3 Bedroom home with Heated Flrs. & CA. RED \$359,000



111 Federal
 Terrific 401, 3+Over/2 B Bth, Bath, 2 Ovs, Garden, Garage + TA. \$499,000



128 Kensington
 2.5 story Historically Certified. Cook 1700, 2BR Fp & Lg. Garden. \$359,000



401 Woodrow
 Cute 2 story hse on nice B.V. block, 1 bath, full basement + yard. Needs Rehab. \$159,000



104 Catherine St
 Wood/Lg duplex each w/ w/ prng, prng, one 2 bdrm unit & one 3 bdrm unit w/ exterior + grdn. \$349,000



827 Swanson
 Single family currently used as duplex, 3 total bedrooms, 3 full & 1 half bath, w/ flrs & 2 decks. RED \$429,000



842 S. American
 3 Story Condo 2 BR + Over/2 BA, Heated Flrs, Fp & Prng. \$299,000



126 Ark
 Humphry's Flag Co. Condo, Spacious, 4 stories 2000 sq ft, Great Inv. Opp. \$1,000,000



783-84-87 S. Marshall
 Terrific investment opportunity to build your dream home, 3 lots 40x32. \$299,000



1908 E. Moyamensing
 A rare find! Posh front ten w/ 4 bedrooms, heated flrs, high ceilings & nice yard. \$299,000

215.440.8190 The Award Winning Kathy, Patrick and the Conway www.conwayteam.com



215.627.6005

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