

Fells Point Citizens on Patrol

A newsletter by and for the people who live, work, and own businesses within the Fells Point area.

May 2004

Volume 6 Number 5



Jacqueline Greff

Under proposals, the tugs and head building would stay, apron would be cut to new cloth.

Mid-Point Takes on Chubbie's Club

Hopes rose among members of Mid-Point Community Organization when a rundown bar at Eastern and Washington Streets was rehabilitated. Optimism flagged when the new occupant turned out to be Chubbie's Club, where "members" crowd in with women hired to strip for them and to fatten their bar tabs. The sex trade extended into narrow residential alleys, say the neighbors.

Next Chubbie's, at 2000 Eastern, started gutting 2002 to expand—allegedly without valid permits—and the *Baltimore Business Journal* reported that Scores of New York was a likely new occupant. Scores found infamy with Howard Stern.

Mid-Point is battling back. Secretary Donna Zebe and several neighbors, including some with young children, described at last month's Task Force meeting the late-night antics around the club: stretch limousines blocking traffic, women on the street simulating sex with the bouncer, and refusal of the management to meet with neighbors. Zebe submitted a chronology of what at the least was inattention by some city officials to repeated complaints, including violation of Urban Renewal strictures. Representatives of the city's Liquor Board and zoning enforcement, asked to attend the Task Force session, gave assurances that action will be taken. Mid-Point and, no doubt, Scores will be watching.

Bike Patrollers Wanted—Any bicyclers looking to get some exercise, meet neighbors and provide a community service are encouraged to take to their wheels for FPCOP. Ride times and durations can vary, and all are welcome. Contact FPCOP through any of the addresses herein.

Citizens on Patrol Seeks Donations—FPCOP asks for modest help from community members and particularly Newsletter readers to defray phone and mail expenses. To contribute, make checks payable to Fells Point Citizens on Patrol and send to address boxed at lower right. We would like to thank a donor of \$100, who asked to remain anonymous.



Trash and Recycling Schedule

Trash should be placed outside in metal trash cans. After 6AM on collection day, it is okay to use plastic bags. Trash collection days are usually Monday and Thursday.

Recycling material should go out by 7AM on collection day. Recycle paper in paper bags, in a cardboard box, or tied with string; glass, metal, and plastic should be in blue plastic bags.

Monday, May 10	glass, metal, plastic
Friday, May 14	paper
Monday, May 24	glass, metal, plastic
Friday, May 28	paper
Friday, June 11	paper
Monday, June 14	glass, metal, plastic

Finalists for Revival of Rec Pier Detail Hotel, Office Proposals

The Fells Point Task Force of community group leaders heard out the two finalists late last month in the City's long-running contest to select a developer for revival of Recreation Pier, and attendees appeared receptive to both proposals—one for a boutique hotel as the principal occupant and the other for offices of a major architectural firm. Under Delegate Peter Hammen, the Task Force is to meet again after the leaders consult their constituents to choose one developer with whom to proceed or, under terms brokered by Mayor Martin O'Malley, to reject both if deemed unacceptable to community needs.

David Levy, an assistant commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development that oversaw the selection process, lauded the efforts of Lori Guess, the head of the Task Force's Rec Pier Committee, and suggested that the developers' proposals were forthcoming because Fells Point has become a desirable site in which to invest.

The team of Lambda Development LLC, Struever Bros., Eccles & Rouse and H&S Properties proposed the office use with the main occupant, Design Collective, occupying 30,000 square feet and also serving as architect for the project. Another 20,000 square feet would be leased space, and 16,000 would be public space including a promenade and much of the apron which would be a green roof. A caterer would operate in the ballroom, and it would be available for community meetings at cost.

Historic Restoration, Inc., including J.J. Clarke Enterprises and Belts Landing resident Sylvan Cornblatt, would work with the Kimpton Hotel group to create a 145-room hotel with 69 parking spaces and valet parking, along the lines of the 38 sites that the luxury chain already operates from Washington, DC, to San Francisco. The public would have access to the ballroom and via an east side promenade to open waterside space at the south end. The public would have access to the ballroom, an east-side promenade, and open waterside space at the south end.

Both proposals would accommodate *Pride of Baltimore II* and Moran Tugboat leases. Estimates of cost of repairing the pier's deteriorated underpinnings were \$5-7 million by Struever and \$2-3 million by Clarke. Both stressed willingness to work with the community on uses of the restored property for which the City intends a contingent sale. It was dedicated in 1914 both to commerce and recreation for a community then as now short on public spaces. Its most recent use besides the tug dockage was as a stage for the *Homicide* TV series. A year ago, five developers offered proposals in the tired yet majestic ballroom. Voting and bureaucratic process concurred in winnowing the field. Levy said that two of the five contestants indicated they felt the pier no longer was viable.

Residents who wish to register their preference for the pier are encouraged to consult the leadership of any community group of which they are a member.

The Fells Point Citizens on Patrol Newsletter is published monthly by FPCOP Inc. Your questions, input, and participation regarding patrols and this newsletter are welcome.

Please contact us by:

Phone 410.342.7354 leave message

New E-mail! fpcop@verizon.net

Write to P.O. Box 6137
Baltimore, MD 21231

FPCOP Newsletters are online @ www.fpcop.com

History Came to Those Who Listened

A Critique: The Preservation Society's April Thursdays lecture series confirmed and fleshed out what all too few Fells Pointers truly grasp: their community carries a rollicking history, mostly maritime and often military, with a cast of characters as improbably engaging as any to take the stage at the Vagabond. Each session offered distinguished speakers, starting with Fell Street historian Geoffrey Footner, who conceived the series as a means of conveying the importance of the Point in the Revolutionary War and that of 1812.

Crowds were modest, surpassing 50 only at the session held in Highlandtown rather than Fells Point. The Rev. P.J. Trautwein, another instigator of the series, gave an explanation in introducing a speaker of why it is that so many Baltimoreans are ignorant of their history—in the formative years, this was a city of immigrants, many of whom intended to move on and who in any event looked back across the sea to their history. Then, too, the evolving city often was a violent one, "Mob Town" at one time; Fells Point was "a den of pirates and thieves" to the British in 1812. The cultured who usually can be trusted to convey history often were instead ashamed.

Another evidence of indifference surprising in a historic community is the tepid attendance at the Maryland Historical Society's new Maritime Museum on Thames Steet, which also tells much of the maritime history. With Mob Town ever more dependent on tourism, and with the bicentennial of Fells Point's war approaching, the lecture series was a step in the relevant direction. As Preacher Jack importunes, we must know our history if we are to instill it as visitors arrive with curiosities at the ready.

Isabel's Flood Still Wracks Durham Street

Eight months after the waters of Tropical Storm Isabel receded, numerous residents near a Fells Point low point at the intersection of Durham and Lancaster Streets have yet to recover. Several still cannot return to their houses and another can live only upstairs. Several are contesting bills charged by contractors and at least three are being sued for nonpayment by a company they accuse of grossly overcharging for repairs rendered. They have asked for a jury trial. Others contending exorbitant charges have submitted their expense records to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for review.

You on the Aisle—At Corner Theater, 251 South Ann Street, May 14-June 15, *Street Scene*, music by Kurt Weill, lyrics by Langston Hughes, book by Elmer Rice, Fridays-Saturdays at 8 and Sundays at 2PM, \$12, 410.276.7837.

At Vagabond, 806 South Broadway, Woody Allen's *Please Don't Drink the Water*, through May 16, \$12, Fridays-Saturdays at 8 and Sundays at 2 PM.

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Help Joe Save the Patapsco, Hons

To save the Patapsco, photographer Joe Stewart jumps right in. He will do so Sunday morning, May 23, to swim across the river's mouth, from North Point State Park to Venice on the Bay. He swims so that the less intrepid can contribute by check, payable to Greater Homewood Community Corp. and noting "Joe's Swim." Address: Joe Stewart, 3212 Avon Ave., Baltimore MD 21218. Proceeds will benefit watershed groups including Baltimore Harbor Watershed Association. Those who wish to cheer Stewart from the shore, or to wade in, should phone him at 410.243.4418.



Save the Patapsco, Hon!, a collection of photos by Stewart that show why he wants to save the river and its harbor estuary of the Chesapeake, closes May 12 at Baltimoregallery, 4514 Eastern Avenue, open 12 to 4 PM, Tuesday-Thursday.

The Patapsco River, photographed from Ft. Smallwood.

Give My Regards to Thames Street

By Cathy Crimes

For years my husband and I lived upstairs above my shop, Grrreat Bears and Childhood Delights, at 1643 Thames Street, having both personal and shop mail delivered through the front door. For years I had to instruct visitors that we lived at the door just past the condom shop.

When I sold the Bears shop, but not the building, I wanted our personal mail to be delivered to our back door, which is really the front door of our over-the-shop apartment. Thus, I went to the Fells Point Post Office (which was labeled Patterson Park) and was told that all mail is computerized and that "rear door" is not a valid address with which their computer could deal.

I was directed to City Hall for a formal address of our rear door of 1643 Thames. I spent most of a day researching the city records to find the former name of the back alley. Because the name "Waterside" has not been used since the 1800's, it could not be reestablished. (By this time, the condom shop had gone the way of all flesh.)

Finally, a city official saw the Catch 22 in which I was caught and offered to look over my back door. Thus was it designated 910 S. Broadway, a street that Thames intersects. Several days later I got the official notification of our address from the city, and the post office was satisfied. Mail usually gets delivered to us, although the substitute mailperson often is perplexed since this address is around the corner from 904 S. Broadway. Can you imagine how one postman delivers mail to 1643 Thames while another delivers to 910 S. Broadway, and both addresses are for the same building? Come on around and find us!

Newsletter Archive—Tonal Vision, a local audio video production company, has been providing Fells Point residents and visitors alike with an internet resource and welcome mat for our community: <http://fellspoint.us/>

Issues of the Newsletter back to November 2002 are visible online: <http://fellspoint.us/organizations/fpcop.html>

Neighborhood Association Meeting Schedules

Fells Point Citizens on Patrol: (Third Monday of every other month) 7 PM at Bertha's 2nd Floor Studio.

Fells Point Antique Dealers Association: (meetings as needed) Call 410.675.4776 for more information.

Fells Point Business Association: (Third Tuesday of every month) 9 AM at Max's on Broadway.

Fells Point Community Organization: (Second Monday of every month) 7 PM at the Fells Point Visitor Center, 410.276.5471.

Fells Point Homeowners Association: (First Wednesday of every month) 7:30 PM at Bertha's 2nd Floor Studio.

Fells Point Marketing Group: (First Monday of every month) 6:30 PM at Kooper's, 410.276.1410.

Mid-Point Community Association: (First Tuesday of every month) 7:30 PM at EBLO, 606 South Ann Street.

Society for the Preservation of Fells Point and Federal Hill: Call 410.675.6750 for more information.

Eastern, Dallas, Bond Streets Association: (Every other month, second Monday of the month) 7:30-8:30 PM at 1637 Eastern Avenue.