

The Fell's Pointer

Monthly Publication of the Fells Point Citizens on Patrol

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THE FELL'S POINTER IS ON VACATION IN AUGUST--WATCH FOR SEPTEMBER

S.E. Police Commander Leads Way for Patrols

By Michael Arida
President of FPCOP

Southeast's police commander, Major Michael Kundrat, joined five Fell's Pointers at the Thames Street Park on June 24 to discuss the neighborhood's security issues and to patrol for about 90 minutes that evening. Chief among the concerns is the status of the park, which is getting a much needed makeover through efforts of the Greenspace Action Partnership to attract more members of the community and to discourage illegal activity and vagrancy.

During the patrol, other members of the community took time to tell the major their problems, including being harassed by large groups of youngsters on bikes and the common problems in this area around bar closing time on Friday and Saturday nights. Major Kundrat said he plans to use foot/bike patrols in the area. The district's mobile police station is often needed to the north, where violent crime is a big issue.

Major Kundrat would like to make these casual meetings/patrols a more regular part of his schedule. With the sometimes short notice of his schedule, the monthly newsletter isn't the best communication option, so if you would like to meet the major and patrol, please send your email address to us at: fpcop@verizon.net. We will only use it to communicate meeting and patrol information. In addition, training sessions with Officer Melvin Penn will be occurring. This to be Saturday, July 30, at 7PM in the Thames Street Park.

Maybe the park would be a good location for one the ever increasing city cameras being installed across town.

The Fell's Pointer would like to thank Mary Ann and Bob Huey for their generous donation last month toward maintenance of the newsletter.

Earth Moves in Thames St. Park

By Amy Cooney
Treasurer of GAP

The Greenspace Action Partnership sought a grant from Parks and People Foundation to begin reviving Thames Street Park and received \$800 to remove overgrown perimeter shrubs that became a safety hazard by blocking views into and out of the park. The shrubs also became a "stash" for illegal items including drugs that were brought to and used in the park.

Union Box Company, facing on the park, became the general contractor and donated use of a dumpster and administrative services. Landscaping Creative Ways contracted at a reduced rate to remove the shrubs and replace them with soil and seed. The city's Parks and Recreation Department actually is the source of the \$800. It is in partnership with Parks and People for distribution of the grants.

The job quickly expanded on discovery that large roots from past trees were under the shrubs. Amazingly, in just a few days, matching funds were raised to pay for the expanded scope of work. Among the contributors are resident Matt Calce, Kevin Kupec from Celie's Inn, Joe Clarke and Sylvan Cornblatt representing the redevelopers of Rec Pier, and the Homeowners' Association.



Photos by Lew Diuguid

Despite assurances, truck attends dinner boat on Broadway Pier.

Black-Eyed Susan Ties Up for Duration

Despite the determined opposition of the Fell's Point Task Force of community groups, Baltimore's Board of Estimates approved a contract last month allowing the dinner cruise paddle-wheeler Black-Eyed Susan three years of permanent dockage on the west side of the public Broadway Pier. Bob Keith of Bond Street, representing the Task Force, argued that the replica Mississippi River boat was out of character for a port that came to fame in the era of sail, that the 111-foot craft impedes residents' view of the harbor, and that dockside Promenade bricks would be at risk in the Susan's comings and goings.

The contract violates existing Broadway Pier Policy promulgated 11 years ago, said Keith, and city officials acknowledged they were unaware of that policy when the contract was negotiated with the boat owner, Leonard Schleider. City officials present said they would encourage update of the policy--taking into consideration changes proposed by Keith--and making it available to the enforcers of limits already placed on the contract.

Among those limitations, though, was that trucks would not be allowed on the pier to service the Susan. But two days after the Board's decision, a welder's truck was pulled up to the boat facilitating repairs.

Until now, the pier has been available for short stays by visiting boats, from tall ships to ocean-going tugs. Not only is the pier public property but the engraved bricks on its surface represent contributions by supporters of the Promenade. The nonprofit Promenade Partnership has sold the bricks for betterment of the waterside walkway and it opposed dockage of the Susan, saying its servicing would endanger the bricks.

The Task Force, presided over by state Delegate Peter Hammens, did not oppose the dinner boat collecting and discharging passengers at the pier but said permanent dockage impeded one of the community's primary harbor views. The Preservation Society, in one of numerous letters from community leaders, said the boat "is inappropriate for that historic landscape."

Councilman Jim Kraft, asked about his absence at the Board of Estimates hearing, said he had called the office of City Council President Sheila Dixon on the morning of the appeal to ask that action be put off in view of constituents' opposition. He was told there would be no delay, said Kraft. Usually deference is shown a councilman whose district is directly affected.



Happenings

Does Your Morning Sun Read As If It Was Put to Bed Early?

Fell's Pointers have lost one of the perks of inner city living--routine home delivery of The Sun's Final edition. A spokeswoman acknowledged that as a money-saving move in the face of declining overall circulation, the newspaper is delivering to this neighborhood's subscribers an early edition that in general is printed only as late as is necessary to include the game story when the Orioles are playing at night, here or in the east. West coast scores? Not much chance. The savings come from not having to pay premiums for deliveries at awkward hours. The spokeswoman told a recent complainant that he was the first since the change was instigated several months ago. Of course, other late-breaking news, in addition to sports scores, fails to appear in the early edition. The paper's public editor had referred the caller to Circulation. The number there: 410.539.1280.

New Top Preservationist

The Preservation Society elected a new president, George Geary, a long serving officer, to replace Wendy Magus, who headed an extended effort to refine the goals of the Society and find the means to meet them.

Anachronism Atop the Pier?

J.J. Clarke, the local leader of the team preparing to revive Rec Pier, met with community groups on progress of the plans and noted, in presenting the latest drawing of the proposal, that the radio towers at the front and back of the 1914 building were still marked for retention. He wasn't sure why, he suggested, except that 'Point preservationists were insistent on the matter. At least one of the towers is said to have served the harbor master when his office was on the pier. The issue provoked this observation from an architect who is renewing a home within sight of the pier: While the rest of the country is trying to be rid of proliferating high-speed communication towers, which those on the pier resemble, Fell's Point is clinging to its own older version.

Hot Title for Summer Readers

A much awaited book by Jacqueline Greff of Lancaster Street and The Fell's Pointer will arrive later this month in local shops, area book stores, and www.TonalVision.com. It's "Fell's Point" in words and pictures, published by Arcadia.

Comer Theater Season Tickets

The theater is selling tickets for the 2005-6 season at 251 S. Ann Street, The coming bill: July 21-August 7, Stephen LaRocque's "Fourty Million Dollars If You Want It." Thursday-Saturday 8PM and Sundays at 7PM



The Baptist Church at 4 North Broadway has an ecumenical past

The Churches of Broadway-VI Once Synagogue, Now Baptist Church

Two doors north of Baltimore Street on the west side of Broadway is the Lamb of Life Baptist Church under Dr. Michael Hopkins. The most arresting aspect of its facade—a Star of David and Hebrew script on its corner stone—suggests a decidedly different past. From 1937 to '51 this was the synagogue of the Anshe Sphard Orthodox Congregation. This group, founded in 1887 according to the Associated Jewish Community Federation, was one of several that met in homes and above stores of East Baltimore. It settled at 148 N. High Street in 1891 and moved to Broadway 46 years later.

By 1950, Anshe Sphard had merged with another congregation and it soon moved to Rogers Avenue as part of a broad exodus of downtown synagogues. In 1993 it moved again, to 5713 Park Heights Avenue, as part of Beth Jacob Congregation. Among the early upstairs synagogues of Fell's Point, reputedly the first was at the northwest corner of Bond and Fleet Streets. The building is restored but long vacant.

As for the present Broadway church, the Lamb of Life Baptist, its turnout on Sunday of the July 4 weekend was minimal but Dr. Hopkins rallied attendees, a black congregation in blond pews, to help spruce up the already spotless main hall.

'Point Privateers to Have Big Day

The Fell's Point Development Corp. is sponsoring Privateer Day festivities on Saturday, Sept. 10, mostly in the square, of a "Seaport Village With a Past. Celebrate the 275th anniversary of Baltimore's original deepwater harbor. Learn about our privateers and their important role in helping America win the War of 1812."

For families, Noon to 6PM, programs run from talks with characters in period costumes to knots, tours and the Town Crier. After 5 PM, pub crawls, dining and music. At 10PM, parade of adult attendees in costume—pirates, privateers, wenches and sailors. Prizes awarded.



Photo by: Jacqueline Greff

Preservationist Urged To Turn Out for CHAP

Director Johns Hopkins of Baltimore Heritage, who has sought to strengthen the City's Commission on Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP), is calling for urgent help in opposing recent proposals to weaken the pending legislation. Fell's Pointers seeking protection for historic properties here have anticipated this area coming under the aegis of a more powerful CHAP.

But while the bill, with changes recommended by CHAP's own Commission, is endorsed by Baltimore Heritage and many others, the Baltimore Planning Commission "has proposed amendments that would significantly weaken CHAP and its ability to preserve Baltimore's historic resources," said Hopkins. "These include proposals to give the Planning Commission appeal authority over CHAP Commission decisions" and alter the makeup of that group.

The City Council Urban Affairs Committee is to hold a hearing on July 27 at 5PM in City Hall and Hopkins asks supporters to contact Councilwoman Paula Johnson Branch, its chair, and Councilman Jim Kraft to urge them to support the CHAP bill and oppose the Planning Commission proposal. Branch's email is pbranch@baltimorecitycouncil.com and Kraft's is jkraft@baltimorecitycouncil.com.

The Preservation Society is seeking immediate CHAP status for the notorious hole in the doughnut of the current Urban Renewal ordinance protection of historic Fell's Point. Residents along Aliceanna from Register to Washington and dipping down to Lancaster from Register to Wolfe streets voted to be exempted from the '70s Urban Renewal Ordinance. That chink in their protection against dense development is showing as the main property, the former St. Stanislaw's Church complex, has been sold. The Society plans to solicit residents door to door to seek CHAP status.

Who's Fishing in the Harbor?

The Baltimore Harbor Watershed Association, which is dedicated to cleaning up the water, is also concerned with whether its current level of pollutants is affecting those who fish and crab along the piers. At last month's meeting of BHWA in Canton, Dr. Ellen K. Silbergeld of the Hopkins School of Public Health, spoke on a project for which she has found funding: to determine just who is fishing in these troubled but by most accounts improving waters.

Silbergeld's project extends through the harbor's watershed and she already has drawn two conclusions that defy what is widely taken as common knowledge—the fishers are by no means confined to "subsistence" anglers, and the fish on which they prey are quite diverse. She recalled the prediction by Abel "Reds" Wolman, a mainstay in the Hopkins school's early years, that the critical period in public health related to cleanup of the harbor would come with the return of the fish. The city generally advises that seafood from the harbor is safe if thoroughly cooked but it warns that infection from microbial dangers extends to handling of the raw fish.

BHWA's current concern is the city's construction this fall of a bagging facility where storm-drain trash enters the harbor through subterranean Harris Creek in Canton. The group has fostered the pilot project and is to pay for its maintenance once the collector is up and bagging.

Schedules

Trash

Place trash outside in cans or, after 6AM on collection day, in plastic bags. Mondays and Thursdays but no holidays. Monday, Sept. 5 is a holiday, so do not put trash out until Thursday, Sept. 8.

Recycling

Place outside by 7AM on collection day. Glass, metal and plastic in blue plastic bags. Mondays, July 25, Aug. 8, 22, Sept. 12.

Paper and cardboard in paper bags, cardboard boxes or tied with string. Fridays, July 22, Aug. 12, 26, Sept. 9

Neighborhood Meetings

Douglas Place: Third Wednesday of every other month at the Polish National Alliance, 1637 Eastern Avenue, 410.563.1297.

Fell's Point Antique Dealers' Association: Call 410.675.4776.

Fell's Point Community Organization: Second Mondays, 7PM, Fell's Point Visitor Center, 410.276.5471.

Fell's Point Development Corp.: 9AM every Tuesday, Max's on Broadway. Open to all. 410.675.8900.

Fell's Point Homeowners' Association: First Wednesdays, 7PM, Bertha's 2nd Floor.

Greenspace Action Partnership: Second Tuesdays, 6PM, Visitor Center, 410.675.6750 ext 10.

Society for the Preservation of Fell's Point and Federal Hill: Call 410.675.6750.

The Fell's Pointer is published monthly by volunteers of Fell's Point Citizens on Patrol, Inc. Questions, input and participation in patrols and this newsletter are welcome.

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