

Fells Point Citizens on Patrol

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

March 2004

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A Pinnacle for Harbor Point? Bike Path beside the Promenade

As redevelopers of the Allied Chemical brownfields site, now known as Harbor Point, sought to alter plans worked out a decade ago, the city's Planning Commission astonished attendees with an immodest proposal to raise the maximum building height to 350 feet. Until recently it was 180 feet. The commissioners said they wanted to build in flexibility for the eventual architects to create a "signature" building on this prime harbor site in Fells Point.

Also surprising, civic groups that had fought the similarly tall hotel next door at Harbor East because it would overshadow Fells Point seemed reconciled to the proposal. They had asked Struever Bros. Eccles and Rouse and H&S Properties to lower heights of planned buildings along the west side of Caroline Street, where newest will meet new, and the companies had agreed to drop those to a maximum 90 feet. And since the total of new commercial space on Harbor Point is to remain 1.8 million square feet, the density elsewhere on the 27 acres must be thinned accordingly. Other concessions to expressed community concerns include wider sidewalks along Thames Street as it extends through Harbor Point and a consultative mechanism during development and for use of the site's 8.3 acres of public land.

No client to build a harbor pinnacle has been identified. Of more immediate concern is the proposed initial office building to house offices of Morgan Stanley and to extend onto a reconstructed pier at water's edge on the southeast corner of Harbor Point. The precedent of putting a non-maritime structure on an abandoned pier is worrisome to Harbor watchers, for other developers could ask to do the same. This matter will face the test of a zoning change by City Council to align city and state strictures. Morgan Stanley is a major occupant of Struever's nearby Bond Street Wharf building, which the proposed new structure would resemble.

Struever has announced intent to accompany the walkers' Waterfront Promenade around the perimeter of Harbor Point with a bicycle path. The 14-foot asphalt bike path would be inboard of the 19-foot Promenade. A state program could fund part of the path, which would be completed in an early stage of the long-term project. The Promenade Partnership that seeks to extend and improve the walkway has been considering an effort to include a bike path throughout. Often-ignored park rules regulating the Promenade do not allow bicycles.



March

Down to the Sea in Ships

The wind-blown capsizing of a Seaport Taxi beside Fort McHenry on March 6—with the first fatalities on either of the two shuttle lines since the late Ed Kane launched the blue Water Taxi more than 20 years ago—revived in Fells Point a particular anguish little felt since the eclipse of this port's epoch of sail: a boat of its own had left its mooring here, on Ann Street Wharf, and it had failed to return.

Indeed, the closest modern parallel to this despair came in 1986 with news that the *Pride of Baltimore* had sunk in a freak storm off Puerto Rico. Four crew were lost. That replica clipper was built in the Inner Harbor, not Fells Point, but like its dozens of predecessors the *Pride* was commissioned here to commemorate the Point's shipyards and piers in the time when all hulls were wooden.

In those days of privateers sent off to plague the British and of full-rigged cargo carriers racing with the winds of the seas, many a Fells Point family waited in vain for the return of their watermen. Where once there were widow's walks, now there are roof decks, and the sole transport for pay from the port of Fells Point is in short-haul passengers. Yet in this mini-port of modern times—home to both fleets of floating taxis and, in Rec Pier, the hoped-for home berth of *Pride of Baltimore II*, there is awareness anew of an inherent risk whenever men go down to the sea in ships, or even in route taxis.

Greenspace Action Partnership—

The recently formed Greenspace Action Partnership is seeking members to create and maintain green and open spaces throughout Fells Point for the benefit of residents and visitors. GAP committees are working to improve Thames Street Park, Chester Street Park and Broadway Plaza as well as to locate and develop "pocket" parks and other open areas. "We are seeking the support of the community as members and as volunteers," said President Kay Hogan. Dues are \$5 a year. Contact GAP through the Visitor Center, 808 S. Ann Street or phone 410.675.7650 ext.10.

You on the Aisle—*The Weir* continues its Scottish stories at the Vagabond through March 28, Fridays-Saturdays at 8 and Sundays at 2PM, at 806 South Broadway, \$12. 410.563.9135. Opening April 16: *Please Don't Drink the Water. Recent Tragic Events* involves a blind date and September 11, by Craig Wright, March 12-April 11, Fridays-Saturdays at 8 and Sundays at 2PM at Corner Theater, 251 South Ann Street, \$12. 410.276.7837.

Easter Service on the Pier—The Rev. Jack Trautwein, aka "Preacher Jack" or "Town Crier", will hold Easter Sunrise Service on April 11 at 6:30AM on the pier at the foot of Broadway. He is also accepting nominations for this year's Fells Point community's 9/11 Citizen of the Year. The initial winner last year was Nancy Conrad of FPCOP. Deposit your nominations at PJ's, 1707 Lancaster Street, or the Visitor Center on Ann Street.

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.

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Trash and Recycling Schedule

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

Recycling material should go out by 7 AM 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, March 22	glass, metal, plastic
Friday, March 26	paper
Friday, April 9	paper
Monday, April 12	glass, metal, plastic
Friday, April 23	paper
Monday, April 26	glass, metal, plastic

\$2 Evening Rate at Caroline Garage; Restyled Meters—No Small Change

By Bob Keith

The Parking Authority of Baltimore City, looking for ways to put some 1,000 newly built garage spaces on the west side of Fells Point to use, has come up with bargain rates for its 350-space garage on Caroline Street, a half block north of Thames: \$2 for cars entering after 5 PM and leaving before 8 AM on Mondays through Fridays and \$2 for any 24-hour period on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. The monthly overnight charge, with a card to permit entry after the gates close, is \$40. On weekdays about two-thirds of the garage is committed to parking for Whitman-Requard, the engineering firm at Lancaster Street. The monthly rate for unlimited parking in one of the remaining spaces is \$60.

The other new garage in the neighborhood is a 700-car facility operated by PMI just south of the city garage and built to serve the Bond Street Wharf building. Day rates are \$4 for 1 hour, \$7.25 for 2, to a maximum of \$10.25. Evening (5 PM to 3 AM) rates are \$8 Sunday through Wednesday and \$9 Thursday through Saturday. Special rates of \$152 for monthlies and \$5 daily for local businesses are also available. Call 888.764.9191 ext. 202.

The Parking Authority initiative has a related purpose of helping unclog Thames Street, which is to be restricted against all-day parking. The hope is that the restrictions coupled with the lower garage rates will make more street spaces available to patrons of Thames' shops and restaurants.

Authority Director Jeff Sparrow also plans to introduce a new electronic "pay-and-display" device that regulates parking without "a sea of meters" marring the historic look of the neighborhood. A single device can serve eight or ten spaces. It accepts cash or credit card and produces a slip of paper for the dashboard to show enforcement agents when the paid parking runs out. The Authority is discussing the new rates and this pilot project on Thames with community groups. Sparrow won applause at the Homeowners' meeting earlier this month for his effort. *For more information about city garages or parking permits, call 443.573.2800.*

Minas Quits Ann Street for Hampden

Minas Konsolas, who for 12 years operated a unique boutique and poets' haven at Ann and Lancaster Streets, has packed off to 815 West 36th Street in Hampden, next door to Mud & Metal. "We will really miss Fells Point. It's a special kind of tight-knit community," said Konsolas. "We hope

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that our Fells Point friends and neighbors will come visit us in Hampden."

For 12 years, too, Konsolas put poets together with minute audiences for readings, and it distressed him that residents so rarely attended—or shopped for his exotic mix of books by Baltimore authors, "worn-in Levi's, jewelry, retro tschotchkes" and his own cards. He hopes for more traffic in Hampden. Not mentioned, but doubtless a factor in the move was his stabbing last summer by a robber who frequented nearby Thames Street Park.

Extra, Extra! Hear All About It: When War Cries Roiled Fells Point

What was Fells Point up to during the Revolutionary War and even during the War of 1812? The Preservation Society offers an authoritative lecture series, "Getting the Point," on four Thursdays in April at 7:30PM, explaining how it happened that Fells Point is historic. And more. The battle line:

~ **Revolution!** On April 8, with maritime historian Geoffrey M. Footner and naval historian Donald Shomette, at the Polish National Alliance, 1627 Eastern Avenue.

~ **The Schooner Trade around 1812.** On April 15, with historian Fred Hopkins and author Christopher T. George, at Polish National Alliance.

~ **Patterson Park in the War of 1812.** On April 22, with Footner and National Park Service historian Scott Sheads, at the Creative Alliance, 3134 Eastern Avenue.

~ **At Home in Fells Point, Architecture, Restoration and Furnishings.** On April 29, with architectural historian Robert Eney, architect Worthington P. Pearre and Homewood House curator Catherine Rogers Arthur, at Polish National Alliance.

Tickets are \$30 for the full set and \$10 per lecture (\$8 for members of the Preservation Society or Creative Alliance). Refreshments and cash bar. Ticket outlets: Brassworks Co., 1641 Thames; The Frame House, 901 S. Ann; Eclectic Elements, 813 S. Broadway; Strictly B-More, 1728 Thames; and Zoe's Garden, 1918 Fleet. Join the Preservation Society and buy tickets at Visitor Center, 812 S. Ann, 410.675.6750.

Historic Docents Sought—The Preservation Society seeks volunteer docents for 3-1/2 hours a week to share Fells Point's history with visitors. Training is provided - an excellent opportunity for you to learn more about Fells Point in the late eighteenth century. Other volunteer opportunities also are available. Call Barbara Cromwell at 410.675.6750 or e-mail info@preservationsociety.com.

Pass Up Dog Clean-Up? \$100 Fine

A Dallas Street resident tired of dodging dog feces that mine the way as he walks through the neighborhood made the requisite calls for help from the city. The response from the Bureau of Animal Control was sympathetic, although couched in the usual terms of so few inspectors, so big the city. Still, though, the official advised passing along the reminder that the fine for failure to clean up behind one's dog is \$100. The official vowed to seek figures from the police on how frequently the fine is meted out. No word yet. The Point's Agent R. A. Starr recalled issuing such a citation some years back.

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.