

Police Responsiveness at Issue As Residents Are Left Waiting

Three recent cases are raising concerns not only about police response time to calls for help from residents but whether officers once on the scene are reluctant to file reports in cases that could impact on the city's crime statistics. In the earliest of the instances, graphics designer Colleen Doering called for help last August after she asked a prostitute to leave the stoop of Doering's office/residence at Eastern Avenue and Ann Street. Doering was carrying her infant daughter and her 2-year-old son looked on terrified as the woman's pimp rushed up and ordered her to attack Doering. When the family retreated inside, he threatened to shoot her and banged on the windows as she called 911.

A police car arrived after two phone calls and 45 minutes, said Doering, and the pair departed. The police did not approach Doering's door until she motioned her wish to talk to them. They asked routine questions, declined her offer to help search for the duo—widely reviled in the neighborhood—and left. In an e-mail to the Southeastern District's officer for community relations, Melvin Penn, Doering said, "The police never came back. The hooker and pimp did come back, less than two minutes after the police left, and continued to taunt and threaten us throughout that evening and ever since."

Nor did Officer Penn respond to the detailed message. Others have complained about the threatening pair as well. Doering, long active in Upper Fell's Point community efforts, said that recent news accounts calling in question the city's crime statistics caused her to e-mail Mayor Martin O'Malley: "I am a supporter of you and your administration. However, the conversations that go on in neighborhood meetings about the issues of lack of police support have me wondering if I can still be protected in Baltimore, or if it is time to leave."

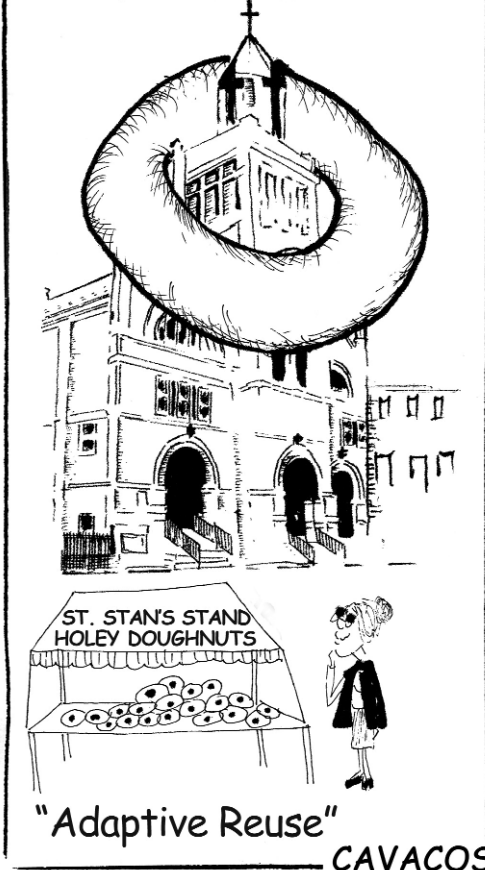
More recently, Denise Whitman of Fountain Street, also active in Fell's Point causes, heard clamor in the street during a heavy rainstorm about 11PM and saw an intoxicated woman trying to break into Whitman's car, kicking it and screaming. Whitman called 911 and her neighbor, a Baltimore County policeman, who restrained the woman. "We held her in the rain for 1 1/2 hours and repeated calls to 911 until the police arrived," said Whitman. The officers did not want to arrest the woman as they would have to accompany her to booking, said Whitman. They offered to drive her elsewhere.

In a Feb. 21 incident that speaks only to response time, an evening meeting of the Preservation Society's board at the Visitor Center was interrupted by the entry of a large drunk who shouted vaguely as to his purpose. An attendee called 911, noting the time. Police arrived 37 minutes later but by then the drunk had adjourned.

Most long-term residents have positive accounts of police responsiveness as well as negative ones. A few who like Doering are active volunteers in matters that involve the police acknowledge, though, that they wonder if somehow they have landed on a brush-off list.

Doering's e-mail to the mayor did elicit a response by a vice squad officer, who questioned her about the conflict with the street pair. The officer paid close attention and agreed that she took the right steps, she said, but showed no interest in the e-mail's larger issue: police responsiveness to taxpayers' insecurity. The Fell's Pointer has found attempts to obtain information from the police difficult, too. Its e-mail to Penn on this story drew no response.

BRICK BANTER



St. Stan's Developers Seek Demolition Permit

Late-inning efforts by politicians, Polish petitioners and the Preservation Society to stave off demolition of buildings adjacent to St. Stanislaus Kostka Church on South Ann Street failed to deter the redevelopers from applying for demolition permits. The onetime prime church of Polish immigrants was closed by the Archdiocese in 2000 and the property occupying most of a full block is being sold to a group representing the Mother Seton Academy for low-income students. A bid by a group including members of the diminished Polish community was rejected. The school's current building is to be demolished along with half a dozen other buildings to make room for luxury town houses. Part of the income from that is to support the school and the church itself is to be adapted to accommodate it.

The Preservation Society sought adaptive reuse of

Continued on page 2



Photo by Lew Diuguid

Four-bay mansion on Aliceanna St., if saved, could revert to original two-story facade.

Happenings

Thames Street Park Revival

The Green Space Action Partnership invites all interested in improving the city park at Thames and Ann Streets to a followup design meeting at the Honeywell site on Caroline Street, just south of Living Classrooms, on Thursday, March 23, at 6PM. The charrette in November resulted in a report on residents' preferences and GAP is now offering two options for consideration. With the help of Struever Bros. and H&S Properties, GAP has pursued interim measures including, last month, installation of all-night lighting in the gazebo.

Kudos for The Sun

The morning Sun that Fell's Pointers are receiving once again is a final edition, after several months in which the home deliveries here were put to bed at the plant across the harbor too early for anything later than the end of Orioles night games. The Sun's circulation department responded to complaints from The Fell's Pointer, among others, and this newsletter is most grateful.

A Hand in City's Plan

The Planning Department is inviting residents to critique its draft six-year Master Plan, which projects the city's goals, from zoning update to school construction and job creation. The nearest public hearing is on Saturday, March 25, at 3PM in Hampstead Hill Academy, 500 S Linwood Ave. The Preservation Society has encouraged broad attendance to seek assurances that the plan will at least maintain and if possible strengthen protection of Fell's Point's historic character. The plan website is www.liveearnplaylearn.com

Rats, Cacti and Clippers

From a cactus fancier who shall remain anonymous: During drought couple of summers ago, I noticed that rats were gnawing my cactus. I bought every contraption and rat poison and placed them in my side ally. The gnawing ceased. Last summer I noticed major pieces of my cactus again missing and rearmed with more traps, cages and poison. About 2 weeks after I had set up the gantlet, I noticed a cluster of people with scissors and plastic bags snipping the cactus fronds. Looking closely I could see that the second year's damage was by humans—not rats.

Help Wanted at 'Pointer

The Fell's Pointer is in need of a volunteer to tend a short mailing list. It includes subscribers who are beyond the reach of the newsletter's all-important volunteers that deliver block by block on the second Saturday of all months but August. The Pointer needs some distributors, too. And if your block doesn't receive newsletters, you or a neighbor should agree to deliver them by checking in with Jacquie Greff, the circulation manager: Jacquie@TonalVision.com or 410.675.4128 or the addresses listed at lower right on page 2.

'Point's Prime Characters-VII Shop That's Never Open Shuts

By Mark Walker

Marketing Analyst, Puppeteer, Conjurer

During 30 years of coming to Fell's Point I've wanted to enter a particular shop, at 1742 Aliceanna Street. But I never found the store open. Nor does it have a sign now, except for the faded one in the window saying "Closed." The locked door consists of sewing machine treadles, welded together and whining to be opened. You might even suppose the store's name is Singer.

One day I did meet the owner, at the bar in Birds of a Feather up the street: George Remmers, who taught at School No. 84 in south Baltimore. He and



his elderly father always wanted to operate an antique shop. So back before the expressway battles, when quaint little 1742 came on the market, they jumped at the chance. Because George was still a teacher, the shop only opened on Saturdays. Besides selling what

George's card called "Unique Antique Junque," he sold odd light globes and fixtures. When I told him how I'd been coming forever to see inside the shop—which then bore the sign Yankee Peddler—we vowed that I'd stop by soon. And so it went.

Two years ago Alicia Horn, owner of Birds of a Feather, informed me that George's father had died and the store now was only open on the October weekend of the Fell's Point Fun Festival, even though George still lived upstairs. I missed last year's festival but the year before, my son Victor had said, "Dad, don't forget, we have to go see 'The Store That's Never Open.'" I was performing too many Punch & Judy shows and we missed our chance.

As fate would have it, I did get a glance inside just a few months ago, by accident. The store was being painted and the workmen had the front door open a bit to carry in equipment.

I told the painters my story and they allowed me a peek. I didn't see much but dusty light fixtures, but I felt fulfilled. We found George, now 80, who had a stroke and no longer is able to mount the stairs to his apartment. He has moved to Biddle Street and plans to sell the shop, but who knows when? He said he misses the old neighborhood, adding: "There'll always be a Fell's Point as long as there's Jimmy's."

If I ever hit the mega-lottery I'm going to stock one of the greatest antique shops in Fell's Point history—with treasures from around the globe. All items will be tagged with very low prices to ensnare window shoppers. But my store is never going to be open, by George.

Liquor Board Renews Chubbies' Licenses

By Deacon Bill Pearson

Over determined opposition from embattled neighbors of Erotica, nee Chubbies, at Washington St. and Eastern Ave., the Liquor Board found "administrative and circumstantial circumstances" to renew the liquor and adult entertainment licenses of the club long targeted for its Block-like behavior—replete with barkers—in a largely residential area.

The Schulman family acquired their licenses in 2002 and complaints to the board soon followed, ranging from moral corruption to harassment of neighbors.

An attempt to expand the "Gentlemen's Club"



AFTER LEAVING a sushi favorite at Arm Street Wharf in recent years, Kawasaki Cafe was raided March 2 by Immigration agents who arrested owners and detained 15 alleged illegal immigrants at three linked restaurants.

St. Stans

Continued from page 1

buildings in the 1700 block of Aliceanna Street, including one identified as the neighborhood's sole remaining four-bay mansion/row house. Delegate Pete Hammen and Councilman Jim Kraft brought the parties together and obtained a tentative agreement of the developer to retain that historic structure in return for support of the rest of the project. The Preservation Society board then voted to maintain its position on adaptive reuse throughout. The developers said they are still considering retention of the mansion. A suit by the Polish group challenging the sale of the property has not gone forward.

The conflict is unusual in that the church excluded its property from the 1970s Urban Renewal Ordinance that protects properties in Fell's Point. The ordinance limits heights, so within this "hole in the donut" a developer theoretically could make the sky his limit. All parties opposed that.

Opening Weekend on Broadway Reveals 7-Building Transformation

Susan Singer and Steve Schulhoff opened last weekend the husband-wife team's phase one of the most extensive renovation project on Broadway since the Admiral Fell Inn more than a decade ago. It converts the widely despised 723 ex-megabar into a furniture store twice the size of their original Eclectic Elements. Indeed, the only recent undertaking even near such dimensions was by this same team when they transformed the shuttered Seamen's Mission on the square into apartments and the furniture emporium. They have now leased that store to a retailer of women's clothing and shoes.

The 723 property that George Karabelas sold to Singer and Schulhoff turned out to be a warren of seven buildings dating from the 1860s and even a built-over alley—in all, 18,000 square feet. Schulhoff said they paid \$1,425,000 for it and expect to spend \$600,000 in renovation, 20 percent of which will come from Federal historic tax credits. Still to come behind the half-block facade, which earned Main Streets funds administered by the Baltimore Development Corp., are more furniture space, a cafe and a large three-story building that is to house offices. Another source of assistance was the city's Commission on Historical and Architectural Preservation.

into a house next door was blocked as illegal. Councilman Jim Kraft and Delegate Pete Hammen supported the position that the club had no place in the community.

Last June, the owners of Chubbies changed its name to Erotica, with gaudy signage. Community groups forced a hearing in September in which the owners were fined \$3,000 and had operations suspended for 30 days.

The Liquor Board in subsequent hearings reissued both the licenses. The Fells Prospect Association vowed to revive opposition when renewal of the liquor license falls due later this month.

Schedules

"GARBAGE BAGS ARE NO LONGER ALLOWED"

Trash

Place trash outside in cans or after 6AM on Mondays and Thursdays All Trash must go in cans!

Recycling

Place outside by 7AM on collection day. Glass, metal and plastic in blue plastic bags. March 13,27 and April 10.

Paper and cardboard in paper bags, cardboard boxes or tied with string. Fridays. March 10,24 and 28

Neighborhood Meetings

Douglass 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. meets at 8AM on the first and third Tuesdays at True in the Admiral Fell Inn. 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.

E-mail fpcop@verizon.net
Online www.fpcop.com
Write to P.O. Box 6137
Baltimore, MD 21231

Thanks!

Printing costs for this month's newsletter donated by:

John Steven, Ltd.
1800 Thames

Contributions
from Readers