

Inside ★ Special Report ★ Harrison West Nominated to Near North Side Historic District

**Near North Side Historic
District Information Meeting**
Tuesday, March 7 • 7 p.m.
Thompson Recreation Center

NEXT HWS MEETING Thursday, March 9 • 7 p.m.
Tree planting planning
Traffic and parking concerns
Membership Committee campaign

MARCH
1995

Harrison West News

A Neighborhood on the National Register of Historic Places

Vol. 6
No. 3

SPRING-SANDUSKY INTERCHANGE PROJECT JUST STARTING

18,000 Cars, Trucks Snarl Neil Avenue On Weekdays

Traffic flow through Harrison West and Victorian Village has increased since portions of the Spring-Sandusky Interchange were closed for construction and forcing westbound I-670 traffic to exit at Neil Avenue. Many drivers now travel north on Neil and west on Third, Fifth and King Avenues to Olentangy River Road. On an average weekday, 18,000 cars and trucks travel north-south on Neil Avenue. Michigan Avenue residents also report an increase in traffic that may increase until the proposed new Goodale-Michigan intersection is completed in 1998.

State highway funds have been shifted to other projects leaving doubt if the project will be finished in a timely fashion before 2001. Last month, Tracie Conway, Chair of the HW Traffic and Parking Committee, along with Craig Copeland and Pastor Richard Morris attended a meeting sponsored by State Representative Priscilla Mead that brought area groups together with officials from State and City agencies working on the project. The purpose of the meeting was to start a community effort to put the Spring-Sandusky Interchange (SSI) at the

top of the state's funding priorities by a letter writing campaign to the Governor, the House and Senate Finance Committees and the Ohio Department of Transportation to urge the full funding of the construction. Third and Fifth Avenues are likely to turn into rolling parking lots at times during the next five years when construction begins in earnest later this year. The project has already slid from a 1998 completion date and could stretch out further unless ODOT obtains and commits funds to complete the scheduled work by the fall of 2000.

The Victorian Village Society's Traffic and Parking Committee has been meeting regularly with City officials for over two years. Harrison West's fortunes are linked with those of Victorian Village in this project. Committee Chair Tracie Conway is

seeking a representative to act as a liaison with the Victorian Village Traffic and Parking Committee, and various state and local agencies for her committee, while she works on other traffic issues in Harrison West.

Peter Anderson, Chair of the VVS T&P Committee, reports on their progress on page 8.

See **SPRING-SANDUSKY** on page 8

Meeting Notice "Paving The Way"

Re: Spring-Sandusky
interchange and
connected construction
**Wednesday, March 15
7:30 p.m.**

**Fourth Avenue Christian
Church**

DETAILS ON PAGE 3

NO DIGGING REQUIRED

Volunteers needed to plant \$8,000 tree grant from Columbus Foundation

Spring is almost here and the Harrison West Society tree planting, in partnership with the Godman Guild, is in search of volunteers to give a few hours on a Saturday morning this April to plant trees along the curb lawns in our neighborhood. The grant from the Columbus Foundation's Neighborhood Partnership Program, will give us the opportunity to have the services of a backhoe operator and contract with a commercial nursery for 65 to 80 trees of 2-2.5" caliper. The final number of trees planted of course depends on how many volunteers help. Boy Scout Troop 29 (average age 13) has already signed on for the effort which is projected to take place on two Saturdays next month.

City Forester Jack Lowe has recommended planting oak trees on the wide curb lawns along Second Avenue, and Aristocrat pears on Bradley and Third Avenues. The Forester will choose the site for each tree. Narrower portions of the curb lawn may be best suited to serviceberry trees according to the Forester, but pears, crab apples or some other type are also a possible choice. The initial plan is for each tree to be unloaded by hydraulic boom from the transit truck at the individual sites.

See **TREE VOLUNTEERS** on page 8

SUBMITTED BY HWS TREASURER JOHN COWIN

HWS Minutes for Thursday, February 9, 1995

• Call to Order 7:10 p.m.
 • ABITEC Corporation water tower presentation by Mr. Jim Willits, Senior Vice President, Operations. Also representing the company are Ms. Jackie Hendrix and Mr. Glenn Martin.

I. Chronology of Capital City Products
 A. Started 1883 on Front Street as Capital City Dairy Company

B. Relocated in the former Washington Brewery at First and Perry Avenues

C. Vegetable oil refinery built to make margarine

D. Various owners over the last decades

E. October, 1994 acquired by ABITEC Corporation, a United Kingdom company

II. In the Fats and Oil Business

A. Vegetable oils converted into edible products, hard butters

B. Products are entirely wholesaled, mostly to bakery operations

III. Desires to repaint its decommissioned water tower and include its new name on tower.

A. Entire tower to be painted white

B. ABITEC Ingredients spelled in blue letters

C. Letters to face SW and NE sides

IV. ABITEC needs a special permit and permission from the City's Graphics Commission to proceed with what is essentially a 150' sign. Graphics Commission to meet on February 21, 1995 to consider the Company's request.

V. ABITEC plans to demolish significant portion of the plant and build a modern state-of-the-art oil refinery and packaging

line over the next 3 years.

ABITEC representatives leave the premises and the Society discusses the proposal. Generally, the members believe that the aesthetic qualities of the proposed project could be improved. Discussion of precedent for 150' sign if the water tower is torn down during the modernization to take place during the next 3 years. There was speculation if ABITEC's present illuminated signage is in compliance with City Code and a need to look at the Code as it related to these issues. There is also concern that the Society was included in the process at the last possible moment. Passed motion forming a committee to work with ABITEC and the City's Graphic Commission. Committee members are architects Frank Petruziello and Steve Shinn, along with Realtor Ken Wightman, Pastor Richard Morris and Craig Copeland. Society supported the position that it does not oppose the concept of painting the water tower, but can not support the present design. Members of the Society felt time is needed for all interested parties to research issues, develop and stipulate an acceptable design.

• Motion unanimously passed directing the treasurer to establish a separate account for monies designated toward future legal expenses from operating funds.

• Motion unanimously passed directing the treasurer to pay \$25 fee for incorporating the Society.

• Motion unanimously passed directing the treasurer to pay \$29.82 for *Harrison West News* office supplies.

• Additional discussions:

1. What arrangements does the City have

to pick up Christmas trees missed?

2. Permit parking enforcement problems. City collects \$98,000 in fees, but only spends \$5,000 on signs and decals according to investigation by Tracie Conway.

3. Near North Side Historic District proposal; to include Harrison West, Dennison Place and NECKO; information meeting Tuesday, March 7 at Thompson Recreation Center, 7 p.m.

• Adjournment 8:35 p.m. ☐

HARRISON WEST NEWS is published monthly by Harrison West Society, Inc. The Society meets at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month at First Brethren Church, 473 W. 3rd Ave. Copyright © 1995 by Harrison West Society, Inc. All rights reserved.

Harrison West Society Officers

PRESIDENT

Craig Copeland 299-3737

VICE PRESIDENT

Richard Morris 861-3003

SECRETARY

Kevin Rouch 294-3408

TREASURER

John Cowin 291-7063

HW/N Publication Information

EDITOR

Dwight K. Phelps 424-6001

FAX 291-7540

HARRISON WEST NEWS, PO BOX 10143,
COLUMBUS OH 43201-0710

April Deadlines

Editorial: Friday, March 31

Advertising: Monday, April 3

Harrison West Society Membership Application

Please complete this application and mail it, along with your appropriate contribution, to Kevin Rouch, Secretary, Harrison West Society, 1259 Michigan Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43201. Membership dues are paid annually at the beginning of each year. 1995 dues must be paid on or before Thursday, May 11, 1995 to be eligible to participate in this year's Society elections.

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Select one: ☐ Individual \$10 ☐ Senior (60 and over) \$5 ☐ Sustaining \$20 ☐ Patron (Business) \$25

Your comments are invited:

✂ CLIP AND MAIL

Zeno's Appeal Update

Mary Funk, named in the contested November 1994 ballot issue, reports the attorney representing her, Paul Stehura, has filed additional papers in Judge O'Grady's Court of Common Pleas. The other side has just fired off a response and some action is hoped for by the end of the month. ■

ABITEC Proposal Tabled

At the February 21 meeting of the City of Columbus Graphics Commission, the ABITEC Corporation requested that the application for a special permit to paint their water tower be tabled until the next meeting on March 15 at 4:15 p.m. ■

Neighbor of 45 Years Passes

On March 1, longtime Harrison West resident Dorthe Gibson, age 82, died at Doctor's North Hospital. She will be missed by family and friends. ■

Paving The Way Meeting

There will a meeting of Paving The Way on Wednesday, March 15 at 7:30 p.m., for a presentation by Brett Gilbert, Paving The Way Coordinator. The meeting will be held at the Fourth Avenue Christian Church located on the northwest corner of Neil and Fourth Avenues. Mr. Gilbert will discuss the reconstruction and building of new ramps to connect S.R. 315 to I-670 between Third Avenue and Goodale Boulevard. He will also outline the rehabilitation of the Goodale Boulevard Bridge over S.R. 315.

There will be a question and answer period after the presentation. ■

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FROM THE VICTORIAN VILLAGE VIBE

Expressway Study in Traffic Limited Access Likely to Continue Until 2001

by ANDY KLEIN

The Spring Sandusky interchange will connect I-70, I-71, I-670 and S.R. 315, and cross two rivers, two railroads, and the Short North and North Market neighborhoods. Existing I-670 through the Short North, built forty years ago as the Goodale Expressway, will be widened and rebuilt. Before I-670 construction can begin, however, new connecting roads must be built. Before that, toxic soil under the new roads must be removed. That task is currently underway, as shown by the dumpster bins arrayed along I-670 adjacent to the river, where the toxic soil is located.

However, even after soil remediation, I-670 in the Short North still awaits final design drawings. Highway planners are also reexamining the route of the Nationwide/Goodale connector, now set to start construction later this year, due to arena plans for the old pen site, and Nationwide's reluctance to have an expressway dump out next to its headquarters. Even without this backtracking, the project lacks sufficient funds to proceed as scheduled.

You may have read in *Columbus Monthly*, *The Other Paper* and *Business First* about the New Albany bypass sucking up all construction funds available for highway construction over the next three years. Thanks to the Voinovich administration's policy of "doing more for Les" Ohio lost a quarter billion dollars in federal funds. By choosing to pay 100% of the \$32 million cost to improve the I-270/S.R. 161 interchange, ODOT sacrificed the 10% local match for numerous other projects eligible for 90% federal funding. The extra \$25.6 million ODOT used to help out New Albany and The Limited could have leveraged \$256 million to widen I-270 north, and complete the Spring-Sandusky interchange.

In the meantime, the city continues to investigate the concept of a "cap" over that part of the expressway between Goodale Park and the convention center. A study scheduled for completion last month has been delayed while the subconsultant investigates new federal regulations governing tunnels. Look for some final (?) word later this year. ■

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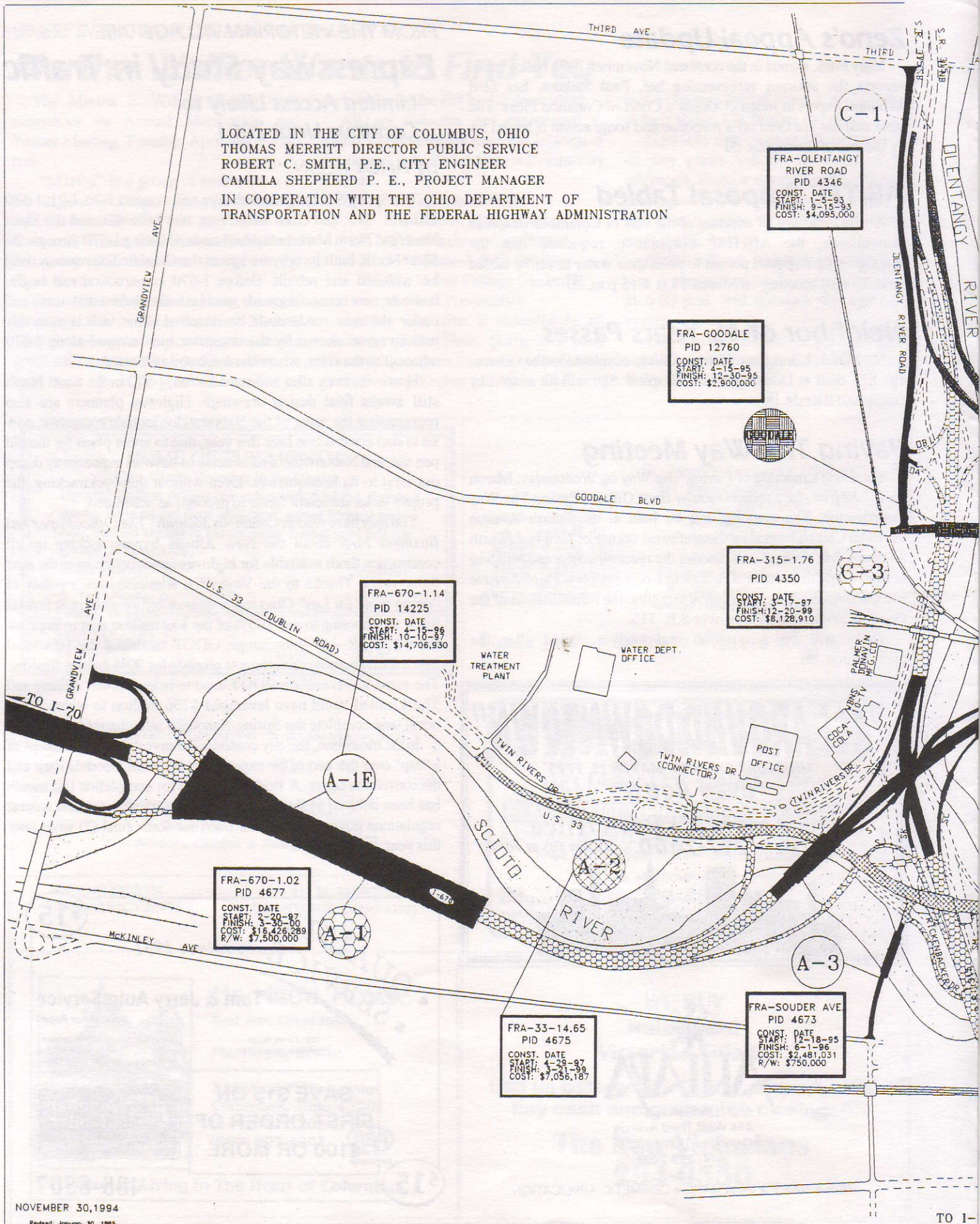
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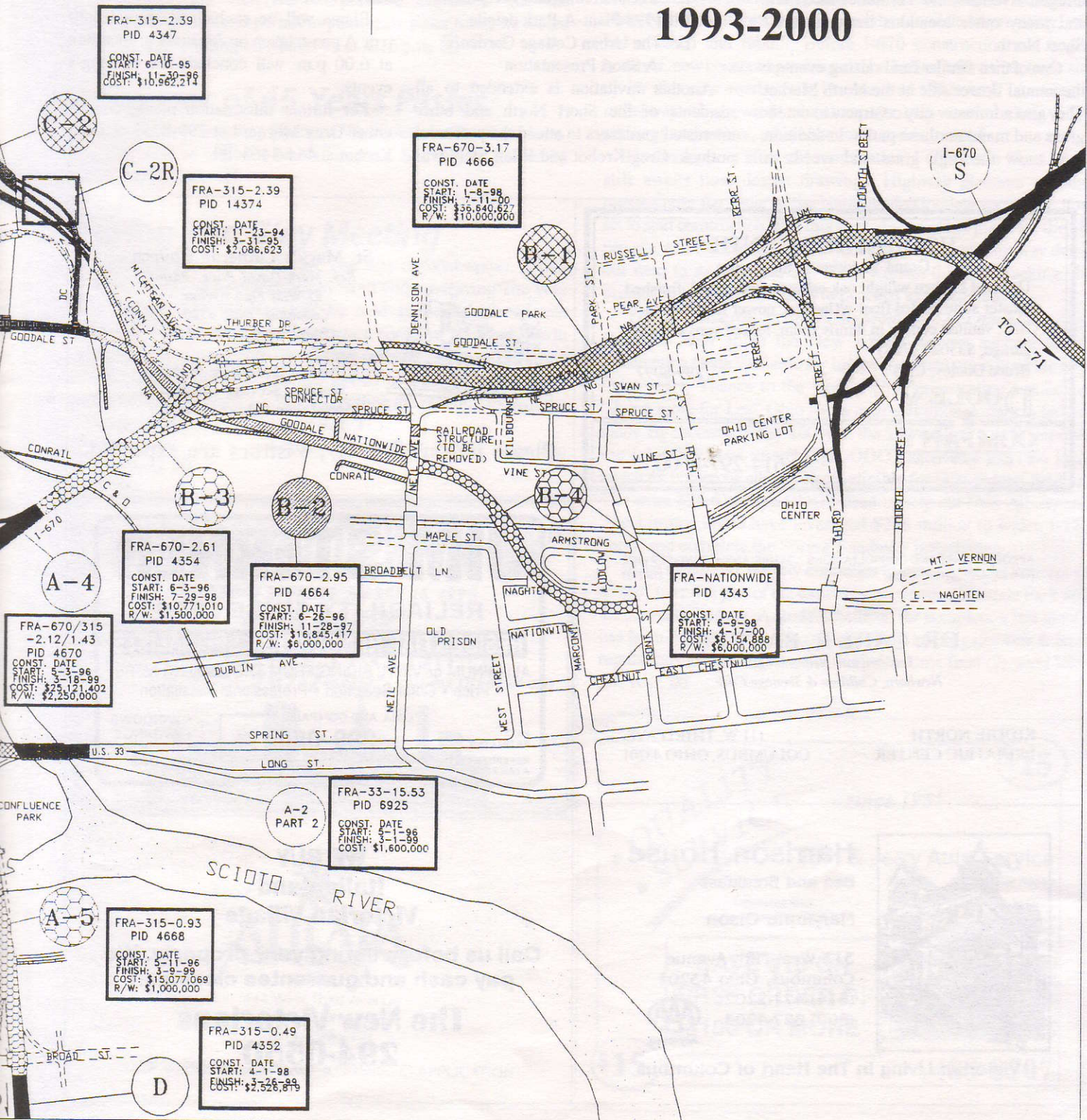


Harrison West

Spring-Sandusky Interchange

FRA-670-1.25

1993-2000



WHERE IN THE WORLD IS MARTHA WALKER?

Martha Walker Wants to Find You

The Martha E. Walker Garden Club announces its Annual Membership and Trustee Meeting, Tuesday, April 4th at 7:00 p.m.

"Martha" is a group of enthusiasts who are responsible for providing the flowers at the Harrison West Park at Fourth and Oregon Avenues, the Vermont Place Park, and many other locations throughout the Short North.

One of their familiar fund raising events is the annual flower sale at the North Market. They also administer city contracts to cut the grass and maintain these parks. In addition, they mow the high grass and weeds on

vacant lots for the city health department.

All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Membership is free. The location of the meeting is the Third Avenue Community Church.

This year's agenda includes:

- I. The Report of the Trustees
- II. The Administrator's Report
- III. 1995 Plant-A-Park details
- IV. The Urban Cottage Garden, A Short Presentation

Another invitation is extended to all residents of the Short North and other interested gardeners to attend the perennial potluck. Greg Krobot and Ellen Stein will

host Saturday, April 8, from 3:30-7:00 p.m. at their home, 231 Buttles Avenue.

Light hors d'oeuvres and desserts served on tiny plates will be the order of the afternoon. Bring a vigorous perennial from your garden to exchange. A desert or d'oeuvres to share. A little dirt under your nails is OK, too.

Plants will be exchanged around 4:30 p.m. A presentation on Japanese arboculture at 6:00 p.m. will conclude the evening's events.

For further information please contact either Greg Maynard at 299-8252 or Greg Krobot at 464-3463. □

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FROM THE PRESIDENT CRAIG COPELAND

Now is the time for Harrison West to get the recognition our neighborhood deserves

Our neighborhoods — Harrison West, Dennison Place and NECKO — have been nominated to the Columbus Register of Historic Places to be known as the Near North Side Historic District. While Harrison West is on the National Register in Washington, D.C., real benefits will come to our area with this placement on the City of Columbus Register.

To identify our neighborhood for historic district status is to acknowledge the desire for improving the quality of life and the significance of the place we make our home. While the real character and quality of neighborhood comes from the people who live here, not the buildings, the physical environment in which we live is one of the most important elements in achieving those goals.

An opportunity to nurture our turn-of-the-century neighborhood is before us. The places where we live, plain with simple details or grand and ornate, reflect a pride and craftsmanship that is difficult to reproduce today. Honoring the past by repairing these old homes is quite a challenge since the skills of the generation that designed and built them are often forgotten and the trim that decorates them is out of production. Helping to find the best, least expensive creative solutions to these challenges is one of the purposes of the Historic Resources Commission, a city-wide resource already participating in twelve other districts ranging from Old Beechwood to Bryden Road. Their accumulated experience and advice in dealing with these old structures has already helped hundreds of homeowners add value to their historic houses that goes beyond what the replacement window salesman or

the siding subcontractor has to suggest. Many already know that hiring a contractor without a good written plan, just waving their hand at the side of the house, can be a disappointing experience. (For everyone the investment by your neighbors has increased the rewards of investing in your own home.)

Historic designation serves all the residents of our community, homeowners and renters alike, by stabilizing the houses and apartments that landlords often neglect, thereby maintaining the number of rentals available and protecting homeowner values.

"...real character and quality of neighborhood comes from the people who live here, not the buildings, the physical environment in which we live is one of the most important elements..."

When a home slowly rots because no one bothered to invest in a coat of paint or other routine maintenance, the structure has often been bulldozed. Another family is then lost from the neighborhood. The Harrison West area to the south, especially along Michigan Avenue has witnessed a huge loss of housing stock that is still ongoing today. NECKO, north of King Avenue has seen many of the homes there illegally converted into rooming houses, and run into the ground by absentee landlords. Ten years from now, what will be the consequences of this momentum? What will go up on these vacant lots? A look to

the student ghetto surrounding OSU or the boarded up houses, (brick and wood) throughout the proposed Near North Side Historic District demonstrates the effects of demolition by neglect.

To make our neighborhood more livable and to improve our image from within the neighborhood (as well as City Hall), we have the opportunity to speak out as a group by returning our opinion forms in the affirmative and let it be known that we are a unique district in Columbus; that as a historic district we are worthy of improvements in City services like better police protection, upgraded maintenance of our infrastructure, improved trash pickup and acknowledgment of the residential character of our streets in regard to traffic flow patterns. Now is the time to identify our neighborhood as place where it is inappropriate to run along our streets 90 foot electric lines (as the City was 30 days away from doing in 1994). Elected officials listen to the unified, collective voice of 1,500 homeowners. In short, the Near North Side Historic District is about clout.

Historic preservation means celebrating the vision of those who built the homes of our neighborhood at the turn of the century, while adding our own imprint. We all have chosen to live where we do because we feel strongly about the beauty of our neighborhood and the sense of community it represents. The Near North Side Historic District designation will help assure that what we have now is what we will have in ten years and beyond.

To count, opinion forms must be notarized. Please feel free to call me at 299-3737 if you need a notary public. ▣

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SPRING-SANDUSKY continued from page 1

VV Traffic and Parking Committee Pushes for Changes

The Victorian Village Traffic and Parking Committee continues to meet with City of Columbus traffic, engineering, and planning representatives to discuss particular options for alleviating heavy through traffic on Victorian Village and Harrison West streets. Although there have been several joint meetings over the course of two years, no meaningful actions resulted. The committee has now arranged a meeting with Thomas Merit, Director of Public Service, to discuss the lack of action and make an appeal for assistance. The outcome of that meeting will be discussed next month.

The meeting with Merit will serve to highlight several goals and concerns that have developed from neighborhood meetings, surveys, and area studies conducted OSU City and Regional Planning students and the City of Columbus.

For example, recent traffic counts indicate more than 16,000 cars, 1500 light duty trucks, and 80 larger trucks (three axle and semi-tractor trailer type) travel on Neil Avenue each weekday. Many residents have commented that only the rear half of their houses offer comfortable levels of protection from noise generated by such large volumes of traffic. In fact, interior noise levels in houses along our arterial streets are high enough to meet Federal Highway Administration criteria for installing highway-type noise barriers! Without question, the impact of traffic has reached crisis proportions for many residents along Neil Avenue.

A recent position paper prepared for city officials outlines the principal goal of this committee: *Eliminate the damaging impact of heavy through-traffic on the stability,*

identity, and security of Victorian Village. More specific tasks are to:

- Eliminate truck through-traffic.
- Reduce significantly car through-traffic.
- Reduce and enforce all residential traffic speed to 25 mph.
- Enforce compliance with city ordinances regarding excessive noise from mufflers and car radios.
- Implement streetscape improvements that will:

- protect pedestrian safety
- improve quality of life
- enhance the neighborhood identity
- promote private investment

Currently the committee is focused on identifying alternate through-truck and through-car routes, and specifically, have asked city traffic engineers to examine the possibility of opening the Olentangy River Road extension from Goodale to Third Avenue to two-way traffic. This option would provide an alternate, *non-residential commuter* route that could substantially alleviate traffic flow on *residential* sections of Neil, Third, Fifth and King Avenues. Paving the Way coordinator Brett Gilbert, who will speak at the Fourth Avenue Christian Church on Wednesday, March 15, at 7:30 p.m. (notice elsewhere in this issue), is exploring this option.

However, our committee's work over the past two and a half years raises serious concerns about the ability of Columbus officials to help neighborhoods with traffic issues. In particular, our concerns and lack of progress at the committee level were raised in a detailed June, 1994 letter to Mr. James Musick, Chief Traffic Engineer. Approximately a month elapsed before our

letter was even acknowledged, and two additional months elapsed and several telephone calls were made before our committee received an informal reply to our letter. Since then, it appears that our neighborhood may be challenged further with development of two arena sites at the south end of Neil Avenue, and traffic congestion from the extensive construction of the Spring-Sandusky Interchange could continue to worsen for several more years than planned. ■

Tree Volunteers

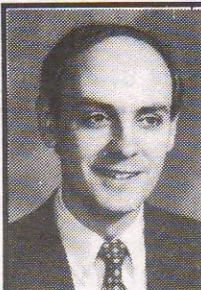
Continued from page 1

Then the holes will be dug to size by backhoe and the tree ball rolled into the ground. Backfilling, cleaning up the extra excavated dirt, mulching and then watering will finish the planting.

Other streets could receive trees depending on final planning and anticipated volunteer turnout. The nearly dead tree at the focal point of the Harrison West Park could certainly be replaced. There is something for everyone to do from watering, sweeping up with a broom, spreading a bag of mulch on each tree to wrestling the trees down into the holes. How much we can do depends on you.

If you would like to purchase a tree at wholesale prices for your front yard, there is a possibility to add on to the order. This would be chance to save delivery charges on a significantly large "instant" tree.

Initial planning will take place at the Harrison West Society this Thursday, March 9 at 7 p.m. or call Craig Copeland at 299-3737 for more information. ■



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