

TACONY CIVIC ASSOCIATION

4815-19 Longshore Ave. ♦ Philadelphia, PA 19135 ♦ Phone: (215) 338-2575 ♦ Fax: (215) 338-3150
Email: taconycivic@gmail.com ♦ Website: <http://www.taconycivic.org>

Volume 8, Issue I

A Nonprofit Corporation to Serve the Community

March 2010

Tacony Civic Association General Meeting

★ **March 9, 2010** ★

- ♦ Starting Time: 7:30PM
- ♦ Disston Memorial Presbyterian Church, located at 4500 Tyson Ave. (Please use side entrance on Glenloch St.)
- ♦ The DRCC and Food Network will be sponsoring a community garden in Tacony. To be discussed at the meeting!
- ♦ All are welcome!

Future 2010 TCA meetings:

- ♦ May 11th
- ♦ September 14th
- ♦ November 9th

Renew Your Membership for 2010!

If a 2010 membership renewal form is enclosed, please complete it and return to the address specified on form. Only \$5 a year! What a bargain!

Inside This Issue:

I-95	3
Upcoming Meeting	3
Spring Clean Up	3
Tacony Zoning Report	4
Spring Flea Markets	4

IN MEMORIAM.....

Louis Iatarola, President, Tacony Civic Association

Last December 5th seemed a day like most others. News media was focusing on the upcoming Copenhagen climate summit, while closer to home many were still buzzing about the White House Dinner crashers and in Philadelphia, late autumn snow flurries served as a quaint foreshadowing of the record-setting winter snow which would soon be upon us. But this was a day like no other for the citizens of Northeast Philadelphia, especially Tacony, as Dr. Harry C. Silcox passed away and we collectively lost our greatest civic booster. I was fortunate to have known Harry since 1990, when he visited the Tacony Music Hall for the first time. The man was a virtual walking encyclopedia of the evolution and historic significance of the neighborhoods in Northeast Philadelphia. To say he had a profound impact on the way we perceive our unique corner of this great city would be an understatement. To say he infused a newfound sense of community pride in Tacony residents through his groundbreaking work would be a mere generalization.

Harry was most proud of his Tacony heritage, and was never shy about promoting this fact. Born December 1, 1933 in the front bedroom of 6606 Torresdale Avenue, he became a fixture on the grounds of Disston Recreation Center, whose basketball team he led to a city championship in 1951. Harry attended Hamilton Disston School and went on to play basketball for Abraham Lincoln High School when it first opened its doors. He went on to be a star player at Temple University, where he earned All-City honors three years in a row. Eventually earning a doctorate in history, Harry went on to serve as Assistant Principal at Lincoln High in 1967 and served as Principal from 1976 through 1992. Upon leaving his post, he became a proponent of "service learning," a teaching strategy integrating community service with instruction and reflection focused on enriching the learning experience, reinforcing civic responsibility and strengthening communities.

The greatest legacy Dr. Silcox will leave is the collective body of published works which helped teach us that there really is significant Philadelphia history north of Old City. Cont. page 2.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Louis M. Iatarola
President

Mary Benussi
Vice-President

Christine Woolslayer
2nd Vice President

Linda Salandra
Treasurer

Anne Marie Kuvik
Secretary

Troy Everwine
Dawn Ramos
Board Members

TACONY CIVIC COMMITTEES

Events Committee
Mary Benussi

Membership
Dawn Ramos

Fundraising
Dawn Ramos

Police Liaison
Mary Benussi

Publicity & Public Relations
Troy Everwine

Quality of Life
Barbara Dooley & Sandy Stewart

Public Works (Streets, Traffic, Water, & Sewer)
Anthony Naccarato

Tacony Clean & Green
Troy Everwine

Zoning
Louis M. Iatarola

*Please leave a message on the Tacony Civic phonenumber (215-338-2575 ext. *1) if you would like join a committee.*

Your help is greatly appreciated!

IN MEMORIAMCont. from page 1

It was at Harry's prompting that Allen Wetter and my father decided to form the Historical Society of Tacony. Twenty years later we have amassed an impressive collection which clearly documents Tacony's place in the history of our city, our country and the world. It is no coincidence that our old town's name seems to find its way into many of Harry's Northeast Times history articles, no matter where the focus of the article may be, as if to reinforce the place his hometown has in the annals of Northeast Philadelphia history.

Toward the end of his life, Dr. Silcox finally began to embrace the idea that he was truly someone special. We honored him at 2008 Tacony History Day by making him Grand Marshall of our parade and bestowing upon him a commemorative plaque. "This is great, kid..." he'd say as he perused the display of Tacony history inside the gymnasium where he once excelled on the court, knowing in his heart and mind that the history of his hometown was alive and well. Although he could not attend last year's inaugural Northeast Philadelphia Hall of Fame induction due to health reasons, the significance of being the first living inductee was not lost on him and he considered this quite an honor.

Harry used his influence to galvanize historical societies and historians both expert and novice by forming the Center for Northeast Philadelphia History. He finally recognized that discovering and reinforcing local history was not only a great intellectual tool but a tool for neighborhood revitalization. I am proud to be a part of this loosely formed group which is now planning a Northeast Philly History Fair for Spring 2010 at Holy Family University. Participants in this group will surely carry the torch that Harry lit so brightly by continuing his lecture series throughout the Northeast and contributing articles after the treasure trove of yet-to-be published Northeast Times history profiles runs its course later this year. The group also has the potential to raise awareness for saving important pieces of Northeast Philadelphia history such as the endangered Lower Dubin Academy property near Frankford Avenue and Academy Road.

Most important, Harry inspired us all to look beyond just dates and names to learn about and appreciate the stories of personal sacrifice and hard work making up the real history of Northeast Philadelphia. It was poignantly appropriate that his final public appearance was in his hometown, at Tacony Baptist Church in late September, where he lectured about some of the untold stories relating to Tacony history. He especially enjoyed the quiz portion of the event, where at the end he awarded cash prizes to several lucky attendees. Despite being physically weakened by illness, his enthusiasm was infectious, and provided all the inspiration we will ever need to carry his mission of promoting local history well into the 21st Century. Someone once said that without understanding our past we can not possibly know where we are headed in the future. Thanks to Dr. Silcox, the route toward keeping Northeast Philadelphia a stable place to live and work became a bit easier to navigate.

I-95 Update

Anthony Naccarato, Tacony Civic Streets Committee Chair

Well, it is the heart of winter and the Phase I I-95 CPR project is well under way, although under way too much snow of late! The project is essentially at a standstill until Mother Nature decides to cooperate, which at this point, looks like mid-March at the earliest. The contractor (Tony DePaul & Sons) has made significant progress on Princeton & Cottman Avenues and along State Road near Longshore, where the new southbound on-ramp will eventually be constructed at the end of this construction phase. Look for continuation of the curb bump-out work on Princeton Avenue later this spring and into the summer as the continued widening & deepening of Cottman Avenue to permit two-way traffic and more reliable passage for large trucks. Work on the new south bound on ramp at Longshore and north bound from Milnor Street will proceed later this summer as well. In addition, we have received word from Penndot that they would convey ownership of the extra ground adjacent to the new south bound on ramp to Septa for construction on a parking lot, for use by commuters by day and by patrons of Curran's Irish Inn on nights & weekends. We will continue to work alongside both Penndot and Septa to bring this parking lot to fruition. We also expect to meet with officials from the Streets Department this spring to begin discussing potential changes in street directions within the neighborhood, to work better with the revised I-95 traffic patterns, to reduce cut-through traffic within the neighborhood. We encourage members to contact the civic or attend future meetings to voice any issues related to traffic & street issues, whether they be associated with the I-95 project or not.

Also, we want to offer a special thank you to Bob Behn and everyone at Tony DePaul & Sons (TDP&S) for their tireless efforts to communicate and work with the neighbors, businesses and institutions affected by the construction. We appreciate everyone's patience as we work together to make it through this difficult, but important process. I also want to commend & thanks TDP&S for their donation of material, manpower & equipment for the construction of the riverfront trail segment along Pennypack on the Delaware.

Please attend the TCA Quarterly Meeting on Tuesday,

March 9, 2010

at 7:30 PM at Disston Memorial Presbyterian Church

Disston Memorial is located at 4500 Tyson Avenue; use Glenloch St. entrance

We're working with DRCC and the Food Network to bring a community garden to Tacony, likely in Disston Park or near the greenway. Details are still being worked out but we should have some exciting news by the time the 3/9 meeting

Disston Park Clean-up - May 8, 2010 - Volunteers Needed

On Saturday May 8th, the Tacony Civic Association and Spring into Your Park is hosting a park cleanup at Disston Park. The cleanup will run from 9am until 12 noon. We will be meeting at the corner of Longshore and Disston Streets. All gloves and snacks will be provided.

We also welcome high school and college students who may have community service hours to complete. If interested in helping out, please contact the civic at taconycivic@gmail.com.

Zoning Variances

Louis M. Iatarola, Tacony Civic Zoning Committee Chair

7010 Keystone Street - permit for a one and partial 2 story addition at the rear of an existing 3-family dwelling. Applicant provided building plans and signatures of support to TCA. TCA did not oppose, ZBA granted variance on 1/25.

4620 Unruh Avenue - permit for cold food sales for take-out at existing grocery store. Applicant did not contact TCA prior to hearing on 1/6. ZBA heard the case and instructed applicant to meet with the TCA so that a letter from TCA would be reviewed prior to a decision. Meeting scheduled for 2/11 was postponed due to the snow. Meeting scheduled for 2/25 and results will be discussed at general meeting on 3/9.

7257 (rear) Frankford Avenue - permit retail sale and rental of furniture at the rear of a one story commercial building. Case handled by Mayfair Civic Assoc. with input from Lawrence Vitale of TCA Zoning Committee at community meeting on 11/4/09. MCA opposed variance and ZBA denied variance in December, 2009.

7223 State Road - permit for automobile sales and installation of paint spray booth at existing contractor's garage. Applicant met with representatives of ZBA Board of Directors in September, 2009. TCA did not oppose and asked for five (5) provisos. Will be discussed at meeting on 3/9. ZBA approved variance and all provisos on 2/4.

7385 Melrose Street - partnering with Holmesburg Civic Association on this case. Hearing on 2/11 postponed until mid-March due to snow. Calls for a 5-unit, one

story commercial building to accommodate relocation of Cottman Check Cashing, the pretzel bakery and the take-out/eat-in restaurant plus two (2) additional vacant spaces to be filled. It is expected that HCA and TCA will not oppose but will ask for provisos. Will be discussed at meeting.

4835 Longshore Avenue - permit for rear addition and legalization of fourth residential unit where existing permit calls for three (3) units. Meeting was held on 2/22 with applicant and neighbors in preparation for 2/26 ZBA hearing. Will be discussed at meeting.

6414-22 Hegerman Street - permit to construct four (4) attached garages to occupy 100% of the lot at a vacant site. Will be discussed at meeting. Zoning Committee meeting is scheduled for 3/11 at Disston recreation Center on the second floor to discuss the case in depth with concerned parties.

7101 Keystone Street - permit for a 2-family dwelling at a mixed use property zoned G-2 Industrial. Meeting with Zoning Committee is being arranged for mid-March. Will be discussed at meeting.

7109 Keystone Street - permit for a 2-family dwelling at a 2-story row style residence zoned G-2 Industrial. Meeting with Zoning Committee is being arranged for mid-March. Will be discussed at meeting.

Tacony Flea Markets - Tentative Spring Schedule

Disston Park – Keystone Street between Longshore & Disston
8:00 am - 2:00 pm
\$10.00 per 10'x15' space

Saturday, April 17, 2010
Saturday, May 15, 2010
Saturday, June 19, 2010

Rain date: Saturday, April 24th
Rain date: Saturday, May 22nd
Rain date: Saturday, June 26th

Food vendor and restroom facilities will be available onsite.

For more information or to rent a space, please contact Dawn at (267) 455-2859.