



Summit News

October 2002

SNA Issues Challenge to Miriam Construction

SNA has challenged The Miriam Hospital's application for a Certificate of Need (CON) from the Department of Health (DOH) for their proposed renovation and expansion. The hospital is seeking approval to demolish two buildings on the main campus, and replace them with a single larger building that would eventually rise to over four stories in height.

The move by SNA is the latest round in a decades-long struggle between a hospital seeking to grow in a competitive health care market and neighbors seeking to contain that growth.

Hospitals are required by state law to obtain a CON before making changes that affect the health services they provide. To qualify, they must show that their proposal meets a "substantial or obvious community need" for health care equipment or services. They must also describe alternative proposals that also satisfy the unmet need, and justify the choice they made. DOH regulations focus sharply on the impact on health care costs of such proposals, and CON applicants are expected to justify their project budget.

Among the alternative proposals that Miriam rejected, according to their application, are renovating existing space, and a more modest construction proposal.

The hospital rejects the option of renovating existing space even though the two buildings that are slated to be demolished are,

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Developer Plans "Strip Mall" for Hope Street

783 Hope Street, at the corner of Burlington Street, was a gas station before becoming Hope Street Auto Center. The new owner has torn down the old gas station building and plans to put up a block of retail storefronts. So far so good. But according to City officials, the plans call for the stores to be set back from

the street, with a parking lot in front, "suburban strip-mall" style.

Our section of Hope Street is a classic urban main street, designed for pedestrians, conducive to window-shopping. For many, the street is the destination, not any particular store.

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Plans for 783 Hope Street call for parking in front..

PPS Submits Historic District Nomination

The Providence Preservation Society has submitted a National Register nomination for the Summit Avenue Historic District to the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) for review. The Summit Avenue District is bounded by Rochambeau, Camp, Memorial, Creston Way and Summit.

The nomination is the first to

result from the Summit Neighborhood History Project, an effort co-sponsored by PPS and SNA, that enlisted local residents as volunteer preservationists, researching and photographing buildings throughout our neighborhood. In the last year, PPS hired a consultant to prepare the nominations for two historic districts within the History Project

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Rochambeau Library Closed for Renovations

After plans to temporarily relocate the Rochambeau Library fell through, the library closed its doors on October 4th. It will remain closed until renovations are complete in 8 months. In the mean time, library patrons are directed to the Fox Point branch at 90 Ives Street, corner of Ives and Wickenden Streets.

Collections and services specific to the Rochambeau Branch, like the Russian language collection, the cd and video collection and museum passes and subscriptions have been moved to Fox Point. The book drop will remain available even after construction crews begin their work.

The Friends of Rochambeau are considering ways of helping library patrons while our local branch remains closed. For the latest information, check for notices on the bulletin board near the front door of the library (or nearby after the fence goes up). Or check the SNA website at <http://sna.providence.ri.us/library/>.

What services the Friends may offer has not been decided as this newsletter goes to press, but one possibility is a volunteer book delivery service for patrons who have difficulty traveling to other branches. If you would like to help, call Tom Arrison at 331-0056 x82.

Miriam

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according to the hospital's own institutional master plan, in good to excellent condition, with an anticipated lifespan of "more than ten years." The master plan suggests that these two

that this option is "less expensive" and will "prohibit any future expansion of the hospital" without explaining further.

No one wants to deny Miriam the ability to modernize its facilities, or to make other changes to stay competitive. But we do want to see the hospital direct its

long-term growth one block to the west, on North Main Street, where it already owns property, and where C4 zoning would better match its institutional ambitions.

The two buildings that are to be demolished are known in Miriam site plans as buildings "E" and "F". Building "E" is the Sol Koffler Family Research Center,

built in 1967 and visible from Summit Avenue. Right next to it on Seventh Street is building "F," a one-story addition to the main hospital building, built in 1976, and that until recently housed the ICU.



Seventh Street, one block from Miriam.

buildings merit an investment of up to nine million dollars. The cost of Miriam's current proposal is \$25 million.

The hospital also rejects replacing the two buildings with a new one-story building. Miriam notes in their application

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The Sears building on North Main Street is among the hospital's worst buildings. Built in 1936, it ranked last in the facility evaluation section of Miriam's institutional master plan. It is also one of the largest buildings they own. It is separate from the main campus, but it is adjacent to their largest parking lot, closer to the highway, and it is a big building. If they are going to knock down buildings why not that one? We think the Sears site is the obvious place for Miriam to direct future investment and expansion. We hope someday they will agree.

Traffic Calming Project Proceeds

The City has hired the firm of Fuss & O'Neill to complete design and engineering services based on the Summit Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan. The Plan, which was completed earlier this year, recommends a variety of traffic calming measures throughout the neighborhood, including traffic circles, median islands and curb extensions.

A committee composed of SNA board members, a city planner and Councilman Jackson will oversee the work. Design and engineering services will transform the recommendations contained in the plan into construction documents. If all goes well, the construction phase of the project should go out to bid in the spring of next year.

More information about the project, and an electronic version of the Traffic Calming Plan, are available online at http://sna.providence.ri.us/projects/traffic_study/

Street Tree Deadline

The next deadline for completed applications to the Providence Neighborhood Planting Program is December 1st. Call 351-5802 for more info, or visit the website at www.pnpp.org.

Business Scene

The Blue Cottage has opened at 748 Hope Street, where Trent. Bistro was. Owner Andy Dominguez is serving a "country style breakfast" from 7am to 2pm every day except Tuesday. He plans to start serving lunch as well starting around November 1st.

The former Lad & Lassie store at 744 Hope Street will NOT be the temporary home of the Rochambeau Library, as we expected.

Instead, it appears that the building is being divided into several smaller storefronts.

East Side Dental at 239 Rochambeau Avenue, at the corner of Hope Street, has closed.

Down on North Main Street, City Liquors has moved into the former Print Source location at number 1285.

Just across the street at 1284, JavaSpeed Scooters is in business in the old D&B location.

Strip Mall

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And for Summit residents, this walkable mix of mom and pop stores is one of the things that makes our neighborhood such a great place.

Additional parking is a good thing. Parking on Hope at certain hours of the day can be a challenge. But locating parking in the rear helps preserve the character and the charm of our street. And for a corner lot like 783, it is just as convenient, and even saves a couple of prime parking spots on Hope.

Unfortunately, there are no zoning restrictions that prevent this type of development. We think that it is time for a "main street overlay zone" for Hope Street, which would require new construction to conform to the character of the street.

PPS

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survey area.

A second nomination will be submitted to RIHPHC early next year for the Elmgrove Gardens Historic District, which is bounded by Rochambeau, Morris, Woodbury and Cole.

For more information about the nominated districts, contact Mary Kate Harrington, Directory of Preservation Services at PPS, or visit the SNA website at <http://sna.providence.ri.us/projects/history> for more information and links to other resources and contacts.

In the mean time, we have made an appeal to the developer to consider the best interests of the neighborhood and the business district and rearrange his site plan.

Join The Summit Neighborhood Association

Complete this form and mail it to: *Summit Neighborhood Association
Box 41092, Providence, RI 02940.*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Enclosed is \$10.00 for **2003** Individual Family Membership

(Make checks payable to *Summit Neighborhood Association*).

I am concerned and would like to help with SNA activities. I am particularly interested in working on the following:

I can leaflet _____

The Summit Neighborhood Association Presents

ELECTION FORUM 2002

Featuring Candidates for Local Office and Discussion of Ballot Questions

State Senate District 1

Rhoda Perry (D)

Leo Trevino (R)

State Rep District 4

Gordon Fox (D)

Charles Smith (R)

Jonathan Wiening (I)

Providence Mayor

David Cicilline (D)

David Talan (R)

Greg Gerritt (G)

Christopher Young (I)

Ballot Questions

State Police Preservation . . . Transportation Quonset Co-Equal

Tuesday, October 29th

7pm to 9pm

Church of the Redeemer

655 Hope Street

Moderated by the League of Women Voters

Refreshments will be served at 6:30pm