



The Source

Hawthorne Empowerment Coalition

Your Source for News and Views in YOUR Community

Volume 1, Number 5

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Important Announcements:

For All Members Of The Hawthorne Community

New HEC Office Space

Hawthorne Empowerment Coalition is pleased to announce the location of its new office space. The HEC office will be located inside the Hawthorne Cultural Arts Center Building, 1200 Carpenter Street, Philadelphia, PA on the first floor. Office hours will be Monday through Friday, from 2-6 P.M. beginning January 29, 2001. Everyone will be notified of the new phone number once the phone lines are installed.

New HEC Board Member

Hawthorne Empowerment Coalition is pleased to announce a new addition to its Board of Directors, Trey Horrell. Horrell was appointed to the position of Recording Secretary by the Board, which extends him a warm welcome. As you know, the office of Recording Secretary remained vacant since the June election. The general membership voted to allow the Board to appoint someone to fill the position in lieu of holding a special election. We are extremely happy to move into the New Year with a full and complete Board.

New HEC Web-Site in Development

Hawthorne Empowerment Coalition is pleased to announce HEC is going on-line! Members who attended the November meeting heard a proposal presented by Ed Greenberg for a new HEC web site. Greenberg, who resides in Hawthorne, heads his own Internet Service Provider (ISP) company. He has volunteered to

lend his expertise to develop a web site for the organization. The presentation was well received and all questions were sufficiently answered. Several interested members are in the process of reviewing the written proposal. The proposal contains value-added opportunities for the group, its advertisers, and community partners. HEC will purchase the domain name from Greenberg and will maintain control with regard to the contents of the site. A final vote on the proposal will be taken at the December general meeting. In the meantime, the curious should visit <http://www.hawthorne-ec.org> where the site is under construction.

New HEC By-Laws Drafted and Distributed

Hawthorne Empowerment Coalition is pleased to announce the By-Laws Committee has completed a draft of Bylaws for the organization. A copy of the draft was distributed to everyone who attended the November general meeting. The by-laws will be a topic for discussion at the December meeting. Provided revisions are minimal, a vote to ratify is planned.

HEC Logo Contest Extended

The logo contest planned for November has been extended once again. The contest will be held at the December meeting, as all interested participants will have had a fair amount of time to prepare their entries. To refresh your memory, here are the contest rules:

- Each participant may submit up to 3 designs to present at the December 11 meeting.
- A vote will be taken on each design.
- The design with the most votes will be the winner.
- The designer of the winning logo will

receive a free T-shirt imprinted with the new logo he/she created.

- The T-shirt will be presented to him/her at an upcoming General Membership meeting.

The selected design will become the permanent logo of HEC, replacing the one currently in use on a temporary basis. The new logo will be used on all printed materials relative to HEC in the future.

Door-to-Door Delivery of General Meeting Notices To Be Discontinued

Starting January 2002, HEC will no longer deliver general meeting notices door-to-door. We believe everyone knows by now that monthly general meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Arts Bank, Broad & South Streets, at 7:30 P.M.. The fact that we will continue to deliver the monthly newsletter, **THE SOURCE**, door-to-door at the beginning of each month eliminates the need for separate notices. The next general meeting date is always highlighted on the front page. In the event of a special meeting or a change in a regularly scheduled meeting date or location, flyers will be posted throughout the community in an effort to duly inform everyone.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The January General Meeting has been rescheduled to Tuesday, January 22, 2001 because the Arts Bank will still be closed on January 8th for Christmas Break. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the January meeting.

Next HEC Meeting

Tuesday, December 11, 2001
at "The Arts Bank", 7:30 P.M.

From the President:

In the spirit of inclusiveness, the HEC Board is extending an invitation to all of the businesses located within our boundaries to join HEC. As business neighbors, we hope they will all become active HEC Business Members.

In working to realize the vision for our community, I've had the wonderful opportunity of chatting with a few of the business owners along the South Street corridor from 11th Street to Broad. I will continue to work my way through the entire Hawthorne community, personally inviting and soliciting Business Memberships until I have eventually met and spoken to all of the business owners.

I know we all have a stake in what this community becomes. Many business owners recognize this immediately, pull out their checkbooks and ask what else can I do to help? Many do not live in Hawthorne, but realize those that do are the customers who contribute to their livelihood. I approach them with a positive request asking them to work with us, join with us, and help do all that needs to be done. Overall, responses have been positive as indicated by our growing list of business members and from ads placed in our monthly newsletter by a small variety of businesses. The list could be longer and the ads more numerous if we were able to dispatch a team of people out into the community to complete this task. Right now, a committee of one has been on the streets from month to month soliciting business ads and recruiting business members. If you would like to help expedite this process by helping me out, please let me know as soon as possible. I'd welcome any assistance I can get.

When we meet, business people share their concerns: "we are concerned about XYZ property, which was just purchased – what kind of business will open there?" "We are concerned about the sidewalks and the appearance of our streets?" "We are concerned about forming a business association or business improvement district" ... and more. I am compiling a list of concerns for improvement from the business perspective as I continue to meet and greet the various business owners of Hawthorne.

Finally, I work to give you as much information as I can about what is going on in Hawthorne and what we, the Board, are trying to make happen. There is so much energy and so many wonderful ideas coming from the Board and from the participating community that it is sometimes difficult to include all of the details and results in such limited space. As we are about to close out the year 2001, I realize I'm already halfway through my term. Still, I continue to compile lists, plan the work, and work the plan – the plan for "the new Hawthorne" which is definitely taking shape. I will include at the end of my term, a list of accomplishments achieved by the Board in the relatively short time of one year. Together, we have been working hard and I'm proud to be associated with such a dedicated group of people who continue to motivate me and propel me forward.

Seasons Greetings! Happy Holidays! Happy New Year! We are looking to the future, which hopefully will include you. Hope to see you at our next meeting.

Raydell Fisher

TidBits

- The Hawthorne Empowerment Coalition sends a warm holiday greeting to everyone in our family of friends and neighbors of the Hawthorne community and beyond.
- Advertise in the Source. Reach 500 homes in the Hawthorne community at reasonable rates. Call 215-546-4701 for rate info. Space available in the January issue. Deadline: December 28, 2001.
- The Source, a monthly publication of the Hawthorne Empowerment Coalition, is fully funded by our advertisers. The staff is always looking for and will publish articles of interest to the Hawthorne community. Please feel free to write and submit your articles to Hawthorne Empowerment Coalition, Attention: The Source, P.O. Box 18054, Philadelphia, PA 19147. The name and address of the writer must be included when the article is submitted and articles will be edited for grammar and spelling only if needed. Express yourself!



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Ready, Willing & Able— Coming to Bainbridge Street

During the early grass roots days of HEC, one of the issues that brought us together was the homeless shelter in the 1200 block of Bainbridge Street. At the time, the shelter was under very poor management, was overcrowded with up to 300 homeless men warehoused there, and in addition to posing a hideous eyesore, it was becoming a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the surrounding community. A list of problems was presented to the City of Philadelphia, who contracted with the provider (Self, Inc.). The list was quite long and included the following: (a) men were allowed to aimlessly wander the streets surrounding the shelter at all hours of the day/night; (b) one resident followed and assaulted a 12-year-old girl on the way home from school; (c) dumpsters filled with trash and garbage sat out on residential streets and were not picked up or cleaned on a daily basis; (d) no criminal background checks were routinely performed to weed out sexual offenders and arsonists; (e) huge trucks making daily deliveries of food and supplies blocked traffic on Kater Street and damaged the sidewalks in front on the homes because the trucks were too large for the narrow street; and (f) the provider blatantly refused to work with the community on correcting these problems.

Things have really changed although it took a few years of consistent complaining and oversight on the part of dedicated community members. The City of Philadelphia, Office of Emergency Shelter and Services (OESS), hired a new Deputy Managing Director for Special Needs Housing, Robert Hess. Hess responded immediately to the community's list of complaints, met with Mayor Street, and proposed a pilot program for homeless men for the Bainbridge Street site. A community advisory committee was formed so interested community members could be included in the decision making process. The advisory committee met with Hess and OESS staff on a monthly basis. They met with the management of Ready, Willing & Able

(RWA) as well as with the developers who owned the Bainbridge Street building. Albert and Yvonne Hicks, as well as other members of the community, were invited to visit a Ready, Willing & Able site that was fully operational in New York City to get an idea of what would happen if RWA came to Philadelphia on Bainbridge Street. The Hicks accepted the invitation, made the trip and were very impressed with the entire operation. They came back with a glowing report about RWA and how the program could really work at the Bainbridge Street site.

This past summer, all of the men residing in the building were relocated, two of five dumpsters were removed from Kater Street, and workers began to completely gut the Bainbridge Street building. The City with RWA signed a contract and expected completion of renovations was planned for November 1, 2001. Opening day would include an Open House where all interested members of the community would be invited to come and see the changes to the building, meet the management and residents of RWA. Many Hawthorne residents noticed the changes as they began to unfold and were extremely happy to claim victory in reaching a compromise with regard to this site. The advisory committee continued to meet each month. The developer agreed to make certain visual improvements at their request. Although, the proposed November 1 completion date has come and gone, notable progress continues to take place.

Residents can look forward to a renovated building that blends in with houses (particularly those on Kater Street which face the back of the facility), improved lighting, outdoor security cameras, and no dumpsters on the street. Delivery trucks will not block traffic on Kater Street, as the building next to the site will be demolished to make way for a parking lot/loading area. There will be an improved street scape, which includes the planting of trees on both sides of Kater Street. There will be no hideous cyclone fences put up to hide the dumpsters.

Instead, 5' brick walls will be erected and the dumpsters will be stored behind them, out of sight in a more aesthetically appealing manner.

There is much to be said about the merits of the Ready, Willing & Able program. The program operates successfully in Manhattan, NY, Baltimore, MD, Trenton, NJ, and many other places. All of the men in the program are job ready and will, in fact, go to work every day. Only 70 men will be housed in the Bainbridge Street facility, none of which were former sexual offenders or arsonists. In fact, none of the men will have prior criminal records or a history of drug abuse. All residents of RWA will be easily recognizable by their light blue uniforms with Ready Willing & Able written on the back. The men will perform various jobs during their stay, including some that are community-based. The management has agreed that some of the men will be responsible for keeping the area around the site clean on a daily basis. The men, who will work every day, will be able to live independently (that is, without subsidy) when they leave the shelter. They will be able to pay their rent and hold down jobs. They each contribute a percentage of their salary each week to a savings fund, that will be matched by RWA, when they leave the shelter to live independently.

As per the last report of the community advisory committee, completion of building renovations is now scheduled for the end of 2001. In fact, 15 men are ready to move in. The goal is to have them housed before Christmas. It is not known as we go to press if this deadline will be met, but the contractors are working diligently. The building is near completion. Everyone will be notified of the actual move-in date as well as the plans for an open house and tour of the facility. We, the community, will be "ready, willing and able" to welcome RWA after a long, hard fight to bring improvements compatible with the surrounding residential community to the Bainbridge Street site.

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