Konar Breaks Ground on South and Hickory Place

by Nancy O’Donnell

Taking a shovel at the South & Hickory Place groundbreaking ceremony (l-r) Hartley Zwahlen, Tanya Zwahlen, Lyjha Wilton, Michael Trojan, Howard Konar, City Councilmember Adam McFadden, Dan Buyer, City Councilmember Elaine Spaul, Rick Rynski, Mayor Robert Duffy and Timothy Schmid. (Photo by James Woff)

The long-awaited Konar Properties South and Hickory Place, a $4.8-million, 40,000 square-foot apartment and retail project on South Avenue, broke ground on July 16 amid wild cheers. The pop of champagne corks and wild cheers.

Developer Howard Konar was joined by Mayor Robert Duffy, City Council members Adam McFadden and Elaine Spaul, South Wedge Planning Committee staff and board members, Business Association of the South Wedge Area members and local businesses.

“There’s so much vitality in the South Wedge,” said Mayor Duffy. “It’s risen to the occasion time and time again. It’s a beautiful thing to see.” The Mayor went on to credit Konar and SWPC for the project saying the “best thing the city did was get out of the way.”

Duffy praised the community-driven project. “From start to finish, we wouldn’t be here without SWPC,” said Konar. He noted especially board member Tanya Zwahlen, who “kept phoning when the project bogged down during the three years of planning.”

The four-story brownstone exterior building at 661-663 South Avenue will hold 33 apartments (studios and 1 and 2-bedroom) on the upper floors. Some 7,000 square feet below will be used as retail space.

For several years, SWPC courted Konar Properties because of “their reputation for appropriate urban design and their ability to create new buildings that blend into existing neighborhood architecture,” said SWPC Executive Director Robert Boyd.

Former SWPC Executive Director Dan Buyer, who began wooing Konar in 2005, spoke of the project’s uniqueness: “I’ve travelled all over New York state, and you don’t see enough of these kinds of projects.”

Council member Adam McFadden, summung up the mood of the day, said “This community rocks.”

Rochester City Council recently approved a $1 million loan to help Konar’s Gregory Street Transfer LLC develop the site. The project was also approved for tax breaks and incentives from COMIDA.

Local business owners added to the celebration. John Fan- ning, Solera Wine Bar, provided the champagne; Nancy Sawyer Molina served Coffee Connec- tion coffee while Casey Hollen- beck of Mise En Place brought trays of hors d’oeuvres.

The expected completion date is summer 2010. Timothy Schmid, Konar’s residential properties director, said that there’s already a waiting list for apartments, and retail space.

Wedgestock 2009 Is Coming!

by Victoria Walsh

It’s that time of year again: South Wedge Planning Com- mittee (SWPC) will host their annual meeting at Highland Bowl on Sunday, August 30. Sound boring? You must be new in town.

Wedgestock 2009 runs the fun from 2 p.m. to sundown. This year we’ve added a tent for local artists to showcase their work and a cooking/baking con- test judged by local chefs. We’re looking for the most delectable cookie and savory salsa in the South Wedge! For details and to enter the cooking contest, go to www.swpc.org.

Bring your family and join your neighbors in celebrating SWPC’s triumphs of the past year. Vote for new board mem- bers, and enjoy some great music. Local vendors will be supplying food so you can savor the flavors of the South Wedge as well.

Bands headlining the event this year: The King Pigs, a 5-mem- ber rock ‘n roll band, The 9-mem- ber Buddhahead, a local band.

Two more “Gardens of Distinction”

by Nancy O’Donnell

Last month the Wedge fea- tured three gardens from a range of possible beautiful choices. (We’re bringing them back for a second look this month on page 7; they were that good)!

For this issue, two very dif- ferent gardens were nominated. One has an air of quiet serenity while the other vibrates with movement and sound. Both express the creativity of two mas- ter gardeners.

South Ave. Miniatures

There’s nothing unexpect- ed in the front yard of Knapp’s 1860’s South Avenue cottage. But, walk along a drive- way, into the backyard, and you’ll arrive in a world of mini-ature gardens.

Knapp has spent over a decade cultivating alpine gar- dens and housing the plants in “hypertufa troughs” she builds herself. (Hypertufa, containers, which resemble stone, are made from a combination of cement and peat moss.)

A former manicurist, Knapp discovered dwarf peren- nials, whose origins are above the treeline, through the North American Rock Garden Society. In the far back of the yard, beyond a small lawn carefully mown by husband Robby Ade, Knapp has created a sunken garden. The recessed area came courtesy of a building long ago demolished.

In troughs large and small, “hens and chicks” and other varieties of miniature plants reside alongside clematis, del-phiniums, alliums, Asiatic lilies, Japanese anemone and painted ferns. “It’s nice to see something beyond something else,” said Knapp, explaining why a taller plant is planted in front of a small one.

Topiaries are also scattered throughout the yard. “I’m not afraid to prune,” said Knapp.

Along with the plant life, Knapp added a narrow bend...continued on page 8

Check out our newest South Wedge Totems 2009

Artist-designed bicycle racks (see page 7)

Artists Wendy Rust Rob Marvin John Archer Tyler Guay John & Laurie Greico Kevin Mentus Patrick Doyle Christine Knoblauch

The Asian gate opens on a Benton Street ‘Garden of Distinction’ filled with waterfalls, ponds and pet Peking ducks. See more on page 7. (Photo by Nancy O’Donnell)
Chris Jones and “Max” (Photo by James Wolff)

Chris Jones, co-owner with partner James Wolff of Historic Houseparts, says she never expected to be “selling door-knobs, antiques, doorknobs.”

“Today Historic Houseparts includes a large mail order business along with local retail sales. Their inventory ranges from $8 doorknobs to $400 claw-footed bathtubs.”

The couple expanded the business, purchasing a warehouse next door in 1997. The third floor became an office and workshop where Wolff repairs and reworks antique light fixtures.

“We try to take decent old pieces and restore them. We get old lamps covered with nicotine stains and make them serviceable,” says Jones.

The business salvages many historic pieces from houses, circa 1900-1930, being demolished locally and in neighboring states.

Today Historic Houseparts includes a large mail order business along with local retail sales. Their inventory ranges from $8 doorknobs to $400 claw-footed bathtubs.

Jones’ preservation work continues beyond her business. Since 2005 she’s served on BAS-SC’s board of directors.

“The Executive Committee of the SWPC Board of Directors approved this paper and is satisfied with the implementation of the “What’s Wrong With This Photo” article in the June/July issue of The Wedge newspaper. The article was not consistent with our typical approach to community development. Our mission is to support the South Wedge community by supporting a full range of housing opportunities, and promoting a diverse, historically significant, and commercially sustainable urban village.”

We value the comments provided in this forum and encourage continued feedback to SWPC regarding our organization, our work, and activities taking place in the South Wedge. We are always seeking to increase resident representation and involve others in our calendar of events to be posted at http://swpc.org/calendarofevents.php. If you would like to shape the character and effectiveness of your neighborhood organization, please attend a meeting and/or email the SWPC Executive Committee through southwedge.org or swpc.org. Several board meetings are open to the public and you do not need to be a board or committee member to attend. Thank you.

—Lydia Wilton, Tracy Saville, Sarah Johnstone, and Tony Scarabba.

No. 49 Comfort St.—A “Moving” Story

by Tom Cantin

Once upon a time, this old post-and-beam house resided at 161 Hamilton St. After the Civil War, it was moved to the back of the lot, where it accommodated the present house. The Wedge has numerous backyard houses—perhaps we came to major re- cycling of early days.

“The house condition was deplorable, reminiscent of the old saying, ‘the roof was so slanty, it touched the ground.’ To save it, a substantial rear section would have to be removed, making this small house even more so.

“Despite this, I felt our little survivor from the Wedge’s pri- mordial past deserved to survive. After some restoration, rebuilding and relocation required, the house needed a real estate version of the Wit- ness Protection Program. Fortu- nately, the City of Rochester had recently instituted a house mov- ing program that could save this house and others like it.

Time was of the essence. Senter Color Labs (now Echo Tone) was starting construction on the old Blanda Fruits & Vegetables property, and our access to South Ave would be lost. The house was blocked up, and since it was our young- est son’s third birthday (he’s 30 today and living in the Wedge), we tied colored balloons to the house and had “lift-off.”

“As the house inched its way onto South Ave, causing a traffic jam downtown, frustrated driver called out, “Where are they taking that piece of crap?” Well, it was our piece of crap, and we were on our way to an improved situation.

“I will admit that once we got the house up on its extra-high cripple, reality set in. It was an ugly sight! Its new neigh- bors were not in a “Welcome to the Neighborhood” frame of mind. One of them wanted to sue us and one wanted to burn it down, but not necessarily in that order. To be sure, burning would have saved much time, expense and frustration.

“Demolition, the difficult move, major restoration and building/rebuilding compli- cated "stuff" were just the known problems. Numerous unknowns faced us. One favor- ite was finding Comfort St had cypress-wood sewers, and con- tinued on page 9

SWPC Community Calendar by Tracy Saville

All meetings are held at 224 Mt. Hope Ave. except where noted.

• Housing & Structures
  Email: mmccullough@hotmail.org
  Tuesday, Nov. 11 @ 5:30 p.m.

• Commercial Business & Development
  Email: christopher@hpcare.org
  Dates TBD

• Community Engagement & Marketing
  Held at Boulder Coffee House, 110 Alexander Street. Monday, Sept. 13 @ 12 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 11 @ 12 p.m.

• Marketing & Membership TBD: email twilco@rochester.~tst

• Financial Contact: tsciarabba@hotmail.com
  Tuesday, Sept. 8 @ 1 p.m.
  Tuesday, Oct. 15 @ 1 p.m.

SWPC Executive Board Committee
Email: lykholan@hotmail.com
Monday, Sept. 14 @ 5 p.m.
Monday, Oct. 12 @ 5 p.m.

• SWPC Board of Directors
  Thursday, Sept. 10 @ 6:00 p.m.
  Thursday, Oct. 8 @ 6:00 p.m.
  Open to the Public
by Nancy O'Donnell

Behind the facades of Victorian painted ladies and Arts & Crafts bungalows hide a virtual Wall Street of small neighborhood businesses. From filmmaking to world travel, the South Wedge is the coziest place to do business. Here are just a few neighbors who have made their homes headquarters for both startups and established businesses.

Lux World Travel: travel for the Journey inside you

Everyone can sign up for a ho-hum every-minute-accounted-for Cancun cruise. Intrepid adventurer Melinda Johnston's specialized travel agency promises “personalized travel experiences to engage your mind, body and spirit which contribute to the wellness of the world we live in.”

Johnston's Wedge home business specializes in specialties: yoga retreats, wellness vacations, multi-sport holidays, faith tours and sacred journeys. That means meditating at Buddhist temples, sharing in shamanic ceremonies in Machu Picchu or practicing yoga in Bali.

Johnston also believes being responsible shouldn't stop when you depart for foreign lands. She offers volunteer vacations, low impact tourism and fundraising travel programs. Some of her clients have helped end deforestation, save rainforests and taught English in South America. Organizations that Johnston Travel has funded through its fundraising programs that funnel proceeds back to the communities visited.

Ready to go? A November trip takes clients to Oaxaca, Mexico for a “Sacred Journey Photo Tour” led by Kodak photographer John Buck that includes sweat lodge ceremonies and sacred city.


Debra Lewis and Amy Prestley

Debra Lewis and Amy Prestley have managed research wasn't for her. O'Donnell

Annette Dragon (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Annette Dragon Photography

Maine native Annette Dragon has spent a total of 22 years photographing. Ten years ago she followed her partner M. Eve Elzenga when Elzenga returned to her hometown of Rochester. Since then Dragon's photographed everything from Hindu weddings to the Buffalo Bills camp.

“I love Rochester,” said Dragon, “the love of diversity, I get invited to such a variety of cultures. I get to be part of a very intimate part of people’s lives. It’s a privilege to be allowed into their lives to get a chance to record the event.”

“The power of photography is its ability to stop time,” said Dragon.

Dragon especially enjoys working out of a snug office in her home that abuts Highland Park. “The park is my studio,” said Dragon, who often uses it for wedding and graduation photos. “People come see my work, and we can sit and chat in a warm and cordial environment.”


Decor! Decorating Solutions

M. Eve Elzenga, “decorating strategist” is the ultimate Renaissance woman when it comes to her newest, most comfortable career of making homes beautiful. Elzenga brings her previous careers as fundraiser, restaurant reviewer, fashion writer (former student at the Fashion Institute) and researcher (M.S. in Library Sciences) to her at-home business Deco! “I let clients experience how I live,” said Elzenga.

“This house is my laboratory,” said Elzenga. “I get to experiment.” (Her home and backyard artist studio across from Highland Park was a high-light of the Landmark Society’s 2008 house and garden tour.)

Good Cook’s Herb Garden

Debra Eileen Lewis already had an at-home business in the Wedge. The licensed massage therapist opened Highland Hands Massage and Bodywork in the historic German House last year. This year she added an at-home business with neighbor Amy Priestley, who herself owns an at-home landscaping business, and served as a community organizer in Colombia. He studied the Totona Indians in Mexico, taught at Mexico University in Cuernavaca, and became “co-padrés” with many Mexican natives. Today he divides his time between his basement studio near Highland Park and Mexico.

As a filmmaker, he’s filmed documentaries in Afghanistan and documented the art of tattooing. “Lots of young tattoo artists want to see it old style tattooing,” said Lane.

Closer to home, he’s made short films. One about Western New York history, “Along the Erie Canal,” is moderated by Tom Grassi, President of the State Canal Society, who visits locks throughout the system. “Carousel Menagerie” records carousels “of yesteryear and the people who preserve their heritage today” and includes the Dentzel Menagerie Carousel in Rochester.

Lane is currently working on his magnum opus: a film about the Mexico “Voladores,” or the flyers who perform “one of the oldest rituals in the world.” (It involves flying up side down hundreds of feet in the air from a wooden pole.)


Pacho Lane (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Enthoscope Films and Video

Filmmaker Pacho Lane fell in love with the Spanish language and culture during a high school trip. Later he joined the Peace Corp—he was the first group to report for training—and served as a community organizer in Colombia. He studied the Totona Indians in Mexico, taught at Mexico University in Cuernavaca, and became “co-padrés” with many Mexican natives. Today he divides his time between his basement studio near Highland Park and Mexico.

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By Nancy O'Donnell

SWPC Welcomes Sum-mer Staff
Victoria Walsh joined the SWPC staff to help Allison Clark make Wedgostock 2009 bigger and better. She currently studies Business Administra-
tion, French and Spanish at SUNY Geneseo.

My finance professor, Bob Boyd, announced the in-
ternship, and I immediately applied. “I like the [Wedge]’s sense of community. It’s similar to Brighton, but more eclectic,” announced the in-

Time to Look for Re-bates on New Furnaces, Water-heaters
Eileen Thomas, SWPC Co-ordinator, reports that if you are thinking of installing an energy efficient heating system in your home, now might be an ideal time to do so. “In July 1, RG&E and New York State Electric & Gas (NYSIG) are offering rebates to qualified customers who install high-efficiency furnaces, boilers system and indirect water heaters. Program-
able thermostats and duct sealing may also be eligible for rebates. To receive a rebate, both the equipment and the customer must meet certain requirement. The customer must have an account with RG&E and account must be in their name. The equipment must be installed by the end of July 1. Eligible rebates include: high-efficiency furnaces and boilers, by certified contractors. Homeowners and landlords are eligible. Details are available on RG&E’s web-site (www.rge.com) and NYSIG’s website (www.nysig.com). Applications for the reb-
ate program are available from RG&E’s customer service offices and from certified contractors.

Local sites include South Av-

nue Community Center, 99 South Ave., 428-0615, (Breakfast Buffet Mon-Thur 6:30-9:30 M-F, 9-10 a.m., 12-1 p.m.); Field Street Recreation, 194 Field Street, 428-7562, (Lunch only M-F, 12-12 p.m.); Monroe YMCA, 797 Mon-
roe Ave., 271-5220, (Breakfast and Lunch, M-F, 9-10 a.m., 12-1 p.m.)

Gregory Street Block Club Holds Family Fun Night
The 9th annual block party at 25 neighbors enjoyed perfect weather at Marie Daley Park on June 22 reports local historian and writer Rose O’Keefe. The gathering was hosted by the Gregory Street Block Club.

Adults and children played frisbee, tag, jump rope, and cre-
ated a dandelion kiss.

“Much thanks to Allison Clark at SWPC for providing juice boxes, water and snacks,” said O’Keefe. “And thanks to all who came out to meet, greet and share together.”

Fun was the evening’s business for Rose O’Keefe and kids. (Photo by Suzanne Meadows)

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By Nancy O’Donnell

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Music Fundraiser Held for Local Businessman
Dawn Hinkley wanted to help Flesh for Fantasy Tattoo owner Dawn Thorson when she learned she was facing a seri-
ous illness and hefty health care bills, so she turned to “Friends of Dane” in the music world and several local businesses.

On June 28, Hinkley fund-
raiser attracted seven heavy metal bands for a concert at the Darcy House. The bands included: If Tomorrow Falls, Minds Open Wide, Delta Ha, Divine, and Gun Man, Hack-burn, Velve-
teen fox, Night Gallery, and special guests Kevin McConkey, and David Burg-
er. Additional talent included: “Niners from God-
ness Hour, on Monroe Ave.” The event raised $1,600.

The South Wedge pulled together, and donated necessary items, to be raffled off in a silent auction,” said Hinkley. The event included Brian Radonski, and David Mead, and there is no way to repay all the generosity of his friends, family, and neighbors that pulled through to make this happen,” said Hinkley.

Hinkley is planning several more fundraisers to cover chemo treatments scheduled for Au-

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Several local businesses are

Local Businesses Aid Calvary St. Andrew’s Playground
Several local businesses are working to make Calvary St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Parish Paradise.

According to Vera Mascaro, church member and “Padd-
more Family 5K” race coordinator, the church recently learned that the playground sur-
face was not made of the kind of certified playground mulch to add to its “fall protection.”

“There was no money in the budget to replace it,” said Mascaro adding that along with raising the $7,800 needed, they have to dig a deeper surface and add timber to enclose the play-
groundชวนลูก

Mascaro sent a letter to church members hoping that several individuals might con-
tribute the funds for one extra yard of mulch. After she raised the money, she retired on page 9.
SWPC and Farm Market join to make good food fun

by Nancy O'Donnell

The South Wedge Planning Committee (SWPC), The South Wedge Farmers Market (SWFM) and School #12 PTA are joining together to get students at the James P. Duffy School on South Avenue to eat their vegetables. It helps families connect food production from farm to market to family to home cooking and consumption.

The new program, which expands the Market Bounty Program, will run Fridays from Sept. 18 – October 23.

“We want to stretch [the children’s] taste buds,” said PTA member Lori Bryce, who will be coordinating the program at the South Wedge Farmers Market (SWFM). “It’s going to provide a lot of kids with experience with the market and teach them to prepare local produce. The ultimate goal is a lifestyle change so that families will continue to coordinate the program as well as select and deliver food. Members of the School #12 PTA and teachers will help to run the program in the school. The final recipes are not yet confirmed, but Bryce expects apples will be on the menu come fall. “We’ll probably make applesauce,” said Bryce. “They learn how it tastes fresh instead of coming out of little containers.”

A Market Treasure Hunt is scheduled for August 20 at the market between 4-7 p.m. The Greater Rochester Health Foundation (GRHF) to help “in-transit” food literacy into the South Wedge.

On average 500-600 people attend the weekly market. “Shoppers at this year’s market will find more vendors, more selection, broader price options, prepared foods, kids’ activities, and many more special events. New products include milk, cheese, yogurt, fresh pasta, local honey, and many more options of local fruits and vegetables,” said the Hartmans. The Hartmans will help to coordinate the program as well as deliver. Members of the School #12 PTA and teachers will help to run the program in the school.

The South Wedge Farmers Market (SWFM) is celebrating its third year of operation. Its goal is to provide fresh, local foods to family to home cooking and become more conscious of their food choices.

Earlier this year SWPC submitted a grant proposal to the Greater Rochester Health Foundation (GRHF) to help “increase healthy eating practices” among local youth and increase families’ access to fruits and vegetables at the South Wedge Farmers Market.

“Unfortunately, lots of kids eat food from the convenience store not even a full style grocery,” said Bryce. The plan is to conduct “taste tests” of fruits and vegetables on a weekly basis with students K-2. In the program’s cooking section, children Grade 3-6 will learn kitchen skills in preparing healthy food. The SWFM is celebrating its third year of operations. Its goal to provide fresh, local foods has grown to be much more: “a wonderful social gathering spot; a positive way to support neighborhood revitalization; and an important effort of sustainability,” wrote market founders Chris and Vicki Hartman in an e-mail to the Wedge.
South Wedge Victory Garden

SWPC’s “urban farm” seeded in June now flourishes on the vacant lot at 122 Hamilton Street. Diligent gardeners tended the bounty of vegetables and flowers through sun and rain.

“This has been a wonderful gardening experience—especially since I don’t have a sunny spot at home to use for vegetables. I really enjoy seeing all the people who walk by and stop to look at the garden. It’s such a pretty addition to our block, and it’s getting a lot of attention and smiles.”

—Marta Ruderman, proud owner of Plot #6

The plot was a collaborative endeavor of Jonathan and Maren McCoy-Kyle and Karen Wrenn-Rahim. (Photo by Nancy O’Donnell)

A giant broccoli beams in the sun in gardener Jenni St. Pierre’s plot. (Photo by Nancy O’Donnell)

Andrea Burman edged her vegetables with colorful flowers (Photo by Nancy O’Donnell)

South Wedge Totems 2009

On June 18, BASWA (The Business Association of the South Wedge Area) celebrated South Wedge Totems 2009 with the arrival of eight new artist-designed bicycle racks. The totems illustrate a wide variety of themes from “a homage to the historical 2008 election of Barack Obama” to “a play on the South Wedge neighborhood’s name” in the form of a huge chunk of steel cheese.

All photos © James Wolff, Historic Houseparts.
ART AND GARDEN

“Gardens of Distinctions”

Betsy Knapp of South Ave.

Benton Street waterfall built by Otero-Piersante (Photo by Johannes Bockwoldt)

A well-placed mirror magnifies the beauty. (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Knapp's Hypertufa gardens and turtle topiary (Photo by Nancy O'Donnell)

Robert Marvin with “Realized Dreams” across from the Flag Store, South Avenue

John Archer with “The Big Cheese” in front of the Advocacy Center, South Avenue

Alexandra Morris, Washburn Street Garden (Photo by Nancy O’Donnell)

Carol & Paul Gardner, Reservoir Avenue Garden (Photo by Nancy O’Donnell)

Paula Frumosa, Oakland Street Garden (Photo by Nancy O’Donnell)

Aflack and Daffy Peking-Duck (Photo by Johannes Bockwoldt)

Tyler James Guay with “Duet,” John's Tex Mex, South Avenue.

Chris Otero-Piersante and Angelique Stevens of Benton St.

Carol & Paul Gardner, Reservoir Avenue Garden (Photo by Nancy O’Donnell)

Alexandra Morris, Washburn Street Garden (Photo by Nancy O’Donnell)

Betsy Knapp of South Ave.
Public Cheers and Jeers
Canalway Trail
by Nancy O’Donnell
A public information meeting
for the Highland Park/Canalway Trail Project was held by
trails tinkerer Fishers Associ-ates on July 1, 2009 at St. John’s
Meadows on Elmwood Ave-
rence. The project, described as
“an emerald necklace” linking the Erie Canal, Highland Park, and the
Genesee River trails has up
until now received support
from the city, county and Town
of Brighton.

On the other hand, many of the attend-
ees were looking for informa-
tion, along with punch and
cookies, emotions were high on
both sides of what seemed like
an issueless issue—a trail con-
necting the River and Canal.

Angry residents and bicy-
cyclists often interrupted the pre-
sentation given by Fisher Asso-
ciates and DOT representatives. Some residents rallied against the trail on Highland Avenue (some argued that sections are
plagued by accidents and nar-
row rowing the road to include bike
lanes on both sides would be a
disaster). Others criticized the
planned crossing at the inter-
section of South Goodman and
Elmwood, citing speeding dri-
vers and the lack of a traffic light
as handicaps. Others argued that
they had been given the project—in planning since 2004—before the meeting. Bik-
ing trail proponents were in
a minority, but they were the
most vocal in describing the
trails’ benefit to the community at
large.

After the meeting, in a
phone interview, bicyclist Rog-
er Janezic cited several reasons that adding “extra infrastruc-
ture to an established trail” will
make for safer journeys by
bicyclists, increase health benefits
for users and enhance the area,
showing visitors it’s “a desir-
able place to live.”

“You don’t place bike trails in
ugly, dangerous areas,” said
Janezic. “When childhood obe-
sity levels are so extreme, it’s
another step in getting people
out and about. It also brings
people through our city neigh-
borhoods, and shortens bike
commutes to downtown.”

The 10-12 ft.
wide trail with both on-road and off-road sections begins at the Erie Canal Brighton Mead-
ows trail and travels alongside
the Monroe State Development
Center on Westfall Road, and
crosses Elmwood Avenue at
South Goodman Ave. It then
moves through Highland Park
and makes a left on Highland
Avenue. At South the trail picks
up at Robinson Drive and leads
to Mt. Hope Avenue and then
down to the River.

The project schedule given
during the meeting lists “bid
and award project” as taking
place Oct.-Dec. 2009. Construc-
tion is slated to begin in spring
2010.

The project objectives, promoted by Fisher Associ-
ates, were not only to connect Highland Park with the Erie
Canalway Trail and the Genesee Riverway trail, but to “provide
safe pedestrian and bicycle rout
to Highland Park and enhance
a regional trail system.”

For more information, contact
Lana Losch, Fishers Associ-
ates Project Manager at 334-1310.

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Gardens of Distinction
continued from page 2

and two Adirondack chairs. A
large round mirror hangs on
the wall, two Adirondack chairs.
A large round mirror hangs on
the wall, two Adirondack chairs.

Knapp said she’s a practi-
cal gardener who “tidies up an
hour here, an hour there. In
lots of ways, rock gardens take
less time.”

Knapp’s talent with trowels
is recognized around the coun-
try. Several are displayed in the
New York Botanical Garden. In
2008, her garden was profiled in
Rockefeller Magazine.

So while others might want
their backyards as natural,
Knapp feels otherwise. “Natu-
rall is the way you look in the
morning when you get up,” said
Knapp, who prefers a more poli-
ished look for her back garden.

To learn more about hypertufa,
e-mail ktruppa@msn.com.
(Photos on page 7.)

Benton Street by Way of
Beijing
Chris Otero-Piersante and
Angelique Stevens’ garden
on Benton Street is a work in
progress—always. Over the last
six years, along with expected
plants and rocks, the couple
has transformed their back gar-
den. Raised its elevation, added
a waterfall edged in fieldstones,
built ponds, an Asian gate and
bridge and included two Peking
Ducks (“Affak and Daffy”) and
other feathered friends (“Scram-
bles and Omlet”) to the mix.
(Sons Jeremiah and Noah take
credit for the names).

When the couple, both
English professors, bought the
property in 2003, they found
“color, leaf structure and hue.”

Their new garden.

Now renovating, he puzz-
led over what to do with cin-
denlook from an old chimney
and other materials he was accu-
mulating. “I figured there had
to be some way to use it rather
than throw it into a dumpster.”

His solution was to use
them and “15 cubic yards of top
soil” to elevate his yard. A sec-
ond mound grew from a neigh-
bor’s rehab discards.

Five years later, the cou-
ples’ garden is a showcase over-
flowing with an abundance of
shade plants he picks for their
“color, leaf structure and hue.”
Farther back, where he removed
shade trees, he planted dwarf
fruit trees, Concord grapes and
hardy kiwi.

“arlier the better, for he remembered
shade trees, he planted dwarf
fruit trees, Concord grapes and
hardy kiwi.

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Community Builders

continued from page 4

her helpful husband Anthony Mascaro of Percor Electric, who agreed to do the manual work of digging up the old mulch and timbers and replacing them with new. Another local businesssman, Ronald Maier of Kenron Industrial Air Conditioning is also helping by trimming overgrown tree branches and cleaning of the gutters.

“Randy Page, Branch Manager of Skyworks, is lending us the equipment to dig and shovel the mulch,” said Mascaro. The complete renovation will be completed in August.

Free Guided Highland Park Tours Planned

Neighborhood resident Amy Priestley will lead an tour through the Highland Park Botanic Garden and Arboretum including the Pinetum on August 29 at 1 p.m. The tour begins at Lamberton Conservatory.

Taste of the Neighborhood Set for Sept. 20

The Third Annual Taste of The Neighborhood Celebration and Fundraiser will be held on Sunday September 20 at 3 p.m. at the Linden Street at Meigs Street Playground Park. Food, fellowship and music by Bobby Henrie and The Goners.

Autumn History Fair Planned for Calvary St. Andrew

Save the date! Plans are underway for a History Fair at Calvary St. Andrew’s Parish, 68 Ashland St. on Saturday, Nov. 14. The community will hear a number of expert speakers on this year’s theme “Heretics, History and Hallelujahs,” along with vendors and hearty fall food for sale! The event will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more details, contact Rose O’Keefe at roke@rochester.rr.com.

No. 49 Comfort St. - A “Moving” Story

continued from page 2

necting a new waste line could result in a collapse. Financial viability required that the house be doubled in size, which was a difficult task on a very small city lot. Answer: put the first story of the new two-story house partially underground.

Problem: the new rear entrance is now below grade. Answer: add excavation, terracing and a walk-in entrance to the new first level kitchen.

Problem: the former ground-level porch (now on the side of the house) is several feet in the air. Answer: rework access to the porch and use lattice work.

No. 49 Comfort St. - A “Moving” Story

continued from page 2

And perhaps one of the biggest problems: curb appeal. This non-descript house, with its side now facing front, needed a new look. Answer: major re-working of windows, siding realignment, and utilization of salvaged materials from other homes.

If you visit Historic Houseparts on South Ave, you will see a pictorial display of Wedge housing styles. This house is shown in the “Greek” category. I like to think of No. 49 as “Implied Greek.”

Drive down Comfort St. between South Ave and Mt. Hope Ave and be your own judge. The house is now a part of the diversity of the Wedge, and I think our neighbors finally agree, it was a good move.

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Attn: Membership Drive
224 Mt. Hope Ave.
Rochester, NY 14620

Name: ____________________________
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If it Sounds too Good to be True...

by Eileen Thomas

When times are hard, incredible offers are everywhere. The people making those offers want to help you get more income and a better life. And the best part is, there is no risk and no cost (well, maybe just a little cost) to get amazing results.

All you have to do is... Stop. Remember what your mother told you about things that sound too good to be true? Too often, a too-good-to-be-true offer is an illegal scam. Sometimes, they are technically legal but not very ethical. In all cases, the perpetrators deliberately target vulnerable people, especially seniors and people in financial difficulty from an illness or job loss.

One popular scam during this time of year is the “contractor” who shows up at your door, offering to seal your driveway, fix your roof or paint your house. The price is far lower than you would pay a reputable contractor, pay his crew, fix his truck, and therefore mislead potential customers.

A number of well-known respected non-profits in Rochester provide the same services as these companies. They have trained, certified staff working on foreclosure prevention and predatory lending. They do this at NO COST to you and work entirely on your behalf. Their results are often better than what the paid service gets for you.

For example, a disabled senior homeowner recently came to SWPC for home repair assistance. The homeowner had a mortgage payment that used 66% of her monthly income; the interest rate was more than 12%. And this was the mortgage that a private business (the one using an American eagle and “Federal” on its letterhead) negotiated for her after she paid them nearly $1,000. To recoup that $1,000 from the slight improvement in her mortgage payment would take more than six months.

SWPC referred the homeowner to the Foreclosure Prevention program at Marketview Heights Association. Staff there worked on the homeowner’s behalf to secure a more reasonable payment and interest rate. The homeowner’s mortgage payment is now just 30% of her income, and Marketview Heights Association didn’t charge her a penny.

How can you avoid “too good to be true” scams? Here are some tips to keep in mind:

• If you didn’t initiate the contact, don’t give out any bank account, financial or personal information over the phone or on non-secure internet sites.

• Don’t feel embarrassed to question what a stranger is telling you about an offer, no matter how nice (or how official) they seem to be.

• Never pay cash for a home repair. Never pay the entire amount before the job.

• Learn to recognize when someone is trying to pressure you into a fast decision. Playing on concerns for your family is one tactic scammers might use to get you to make a quick decision.

• Trust your instincts. If a situation or an offer doesn’t feel right, it probably isn’t.

If you have concerns about paying your mortgage, you can call any of the following:

• Housing Council Housing Hotline: 546-3700
• Marketview Heights Association: 423-1540
• Pathways: 345-3324
• Urban League of Rochester: 325-6530

For Debt Counseling

• Consumer Credit Counseling of Rochester: 1-800-724-2227

Seniors and caregivers for seniors concerned about scams can call:

• Lifespan: 244-8400

Before hiring a contractor, you can call:

• Better Contractors’ Bureau: 338-3600
• Better Business Bureau: 1-800-828-5000

If you have Internet access, you can join Angie’s List, which requires a small membership fee. Ratings for hundreds of contractors are available for you to review on this site.

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Cut Energy Costs in Homes & Businesses
by Robert Boyd and Nancy O'Donnell

Interested in improving energy efficiency in your home and business and saving money too? Local businesses and residents can do both by participating in two SWPC energy-reducing projects.

Would you like to reduce your electric bill?

The South Wedge Planning Committee, Inc. (SWPC) has joined with Energy Plus to offer residents of the South Wedge an opportunity to reduce their electric bills and help SWPC, an opportunity to reduce their residents of the South Wedge, said Energy Plus Representative Chris Koch. “Rates are great and billing is through RG&E on just one bill. No fees to join or cancel, no fees of any kind make it risk free for SWPC Energy Co-op members to try the program.”

Koch said that “typical residential bill payers put $100 to $125 back into their pockets at the end of twelve months.”

To join the SWPC Energy Cooperative, call Chris “the Energy Guy” at 585-750-5655 or e-mail him at ckoch1164@gmail.com and leave your name, address and phone number and identify yourself as a Wedge resident wanting to join the SWPC Energy Co-op.

Are you a small business?

SWPC, in cooperation with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the Small Business Development Center at the State University College at Geneseo (SBDC) is offering low cost energy reviews for small business owners interested in improving energy efficiency for their operations. Small businesses with an annual electric bill less than $75,000 are eligible.

Along with energy reviews, businesses also receive support in securing financing for implementing energy improvements.

The cost for the audit is based on electric usage: clients using less than $25,000 will pay $150 (NYSERDA fee $100, $50 SBDC fee); clients using over $25,000 will pay $600 (NYSERDA fee $400, $200 SBDC fee). NYSERDA review fees are refunded if the business implements the recommended changes.

In many cases, implementing the changes will reduce utilities between 10%-50%.

The energy review also opens the door to potential financing opportunities for these energy improvements. The New York State Business Development Corp. (NYBDC), which is supported by a consortium of 135 New York State banks, will work with businesses to secure project implementation financing through SBBA 7A and other loan programs.

For more information, contact SWPC Executive Director Robert Boyd at 256-1740, ext. 102.