

Remembering Jan Eichorn

I met Jan in the mid-1960's. She was young and idealistic. She stayed that way; young at heart, pursuing her dream of a more perfect society. She worked like hell to leave this a better world.

In the mid-60's, she was a member of a new and fledgling group of Young Democrats. Jan aligned herself with those who thought that the Young Democrats ought to fill a void that was created by a somewhat passive parent organization. And that's how the Young Democrats, along with other youth organizations, became the leaders of the Home Rule movement.

She had an easy way of making everyone feel comfortable around her even when she disagreed with them.

I was attracted to her for another reason. I grew up and attended schools in the segregated South. She was the first white female acquaintance with whom I felt immediately and completely comfortable. You just didn't relate to Jan on the basis of color—kind of like people today don't relate to President Obama as black, even though we know he is.

She remained a friend for life even when we did not see each other for years on end.

When I was mentoring a 15-year-old boy who had lost his mother to AIDS, I called Jan. I told her that my mentoree was seriously behind in his academics. She invited me to enroll him in her after-school tutorial program which she ran as a volunteer. There, I was instructed in how to teach him reading skills.

Her life touched mine in so many ways, as it did many others; so many positive ways, forever.

Thanks Jan.

~ Eugene Kinlow, Former member and President of the DCPS board of Education, Former member of the Control Board, Pres. Clinton appointee, ekinlow@aol.com.

Leave Hine Alone

I appreciate the informative article which appears in the latest Hill Rag concerning Hine Junior

High School. It is the best print material I have seen thus far. I also appreciate the several discussions I have had with Andrew Lightman, CCN's Managing Editor, when I run into him on 7th St. Though he does not agree with me concerning this building, I am sure, as an editor, he will have an open mind about all matters, including this one. I am surprised he found me to be the only person questioning the destruction of the building -- I know of many others.

I am certain that the three contractors now proposing new construction know of the Pocantico Proclamation for Sustainability and Historic Preservation. The National Trust for Historic Preservation right here in Washington greatly espouses this Proclamation. They advocate the readaptive reuse of older buildings where ever possible. Has the Economic Development Committee even thought of reusing the present building for the various functions proposed?? A good architect could do wonders to the facade of the building to make it blend in with the quaint-village-like nature of Capitol Hill. The 131,300 sq. ft. interior space would lend itself to all manner of creative use. For example, some have proposed a grocery store as part of the first-floor retail. No one is proposing competing with the merchants at our iconic Eastern Market after all they have done to serve the community. But a small grocery selling just canned goods and other items not found in the Market would fit just fine in perhaps two or so of the first floor classrooms.

Additionally, there would be an auditorium for community functions. The present cafeteria and kitchen, given the right architect, could become a good restaurant.

Again, has anyone given any thought to creative use of what is already there?

~ Joseph S. Hall. 802 Massachusetts Ave., NE, mayor.mass@verizon.net

Keep the Hine Development Small

I cannot believe that the six/seven story modern glass project was even considered, much less

chosen as one of the finalists. We are talking about the Eastern Market that we just spent millions to restore to its ORIGINAL historic grandeur, and the Office of Deputy Mayor or Planning and Economic Development considers a huge modern project that will overshadow this beloved jewel. The project should not be taller than Eastern Market, and should be in keeping with historic district style buildings such as the StreetSense project as shown in the June 19 Hill Rag. We are an historic district and we should not allow a huge project to forever overpower, overshadow, and forever hide Eastern Market. What are the historic credentials of the folks that made this decision of the final three projects.

~ Leonard Hacker, lhacker@erols.com

What is the Mayor's Conservation Corps Doing?

I was wondering if you would consider doing a piece on the "Mayor's Conservation Corps"? Specifically whether they find that these teens are actually doing what they have been tasked to do (clean-up and do small scale ecology projects) in city parks and who is holding the projects accountable if it is not accomplished.

My observational experience with the hordes of kids that come to Lincoln Park is that they make more of a litter mess by leaving chip bags and soda cans and do not pick up the litter that is already there. I give an example of an old fold-out mattress that was left lying under a tree there for more than a week, I finally removed it myself. Has anyone has a good experience with this group? Underscoring, again, as an example, the disappointment with this expensive but unaccountable initiative is that the door-flyers announcing it were littered in the front yards of my street North Carolina Ave.

Garfield Park residents report a similar experience.

Thank you,

~ Mark Grace, dundeec@gmail.com ★