



Creedmoor Civic News

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER of the CREEDMOOR CIVIC ASSOCIATION, Inc.

SEPTEMBER, 1974

VOL. 46, NO. 10

FUROR RAGES OVER Q.V. BUS GARAGE DEBUT SET FOR SEPT. 8

QUEENS VILLAGE, N.Y. Threats of road blocks have greeted the news that the new \$14 million Transit Authority Bus Garage in Queens Village is to open on September 8th. The garage, located on 222nd Street occupies the former Dugan Bakery property. At a meeting called by the Community Planning Board (13) at the 105th Precinct in Queens Village on Friday, August 23, 1974, representatives of the Transit Authority heard demands that plans for the opening be delayed until final routes for ingress and egress are worked out.

Current T.A. schedules call for 20 buses to proceed south out of the garage down 222nd St. towards Hempstead Avenue. But all remaining buses would move north on 222nd Street towards Jamaica Avenue. At the intersection of Springfield Blvd. and Jamaica Ave. it has been figured that 167 of the total 216 buses to be housed in the new facility will have to pass through. Moving north on Springfield Blvd. are 135 buses. The rest will use the 257th St. turnaround to feed the Q36 and Q12A routes. Eleven buses will use Braddock Ave. (Q1-Bellerose). However, what was not immediately pointed out until pressed by civic leaders at the meeting, is that there are actually going to be a total of 1,014 bus trips in and out of the garage *each day!* It is expected that the intersection of Jamaica & Springfield will be virtually impassable during the times that bus traffic is heaviest, i.e., during a.m. and p.m. rush hours. It was pointed out that the fire trucks from the Queens Village firehouse may not be able to get to fires north of the avenue because of this blockage. The T.A. denies that they will have any difficulty in maneuvering the buses. They refuse to postpone the opening day, which they claim is September 8.

Another meeting has been called for August 29, which is just before the press time for this issue. Civic leaders have vowed, that one way or another, they will not allow the buses to leave the garage until the T.A. agrees to modifications in the routes. A counter proposal was submitted by the Queens Village Civic Association at the August 23 meeting. The T.A. refused to comment on the proposal and insisted its submission was too late to allow changes to be made before the opening of the garage. They did agree, however, to study the Civic Association proposal. If the changes were reasonable, they said, changes would be made in time, but not on September 8.

A proposal to permit the buses to proceed out of the back of the garage and onto the Cross Island Parkway in order to clear local streets has met with opposition in some quarters, however, this is a long range idea and could not possibly solve the problem immediately at hand. Nevertheless, for the first time in recent memory has there been such intense and emotional division among civic leaders over a single issue affecting a common area. Wayanda Civic Association feels that the 20 buses scheduled to move south is all they will accept, while civic groups to the north feel the southern end must accept more in order to relieve the northern streets. Wayanda feels that the presence of the garage itself makes the burden unbalanced against them. Meanwhile the Cross Island plan has further split ranks. Those on the west favor the plan, while those near the Parkway are bitterly against it.

REGULAR MEETING, SEPTEMBER 3 (TUESDAY) 8:00 P.M.
 AT ST. GREGORY'S CHURCH, 242ND ST. & 88TH ROAD

 AGENDA

1. Unfinished business
2. Committee Reports
3. Civilian Patrol Report
4. Braddock Park Party Report
5. Bus Garage Situation
6. Other new business
7. Refreshments

A vote will have to be taken to determine the position of the Creedmoor Civic Association on the proposal to open one lane in each direction of the Cross Island Parkway to buses between the garage and Union Turnpike. The M.T.A. has been asked to do a feasibility study on the plan, but no bills have been introduced in the State Legislature to permit this. We are looking, though, for feedback on the plan from our members.

Dues are due, and we still have not heard from some of our regular members. Remember, we will publish our list of supporters at the end of this year (in the December Newsletter). We feel this is justified since those who are civic-minded enough to spend the \$2. deserve the public recognition. Remit at the September 3 meeting or by mail or in person to our Financial Secretary, Edward Wohlfort at 89-21 Moline St. Please try to have with you or mail in with your dues your old membership card so that it can be updated on the back. This acts as a receipt. New members and those that have lost their cards and wish new ones should so indicate.

The result of our special drive to recruit more members for our civilian patrol was gratifying, but still leaves us with many vacancies. Most of the vacancies are on the weekends. Please consider serving on our patrol. To those who have signed up and wonder why they weren't called it is probably due to one of two reasons. Either you requested a tour period already filled, or you volunteered your person but not your car. We have a surplus of volunteers without cars.

We announce again that special ultra-sonic intrusion alarms are available for the asking if you are going away. The alarms are loaned to the family going away for the duration of their vacation, then are returned to the Civic Association. You may call John Albano, our block security officer at 468-8170 for details. He lives at 88-29 Moline St.

Patrol members are reminded to be courteous enough to inform the patrol captain, Bill Mattis, in advance of not being able to meet a tour obligation. His number is HO 5-5889.

Users of emergency telephone number #911 are informed that if they get a busy signal when calling, *don't hang up*. When you call, your call is placed on the end of the line of incoming calls. As phones become available, your call moves up. Eventually you will get the next available line. But if you hang up, you are put at the end of the line again when you call back.

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BITS AND PIECES FROM THE CIVIC GRAPE VINE

YOU READ IT FIRST in the Creedmoor Civic News. An article in a recent issue of the Queens Illustrated News indicated that the rumor published in these pages several months ago concerning Robert Hall Clothes moving into the vacant Queens Theatre was indeed a true lead. The much-needed Municipal Parking Field has moved one step closer to reality as the Department of Public Works has completed topographical studies of the site, in Q.V.

H. PETERMAN, INC., a faithful advertiser and long respected name in the paint business in our town has announced the sale of the business to Harvey Haines of Richmond Hill. Harry Peterman maintained a paint store on the southside of Jamaica Avenue for 40 years. We call your attention to the new ad by the new owner, Mr. Haines, who also operates a paint store in Richmond Hill, and encourage your continued patronage. Mr. Peterman will remain on the staff for at least another year, so do drop in and say hello.

ANOTHER CHANGE OF HANDS occurred at Gene Tessler's Candy Store at Braddock and 237th St. The new owners have named the store Willies. Note their ad in our pages, and give them your business.

QUEENS VILLAGE FOR SALE, or the history book about it, rather. The Story of Queens Village by Vincent Seyfried has enjoyed brisk sale since our excerpt from the book was published in our Newsletter last month. Copies are still available at \$5. each by dropping by at 242-29 90th Avenue.

BRADDOCK FACELIFT is a sight for sore eyes. Work is almost finished between Springfield Boulevard down to Moline Street. In several instances bus stops were relocated to improve safety and convenience to passengers. Still to be done is the relocation of several light poles and traffic lights so that the traffic lights will be more visible than at present. So while the street is smoother to ride on, it will also be safer to use. The completion of the contract down to 243rd Street should begin this month, or October at the latest.

VOTER REGISTRATION is coming upon us. Registration will be conducted at your local polling place on October 3rd and 10th from 5:30 P.M. to 10:30 P.M., and on October 5th from 7:00 A.M. to 10:30 P.M. That area east of the centerline of 242nd St., and on the north side of 90th Avenue up to the rail spur report to P.S. 133 on 86th Av. and 248th St. The rest of the civic area reports to P.S. 18, 235th Court and Hillside Ave. AND DON'T FORGET primary day, September 10th, from 6:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. Only those who have registered in one of the four major political parties are involved, and then only if your chosen party is engaged in a contest for a particular office, either public or political. Primaries ARE important. This is where the choices are made for the ballot in November.

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We are saddened to report the passing of member Mr. Robert Ryan of 240th Street. To the bereaved family we offer our heartfelt sympathies.

Our sympathies are also extend to Mrs. Irene Handler and family on the death of her dear father on August 14th. Irene is president of Rocky Hill Civic Association and is executive secretary of the Queens Village Chamber of Commerce.

We hear that member and past Creedmoor Civic president, Ray Wickman of 239th Street is recuperating from a recent hernia operation. Best wishes for a speedy recovery, Ray.

240th Street is home to proud grandparents in the home of the Feeleys who have a new granddaughter, and to the Calis who have a new grandson.

Some consideration should be given to a program to replace many missing street trees in our civic area, and to plant trees where none have existed. If any homeowner wants a tree in front of their home, come down to the meeting, or phone president, Jim Trent, at 343-8830. The City has a matching program wherein the community puts up \$200. and the City plants 10 trees, but they must all be on one block. Three streets which come to mind that might qualify are Pontiac, Gettysburg and 239th Streets. So let's hear it from those blocks. To privately plant a tree can cost a property owner as much as \$150. if all specifications of the Parks Department are met. This is one means of getting a large size tree (14 feet - 16 feet tall) planted at little cost to either property owner or civic association.

On the other hand, if the homeowners on the west side of Moline Street near Braddock are willing to have their trees cut down, the Department of Highways can expedite the reconstruction of their street. We are informed that it is difficult to lower those sidewalks without uprooting the trees, and figuring out how to handle this has delayed the work. Trees would be replaced, of course. We would like to hear from those people about this.

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THE CREEDMOOR RIFLE RANGE

(We continue our excerpts from Vincent Seyfried's "THE HISTORY OF QUEENS VILLAGE." Last month was "How Creedmoor Got Its Name." This month we relate other highlights of the range.)

The National Rifle Association took over the property in July 1872. It was then an unrelieved tangle of weeds and scrub, but it had one ideal feature--it was perfectly flat with no undesirable humps or hollows that would make necessary the use of platforms and elevated ramps on the firing lines. The shape, size, and orientation was almost perfect, allowing the shooters to avoid having to shoot into the sun. Since Creedmoor lacked any natural backstop, an agreement was made with the Central R.R. to build embankments using dirt from a cut the railroad was making in the hills above Hillside Avenue. The railroad work moved so slowly that the 570 foot backstop was not finished until the summer of 1873.

The first shots on the Creedmoor range were fired on April 25, 1873 by the National Rifle Association secretary General Wingate. In the summer of 1873 Creedmoor was used almost daily by units of the National Guard and groups of NRA members, often as many as 5,000 at a time. On September 26, 1874 came the first international competition between a world championship team of Irish challengers and the Americans. The Remington and Sharp Rifle Companies produced special "Creedmoor" rifles to match the fine English guns. Eight thousand persons came to Creedmoor on the Central R.R. to witness the event. By 1875, the Creedmoor range, now fenced, improved and neatly landscaped, had become a model; it was possibly the most modern and best equipped in the world. Twenty-five additional acres had been rented for expansion. In the 1876 season, the 100th anniversary of the nation, the Creedmoor range reached the zenith of its fame when it played host to an assemblage of the best shooters of all nations for the long-range shooting championship of the world.

By 1880 the Creedmoor range had become a very busy spot. On Sundays there were regular excursions to Creedmoor station run by various rifle societies, rod and gun clubs, and the German Schutzenbund. A number of large hotels were built along Range Street to accommodate the visitors. A Creedmoor post office was opened in one of the hotels and lasted until W.W. I

In the 1880's friction between the Rifle Assn and the military began to reduce the frequency and prestige of the Creedmoor meets and deprived the range of much of its financial support. Disgusted with the lack of appreciation for its efforts, the NRA in May 1890 transferred control and ownership to New York State; the legislature appropriated \$25,000. for the purchase of land and facilities. With the range in state hands, it came to be used not only by the Infantry and Artillery, but also occasionally by sailors and marines. In May 1903 three new club houses were put up on the range, the last such improvements.

The presence of so many military men in the neighborhood of Queens Village was not always a blessing to the community. In 1897, for example, we read that 25 or 30 men of the 12th and 47th Regiment of the NY State National Guard, while walking to Queens station half drunk, entered an orchard and helped themselves to apples, and snatched flowers and fruit from postmaster Coomes' garden. When the son remonstrated, the drunken soldiers hit him over the head with a musket and knocked him senseless with a brick. When the soldiers fled to the trolley terminal at Lane's, the local constables managed to pursue them and arrest them.

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BRADDOCK PARTY PLANS SHAPING UP

The Creedmoor Civic Association Committee for the Braddock Playground Social is finalizing plans for the gala affair scheduled for September 21, 1974. At the time of this writing, two live bands, the Skatemobile, the Puppet-Mobile, and the Playmobile are among the highlights of the Saturday afternoon get-together. This is not a celebration of any event, just a chance to have some fun and meet your neighbors. The Parks Department will not permit us to sell any food, therefore we suggest that you bring with you whatever refreshments you feel you would like to have.

This is a repeat performance after the successful affair which we held last September. This time, we have enlarged the number of events of interest. ~~We are requiring that admission be limited only to those bearing the admission cards that are being enclosed with this issue of the Civic News. One card is good for the whole family.~~ Hours are 12 Noon to 4:30 p.m. Rain date is the following Saturday, September 28, 1974.

We were amazed last year at how many of our residents, including old-timers had never been inside Braddock Playground. This is an opportunity to see what a comprehensive facility it is. It encompasses 3.4 acres, and is larger than the playing field of Yankee Stadium (which is only 2.9 acres). To build a park like this today would cost an easy \$1 million. Most of the activities will take place in the rear paved area where softball is usually played, and on the grass Oval. We have a permit from the Dept. of Parks which closes these two areas to all but members of the Civic Ass'n.

Enjoy yourselves, bring your own picnic basket and sit in the shade of what is probably the largest Amur Cork Tree in Queens (Phellodendron amurense is the botanical name) located in the grass Oval. Those who came last year had a fine time, and we hope for an even better turnout this year. More details at our meeting on September 3rd.

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