

# Forest Park News

A Publication of the Forest Park Civic Association

## *Small Gardens Beautify our Neighborhood*

by Don Evans

As you walk or drive throughout the Forest Park neighborhood, notice the little gardens on many of the terraces. Have you ever wondered who is responsible for these lovely enhancements of our streetscapes?

Many of the plant materials are purchased through the Dashevsky Fund. Created with a gift from the sons of Ellie Dashevsky as a tribute to their mother, the Dashevsky Fund now is supported by donations from neighbors and FPCA members.

The gardens are planted and cared for by volunteers...your friends and neighbors.

If you have an idea for a beautification

project in a public space, are willing to be responsible for the project but need some help with funds and labor, please contact Bill Malloy, 734-6894.

Since 2000, over \$6300 has been contributed to the fund, and approximately \$5200 has been spent for flowers, garden supplies, and plantings on several of the neighborhood terraces. The Dashevsky Fund was used in a recent stump removal and tree planting project.

If you enjoy the gardens and want to support this initiative, please consider a donation to enable these projects to continue and expand. Make checks payable to the FPCA and include a nota-

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tion that the money is to be used for the Dashevsky fund. Donations can be sent to Don Evans, Treasurer, 233 Forest Park Ave.

Ellie Dashevsky was one of the founding members of the Forest Park Civic Association more than 40 years ago. She was an activist, who cared deeply about the City and especially about the Forest Park neighborhood. She also loved gardening and appreciated how much flowers and plants add to the beauty of our neighborhood. The Dashevsky Fund is a fitting tribute to Ellie, who is remembered fondly by all those who were privileged to know her.

**Elections for  
the 2008 F.P.C.A.  
Board will be held.**

## Forest Park Civic Association Annual Meeting And Potluck Dinner

When?

Sunday, February 24, 2008  
4:00 – 7:00 P.M.

Where?

Sumner Avenue School  
45 Sumner Avenue, Springfield

Guest Speaker

Gilbert Winn from Winn Companies will discuss the proposed plans for Longhill Gardens Condominiums  
Potluck Dinner

Please bring a dish according to the first letter of your last name:

A-H: Appetizers

I-S: Main Course

T-Z: Desserts

The F.P.C.A. will supply beverages please contact F.P.C.A. Programs committee member Tom Walsh @ (413) 788-6727 with any questions.

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Our email address is  
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Email board members using the first name  
and first initial of last name@forestparkca.com

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## President's Letter

# Notes, News and New Initiatives

Brian Sears

The theme is "new." We are well into the new year, with our new mayor, and another new year is starting for the Forest Park Civic Association. We can look back at 2007 with pride in the many things that were accomplished, but that wouldn't keep with my theme. We have a lot of work for 2008 and I would like to point out a few of the big items that I would like to see accomplished in 2008.

First, Longhill Gardens has been boarded up and an opportunity for the redevelopment of the site has been presented. WinnCompanies has put together a proposal for the demolition of three of the existing buildings, construction of "for sale" condos

on the west side of Longhill Street, and the rehab of 110 remaining apartments. WinnCompanies has presented their plans to both the FPCA Board and the Concerned Citizens Board. Both Organizations have publicly supported the plan and have urged the City to make this their top priority for the February 15th application deadline for State and Federal funding that would subsidize this project. It is crucial for this section of the Forest Park neighborhood be stabilized and not remain a boarded up building with no future.

Second, a Fundraiser is needed for the Association to continue to support the neighborhood as we would like to. The FPCA has traditionally hosted a holiday house tour that is always a great benefit to the association. We will need host families that will be willing to open their homes to allow this fundraiser. We will also need the volunteers to bring this fundraiser back to life.

Third, and most important, we need Growth in both our membership and in our Board of Directors. I grew up in this neighborhood on Marengo Park and moved back to this neighborhood after seven years in Boston. I returned because I got married in 2002 and knew I would be starting a family. I do not regret it for a minute and I love this neighborhood. I also want to ensure I do everything I can to make sure it stays

a great neighborhood, which is why I am on the Board and the President of the FPCA. We need to grow the Board of Directors and it is time for our parents' generation to be let off the hook.

They have carried

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this Association for over 30 years and it is time for the next generation to step up and work for this neighborhood and association.

We have many other goals for 2008, and hopefully we can focus on the social events for the year. I would be pleased if we didn't have to stand up and yell about something this year, but rest assured that the FPCA and the Board of Directors will stand up in a second if needed to ensure that City Hall continues to fight as hard as we do to ensure that our neighborhood thrives.

Regards,  
Brian P. Sears

# Longhill Gardens Saga

Russ Seelig

The saga of the 211 unit condominium complex on Longhill Street continues. The buildings are completely shut down. No power, no water, all accessible windows and doors are boarded or otherwise secured and it's looking very sad although better than in the days of being occupied with tenants with a number of social problems.

Concerned Citizens for Springfield, Inc., aka CCS, owns five condos at the site, bought from the City, which had acquired them in tax title takings. As part of the purchase agreement, CCS, at no cost to the complex, demolished the 11 crime-ridden, dilapidated garages along either side of Edgeland Street. The then majority owners, Mayer Orgel and Morris Schwartz, promised to bring the site up to housing code standards and CCS began renovating its units and buying new appliances, planning to provide safe, sanitary rental units. Orgel and Schwartz then changed their minds

about upgrades and CCS initiated Housing Court action to bring the site into compliance. CCS never rented its units because of numerous housing code violations in the common areas, including broken windows, broken locks, lead paint, litter and trash.

CCS and the FPCA Board have heard presentations by Gilbert Winn, Winn Development, for the site. Their plan would include some demolition, substantial renovations and some new construction of town houses along the west side of Longhill street, reducing the number of units from the present 211 to about 130, and some additional parking. Winn is expected to make a more detailed presentation to the FPCA general membership at the February 24 Annual Meeting. There are many obstacles to making this a reality but it's promising to see this kind of interest from a responsible developer.

Winn now owns and manages the Northern Heights row houses along Central Street (formerly Carabetta) and Museum Place on Chestnut Street (formerly the Sheraton). Winn also owns and manages Chicopee Village, formerly Chicomansett Village, in Chicopee. Winn's web site also lists extensive holdings in eastern Mass. Winn is highly recommended by people in the industry.

CCS's and the City's lawsuits against Longhill Omega LLC and Shalom Segelman as the manager of Omega

and the condominium's common areas are on hold pending a decision from the Mass Appellate Court in regard to a contempt finding against Segelman by the Hampden Housing Court. The hearing before the Appellate Court was held early in December and a decision is expected within the next month.

In the meantime, Segelman has filed yet another action in Federal District Court alleging infringement of several of his constitutional rights and also alleging conspiracy on the part of the City, Citibank and CCS to deprive Segelman of due process.

Among the complaints are: malicious prosecution, violation of constitutional right to religious exercise, violation of right to access to the courts, substantive due process violation, denial of equal protection/selective prosecution, conspiracy to deprive Segelman of rights and privileges, breach of fiduciary duty. This case was filed January 8, 2008 and is expected to proceed very slowly through the system.

Stay tuned!

## The FPCA Invites You To Join!

Send a \$15 check payable to FPCA  
along with this form to:  
FPCA Membership  
P.O. Box 80709  
Springfield, MA 01138-0708

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