

The GREEN

LIGHT



BULLETIN of the POINT ASSOCIATION

NEWPORT

MARCH 1960

RHODE ISLAND

MARCH BOARD MEETING: The postponed meeting of the Executive Committee was held on March 10 at the home of the First Vice-President, George D. Weaver, Jr. The President, Edwin H. Brownell, was in the chair.

TREASURER: Richard S. Weiss reported a balance of \$2380.16, of which \$1908.32 is in the savings account.

The President made a report which concerned the representation of The Point Association at the February 17 meeting of the City Council. Six members and officers attended, and our surveys on lighting, street signs, sidewalk repairs, etc. were presented. Mr. Brownell was asked to speak, and stated that though he realized much in our survey must be considered as long-term, he felt that "musts" included better lighting, more adequate policing, and improvement in sanitation either through the reinstatement of a nuisance inspector or by better enforcement of existing ordinances, or both. Councilman J.H. McCormick promised full cooperation in presenting our needs, and Board members will attend all specific budget hearings. After Mr. Brownell's remarks, the City Clerk read a prepared commendation of the efforts of the Point Association. (see Page 3)

At the Board meeting, a long discussion followed Mr. Brownell's report, touching on vital areas where more lighting is needed, specific poles to be designated, police, etc.

It was VOTED that a full-time, year round patrolman be requested - an absolute minimum being a part-time patrolman for the months of June, July, August and September.

The post of nuisance inspector was again advocated, but it was brought out that such an office is useless unless ordinances can be enforced and penalties imposed. The Commissioner of Public Works is responsible for enforcement of ordinances concerning proper preparation and handling of refuse. The Point Ass'n will take steps to press the matter.

INCORPORATION: Our charter is in process of being restored, and we should soon be incorporated again.

SOOT NUISANCE: A most cooperative letter in reply to ours has been received from Mr. Arthur Myers, Division Chief of the Jamestown Ferry Division. Mr. Myers states that the Division will do anything it can to reduce the nuisance and inconvenience. Orders have been given to firemen to keep the boilers on the ferries in top condition. Tubes are to be blown only in the middle of the bay where the smoke will not reach shore, and no carelessness will be tolerated.

TREES: John L. Murphy, chairman, read a list of 50 trees to be planted this spring - 25 on Washington St.; the other 25 to be distributed on Second, Willow, Poplar, and Van Zandt Avenue.

PROTECTION: Dr. David Nemtzw, chairman, has received and taken care of several complaints. He requested that all members note the time elapsing between the placing of cans at the curb by the "puller", and the time of truck collection, and send the notes to him at 31 Third Street.

A semi-official report listed 169 dog bites throughout the city

in one year. The ordinances on the whole subject of dogs are practically non-existent.

BULLETIN: Miss Price reported a circulation of 372 for the February issue. The 2¢ bulk rate is in force but will not effect a spectacular saving, owing to the fee and printing involved. However, it will reduce the number delivered by hand.

Balance Feb. 1		\$177.85
30 reams paper	\$29.70	
bulk rate fees	30.00	
printing 5000		
outside page	11.25	
postage, Feb.	6.12	
	<u>\$77.07</u>	77.07
Balance, March 1		\$100.78

CLEAN-UP: Mrs. Geo. D. Weaver, jr. chairman, outlined her plans for a "Clean Up and Beautify the Point" project. A Junior Garden Contest will be a feature, and the cooperation of Callender and Potter Schools is assured. All Point young people under 16 are eligible, and the areas of endeavor include:

- (a) gardens - flower & vegetable
- (b) weeding, cleaning unsightly areas and removing trash
- (c) window-boxes and tubs

On application, seeds, tools and supplies will be provided by the Point Ass'n. Three very interesting and unusual prizes will be announced. There will also be a poster project, the results to be displayed in connection with our July 9th Event.

Mrs. Weaver asked that children notify her at VI 6-2894 of the type of project chosen.

MARINE EXHIBIT: Wm. J. Fitzpatrick Jr., chairman, reported that he and his committee of young people have been promised some very worthwhile exhibits for the proposed Maritime Exhibition to be held on July 9th in Grafton House. Anyone having items to loan, please contact him at VI 7-5395, or leave a message at VI 6-3144 (Televoice)

GARDEN COMMITTEE: William H. Fullerton was named chairman of a garden committee, and will also act as a consultant to anyone wishing advice on starting a garden.

PLANNING: Robert J. Kerr, II, chairman, displayed slides relating to the current urban redevelopment plan and the Tunnard & Harris survey. Maps, charts and graphs, coupled with Mr. Kerr's explanation of the basic problems and possible solutions, clarified the plan and presented a most interesting and provocative exposition.

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THE BIG SNOW : Reminders of the storm will probably still be with us even as this goes to press - but the calendar tells us that robins and crocuses cannot be too far away. Indeed, Mrs. Wm. E. Burke had a number of yellow crocuses in full bloom under her window at 107 Washington Street on February 20. Let us hope they knew how to take care of themselves under a snowdrift.

The Point presents a particularly difficult snow-removal problem. With practically no garages, cars must park on the streets, and with houses built close together and right on the sidewalk line, there is nowhere to put the snow when and if walks are shoveled.

It was good to see that many Pointers did clear their sidewalks. Many did not. There again - an ordinance that is never enforced, and which, if it were, might work real hardship on elderly people unable to do their own shoveling and perhaps in circumstances where hiring labor might be out of the question.

However, we noted a good many spots where such conditions did not apply, but where no attempt had been made to clear even a footpath. The worst hazard, it would seem, was where sidewalks on BOTH sides of a street were impassable, and school children and older folk were forced to walk in the middle of the street, at the mercy of skidding cars and splattered ice and slush.

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The following Resolution was read by the City Clerk at the Feb'y 17th meeting of the City Council, and a copy presented to Edwin H. Brownell:

THE CITY OF NEWPORT
Resolution of the Council #41-60

WHEREAS a group of public-spirited citizens formed an organization for the prime purpose of beautifying a section of the City of Newport commonly known as the Point, AND WHEREAS The Point Association of the City of Newport, through its varied activities, has done much to retain the original character of this historic section of our city, NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Newport hereby commends the said Association for an excellent job, AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution, signed by the Mayor and countersigned by the City Clerk, be transmitted to Mr. Edwin Brownell, president of The Point Association.

(signed) James L. Maher, Mayor
John F. Fitzgerald, City Clerk

In Council read and passed, February 17, 1960. A true copy attest.

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This resolution, which was introduced by the Councilman for the First Ward, Mr. J. Harold McCormick, should be most gratifying to our membership, and spur each of us to support, promote and implement every effort for the beautification, improvement and preservation of the area which means so much to us and which should and could be so important an asset to the city.

Whether it be fighting for a cleaner Point, stressing our need for better ordinances, educating the children in the history of the Point, planting trees, hoeing gardens, trying to save old houses - there is a part for each of us to play, according to our various tastes and talents. But there is work for all.

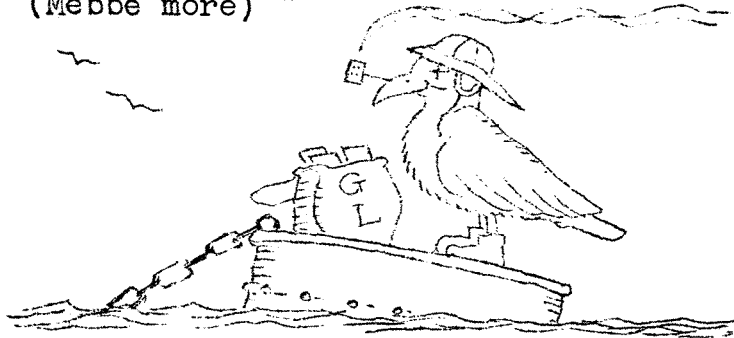
(SILLY SECTION)
When the Seagull heard of the postage rate
It flapped its wings for joy,
And felt that now it could hardly wait
To rest on an offshore buoy.

But a conscience seems to be concealed
Somewhere in that feathered skull,
And it cannot yet completely yield,
For it is a stubborn gull.

It said, "How silly to mail them things
Right here in the neighborhood;
I got web feet and a coupla wings,
And I reckon it does me good.

"Yep, I feels compelled to be sorta thrifty -
So I'll still flop 'round with forty or fifty..

(Mebbe more) "



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+++ ROBERT DUNHAM, HIS HOUSE +++

In the autumn of 1770, Robert Dunham, cooper, and Thomas Dunton, joiner, bought a piece of land on Cherry Street from the Proprietors of Easton's Point. It was Lot 39 in the Second Division of the Point. Later that year Dunton and his wife Patience sold their half-interest in the lot to Dunham for 30 shillings. But it is likely that Dunton the carpenter helped Dunham the cooper to build a house on the land (perhaps in the spring of 1771) - for by 1775, when Dunham and his wife Elizabeth sold the property to one William Carter, not only the lot but the "messuage," or dwelling-house and out-buildings, appears in the deed.

The property changed hands often as the years rolled on. Ezekiel Pearce bought it from Jonathan Stoddard in 1792 for 212 Spanish silver milled dollars; and Robert Shearman purchased it from Pearce for sixty pounds in 1794. No one seems to have lived more than a few years at a time in the little house, and it appears to have reverted to the Proprietors of Easton's Point - for in 1804 we find Constant Taber acquiring it from that body as a devisee of the Second Baptist Church, on a 999 year lease.

But in 1828 we find Eleazer Trevett obtaining it from the church - Martha Thurston, widow of Abraham (a Proprietor) giving him a quit-claim on it, to boot. And now we come to the "handwriting on the wall" which we mentioned in our tale concerning "Lights in the Windows" at 3 Pine St. (The theory that the house was the Ellery Ferry House was only a theory.)

When Mr. Howard Shivers recently tore away the wallboard covering the slab siding of the inside of the gambrel, there was exposed the name "Thurston" scrawled on the rough board, probably with a piece of lime plaster, preceded by an almost illegible word which may have been "Abraham". Some Thurston, mending roof in the early 1800's, may have signed his name to the job, and the large capital F below might have been the initial of FINIS to a difficult task that satisfied him. The house was still on the north side of Cherry Street between Washington and Secor.

However, by 1853, the great stone mansion of Agatha Mayer (Stella Maris) was about to be built - and on the whole tract of more than two blocks soon to be nicknamed "Mayer's Park", the little house was the only building (with the exception of some barns) to block the project. So in 1853 Mrs. Mayer bought the property from Trevett and purchased two lots at the corner of Pine and Third Streets from Maria Smith. (Maria was the daughter of Benedict Smith, who had been a drummer-boy in the Revolution. Mrs. Mayer moved the little house to its present location, and eventually there was added to it part of a house that had stood till 1868 on Chestnut St., and which Dr. Child disposed of when he cleared the area to build his school. (Now the Home for the Aged.)

The house is neither large nor "important" - but every 18th century house is important - and Mr. Shivers may well be thanked for saving it, and congratulated on the fine job he has done in making it eminently livable. And to Mrs. Clifford Sherman, ardent and indefatigable researcher, goes our gratitude for her labors in running down deeds - even some of those taken away by the British at the evacuation - and for painstakingly fitting together the missing pieces of the puzzle. We have the "pedigree" of one more house. Needless to say, Mrs. Bolhouse of the Newport Historical Society is our indispensable mainstay in all such endeavors.

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