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George Catlett Marshall
(1880-1959)
Chief military advisor to Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt

INSIDE

Rogue newspapers fight back. City backs away from banning free newspaper distribution.

See page 2.

SERVING CHICAGO'S NORTH SIDE NEIGHBORHOODS

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NOVEMBER 7-13, 2007

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Grocery shopping in high society... earthbound not allowed



photo by Garin Pirnia

Enjoy lunch, enjoy view — all at grocery store
Tables and chairs are lined up along the wall so people can sit, eat a meal, and gaze out.

POTASH BROTHERS OPENS UPSCALE STORE WITH A VIEW

BY GARIN PIRNIA
SPECIAL TO INSIDE

The John Hancock building soars to 100 floors, offering residential condos up to the 92nd floor and currently boasting the title of the world's highest residential tower. In August, the Hancock may have qualified for another record: the highest grocery store in the world. Potash Brothers Supermarket opened their third city location on the 44th floor and call it Gourmet 44. The newest store is private, only accessible to residents and employees in the building. When the unique store opened a couple of months ago, employees got a tip from a resident who said

Potash had to be the highest grocery store. The adjacent swimming pool is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the highest swimming pool (it was also used in the movie "Poltergeist III") so it made sense for the grocery to deserve the title because most markets are located on the ground floor.

The Hancock has always offered a market in that space, but when Hancock Market decided to vacate the building, the condo association contacted Art Potash about moving in. He runs the family-owned chain of Potash Brothers stores at 875 N. State St. and 1525 N. Clark St. Potash had always thought about expanding his chain and it seemed like a good idea to him. "I saw this view so I definitely considered it," says Potash. "We built the store around the views."

Gourmet 44 draws a smaller clientele than the other Potash

See POTASH p. 19

Bell School parents stage protest over Centrum's townhouse plan

BY PETER VON BUOL
SPECIAL TO INSIDE

Wearing red shirts as a show of solidarity, dozens of parents of students enrolled at North Center's Alexander Graham Bell Elementary School staged a quiet protest at an Oct. 25 zoning meeting at Paul Revere Park, 2509 W. Irving Park Rd., hosted by Ald. Gene Schuler (47th).

About 110 people attended the meeting to hear a presentation by real-estate developer Centrum Properties, which is seeking a zoning change to allow it to build 31 four-story town-homes at a site located at Addison St. and Campbell Ave. The site is currently zoned for commercial purposes and is located in the Bell School District. The grade school is consistently recognized as one of the city's leading public grade schools but it is also overcrowded.

The Bell School district is bounded by Western Ave. to the east, California Ave. to the west, Irving Park Rd. to the north, and Addison St. to the south.

During the meeting, residents and parents of Bell students questioned the alderman as to the short notice given for the meeting. Schuler responded by telling those in attendance that his staff has

found that giving residents a week's notice was the best approach. "We have tried with a month-in-advance notice and have found the best notice is about a week to 10 days," said Schuler.

When others questioned the alderman's voting procedure of allowing only one vote per household at neighborhood meetings instead of allowing all registered voters to participate, the alderman took issue.

"The voting formula is the same as [what it was for the already existing] Bradley Place [developments]. Each eligible unit will have one vote," said Schuler. "Many wards don't have these meetings. I bring the different forces together so you can make an intelligent decision and I am neutral. These meetings are only advisory anyway but my vote [before the Chicago City Council] will reflect what the vote [will be] in the community. When we are done with the meeting process, then we will take a vote."

When asked when such a vote would take place, Schuler did not give an answer.

At the meeting, members of the parents' group said they were protesting zoning changes that have already been allowed within their district and that they said

have caused enrollment at the school to increase by 27 percent within the last six years.

The district once included numerous factories and industrial parks, but in recent years land has shifted to residential use as developers have sought to capitalize on the district's high-performing school.

According to members of the parents' group, the unchecked growth in the number of new residences has directly caused overcrowding at Bell School.

"It is clear that future strain from enrollment growth will further jeopardize Bell School's ability to continue offering these unique programs and the excellent student enrichment and education for which Bell is known," according to the group's Web site, signforbell.com.

To control overcrowding, the group advocates "limiting the Western boundary of the Bell district to only include property parcels which currently exist as, or are currently zoned to allow, residential use."

At the meeting, several parents said developers forgo building in nearby school districts in order to be able to market their properties

See BELL p. 19

Construction of new 23rd District police station may start this year

BY CHRIS ORCHARD
SPECIAL TO INSIDE

Initial land preparation at the site of the new 23rd District police station will likely begin this year, as crews get ready for demolition work.

According to Montel Gayles, executive director of Chicago's Public Buildings Commission, plans for the new police station are still in the "design phase," but the project should go out to bid within the next nine to 11 months. The new police station, which will be constructed just west of the site of the current District 23 building at the corner of Halsted and Addison streets, could be up and running by the end of 2009, but more likely by winter or

spring of 2010. The city will construct the new 23rd District station next to the current police building, between Fremont and Halsted streets along Addison St. To do this, the city has acquired, by eminent domain, two parcels of land, according to Tunney. These parcels include Midas Muffler, to the north of the current station, and a multi-unit apartment building to the west. The new police station will also be partly built on the current site of the LeMoyné School parking lot at Fremont Street, land acquired through an intergovernmental agreement with the Board of Education. The new 23rd District police building will replace the old "Town Hall" station currently being used, though the

See 23RD DISTRICT p. 15

CALLING ALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS!

Here's your chance to show off your artistic ability. Just send Inside Publications an 8 1/2-by-11-inch vertical drawing, in black and white, of a North Side landmark with a holiday twist so we have it in our hands by noon Friday, Dec. 14. The best drawing, as chosen by the Inside staff, will grace the cover of the holiday issue of our newspaper Dec. 19, and be posted on our Web site. The artist will receive \$100. Past winners have drawn a tomb at Graceland Cemetery wrapped in holiday lights and the

Picasso sculpture at Daley Plaza wearing a Santa hat and surrounded by snow. The entries of several runners-up will also be printed in the holiday issue. Be creative! Computer artwork is not eligible.

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CONT. FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

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NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, UNION COUNTY IN THE Court Hubert G. Foka vs. Varley Murdock 07 CVD 2981, to Varley Murdock. Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought is as follows: dissolution of marriage. You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than December 18th, 2007 and upon your failure to do so the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought. This the 7th day of November, 2007. FRANKLIN S. HANCOCK, Attorney for Plaintiff, 1201 Concord Avenue, Monroe, NC 28110-2907

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BELL from p. 1

as being within the Bell School District.

Bell School offers a Deaf Program, a Regional Gifted Program, and an impressive Neighborhood Program. Its leadership, staff, and teachers have a strong reputation.

This is not the first time that Centrum has asked for a zoning change for the parcel. Two years ago, Centrum had the parcel rezoned from industrial use to commercial use.

At the meeting, resident Mark Reynolds remarked that he was not happy to again have to go through the voting process for a zoning change.

"[Centrum] should live up to the original agreement. We already voted on this. [Centrum] might have to eat a little profit but that's real estate," said Reynolds.

Officials from Centrum said "market realities" have caused the company to request another zoning change for the same piece of land. They say they have been unable to attract high-end tenants such as a bank or a non-fast-food restaurant.

"The current zoning is not in the best interest or the highest use of the site. Do you want lower quality real estate — or townhomes?" said John McLinden, founder and principal of the Chicago-based Centrum Properties Inc.

"We do high-quality retail but we didn't get it. [Commercial tenants] want to be on Western [instead of Addison St. and Campbell Ave.]," said McLinden. "We know Bell is overcrowded. That is why we are proposing a voluntary impact-fee in exchange for a zoning change. We'll pay the fee and then we would be allowed to build."

While McLinden said this would be the

first time an impact-fee would be paid by a developer in the City of Chicago, he said such fees are often used by suburbs. McLinden resides in the suburb of Winnetka and is the current chairman of the village's design review board.

To alleviate some of the problems at Bell, McLinden proposed donating \$10,000 to the Friend of Bell School for each unit he would build at the proposed Bradley Place Three development.

"We want to pay to expand Bell. We have suggested that we pay \$300,000 to the Friends of Bell School. We have already paid \$500,000 for our first two Bradley Place developments. Every new development should pay this fee. That's what we are saying! We wished we weren't impacting Bell but we are. We are trying to alleviate that," added McLinden.

At the meeting, architect and district resident Michael Wilkinson said that he did not want any more overcrowding at the school and that he did not believe it was impossible to find desirable tenants for the site.

"I don't see the upside of this project. I have two kids at Bell. Overcrowding is not a perception...it's a reality. Residential is more profitable. That's why you don't want to do commercial! Why only \$10,000 per unit?" asked Wilkinson.

McLinden countered Wilkinson by saying that he would be able to make a profit with the current zoning, but perhaps residents might not approve of the type of businesses he would be able to attract such as a convenience store or a fast-food store.

"If we don't get our requested change, we will have no choice but to go ahead and build retail. These types of stores are not desirable but they are profitable," added McLinden.

POTASH from p. 1



photo by Gern Pima

On top of the world

Adjacent to the market is a swimming pool that is open only to residents, not employees and not the public. The pool has a stunning view.

from customers has been phenomenal. It's a status symbol to be in the Hancock building. It's a landmark and people from all over the world know about it. It's a nice thing to be a part of."

Store manager John Robertson seems unfazed by the status. "It feels the same as other stores but with a better view. When we get thunderstorms, you can feel the building move a little," he said.

Pat Cohen, a resident for 38 years and a design team member, calls Potash the "Gucci groceries." She comes in everyday to have coffee and to see who's around, making the store a social gathering place for her. "Art is good at making sure everyone's needs are met," Cohen declares. "The staff is superb, congenial, and very helpful." With winter coming, residents appreciate that they never have to leave the building.

For more information, call (312) 884-0060 or visit potashbros.com.

Chef Takashi to open restaurant in Bucktown

The restaurant formerly known as Scylla, 1952 N. Damen Ave., is being renovated to improve the flow of the space. Takashi Beard award, plans to open a high-end restaurant in that space sometime this month.

Preservation Snapshots: Classical Perspective

The next Preservation Snapshots lecture, titled Classical Perspective, will take place on Thursday, Nov. 15, at the Chicago Cultural Center's Claudia Cassidy Theater. Architect Thomas Gordon Smith will talk about the current reanimation of classical architecture in relation to his role as an architectural fellow for the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). Chicago is a great setting for this theme due to the classical federal presence before World War II, as well as the move away from classicism during the 1960s (for example, Mies van der Rohe's Federal Center). Smith will discuss the past and a current courthouse design by Chicago architects Hammond, Beeby, Rupert, Ainge, which represents GSA's renewed interest in the classical idiom.

Landmarks Illinois' Preservation Snapshots series provides a monthly review of preservation issues with experts presenting talks on a specific subject. Question and answer sessions will follow each talk. The series takes place at the Chicago Cultural Center, 77 E. Randolph St., Chicago, on the third Thursday of every month at 12:15 p.m. The public is invited to attend; you need not be a member to participate. Admission is free.