

Shaw Main Streets News

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Spring 2004

OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the *Shaw Main Streets News*. Shaw Main Streets (SMS) is proud to update you on its exciting activities and plans. For those of you not familiar with us, Shaw residents, community leaders, and business owners founded SMS in March 2002 to promote the community-driven economic revitalization of Shaw's 7th and 9th Street commercial corridors. The organization's mission is to preserve and restore the diverse, historic environment of the 7th and 9th Street commercial corridors, offering residents and visitors alike a better place to live, work, shop, play, and pray.

Shaw Main Streets wants to:

- Support and strengthen neighborhood businesses currently operating in Shaw.
- Attract new businesses and jobs to Shaw.
- Provide residents of Shaw with retail establishments that offer the goods and services that they and visitors need and want.
- Help keep dollars in the neighborhood and the District.
- Strengthen the perception of Shaw as an historic and safe community.
- Restore the 7th and 9th Street commercial corridors to the prominence that they historically held.

We're always looking for new members. We hope you'll consider volunteering for SMS. Those of you interested

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Partial funding for Shaw Main Streets, Inc. is provided by reSTORE DC/DC Main Streets, Anthony A. Williams, Mayor.

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MESSAGE FROM THE SMS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Dr. Warren Flint

Greetings, Shaw Main Streets supporters. I came on board as executive director of Shaw Main Streets on December 1, 2003. I have already had the opportunity to meet many of you and look forward to getting together with more SMS supporters as we move down the road of commercial renewal for the 7th and 9th Street corridors. I also want to offer my sincere appreciation to all of you who have extended me a warm welcome in assuming the position of executive director. I am gratified and enthusiastic about our Main Street program from the tremendous support the community has shown to me.

I firmly believe that the key to the Shaw community's future is our ability to learn to work together, to recognize that the Shaw commercial district needs the rest of the city, and to recognize that we are linked together and that none of us will reach our full potential unless all of us have the opportunity to succeed. Too many have yet to share in the prosperity of a new economy. I am confident that this organization will help in turning this tide.

The vision that residents and business owners alike have for the SMS target area is extremely admirable and doable. When I listen to people say how they want Shaw to be the finest place in the District of Columbia to live, work, and raise children, I am genuinely excited. Likewise, I am encouraged about the potential achievement of this vision when I hear people say that businesses, community groups, volunteers, and the government can work together to realize the full promise of the SMS area. And the idea that the citizens of Shaw and beyond will apply the full range of their talents and resources to making sure no part of the Shaw community is left behind is an impressive goal. If this vision and these goals are attained, it will mean that citizens are sharing their ideas and insights, their hopes and dreams, and building a unified voice that will propel the SMS focus area to premier destination status in the District of Columbia and beyond.

Although the Shaw Main Streets program is less than a year old, there are already a number of program successes

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR *continued on page 3*

in participating in the work of SMS but who can't commit to serving on committees can still have a voice in decision-making. You can attend public meetings, respond to surveys, and volunteer in other ways, such as through participation in specific projects. Ask to be added to the SMS mailing list to ensure that you are advised of the organization's ongoing activities and progress. Future issues of this newsletter will be distributed via email or by mail to anyone requesting a free subscription. Printed copies will also be available at selected locations in the SMS service area. To receive the newsletter via email or postal mail, send a message to info@shawmainstreets.com or call 202-232-2915, ext. 109. ♦

SMS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Economic Revitalization

By Tim Mack, Chair

The SMS Economic Revitalization Committee is organized to accomplish the following tasks:

- Learn what businesses are currently in Shaw and what is missing.
- Develop strategies and tools for strengthening existing businesses.
- Recruit new and needed businesses.
- Survey existing building stock with an eye to commercial use.
- Identify financial resources and incentives for business expansion, new businesses and building rehabilitation
- Track economic development over time.

The ER Committee has been very active this winter, working with the SMS Design Committee on a commercial building inventory (and business directory) and with the Promotion Committee on a range of projects that will enhance the economic health of Shaw's commercial area. Our participating members range from business owners to citizens to government officials who meet together to improve the economic health of Shaw's commercial corridors.

This year, Economic Revitalization Committee members have attended a week-long training workshop on real estate development at the National Main Streets Center and a two-day training on market research at the newly opened Enhanced Business Information Center at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library. Finally, the Committee is looking for additional new members who care about revitalization of the Shaw Neighborhood. We meet at 7:00 pm on the fourth Thursday of each month at the SMS offices at 614 S Street, NW.

Organization

By Perry Bird, Chair

Do you know people in the Shaw neighborhood? Are you an organized person who enjoys a challenge and wants to see the results of your efforts? Do you like helping to ensure worthwhile projects and organizations have enough funding to be successful? Do you want to see Shaw become a better place to live, work, shop, play, and pray? If you've answered yes to any of the questions above, then the Organization Committee wants you!

The Organization Committee has been busy creating a committee mission statement and goals for 2004. The proposed committee mission is to ensure that Shaw Main Streets is provided with adequate fundraising strategies and is professionally managed. The committee has created several goals that will support this mission. They include: identifying and developing sources of funding for Shaw Main Streets' operations—this will result in the creation of a fundraising plan for the organization; attracting and retaining a variety of volunteers for the organization—this includes the development of a volunteer management program; and providing guidance for the organization to establish and maintain appropriate legal and financial structures.

The committee's next meeting is on Tuesday, March 16, 6:00-7:30 pm at the SMS offices at 614 S Street, NW. After this meeting, the committee will meet the first Monday of each month. If you're interested in serving on the Organization Committee, or would like additional information, please contact Shaw Main Streets.

Design

By Kelby Seamen, Co-Chair

The Design Committee is charged with enhancing the attractiveness of Shaw's 7th and 9th Street commercial corridor, including the perception that it is a clean and safe place. Among our focuses are historic facade rehabilitation, street and alley clean-up, banners, landscaping and other physical aspects of the commercial corridors. Design improvements will result from public and private investment in our neighborhood, as well as volunteer efforts.

The Design Committee began its work this past December. Our regular meetings are on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Shaw Main Streets office at 614 S Street, NW. We are currently looking for new committee members to work on projects and provide input. Current projects underway include a cherry tree planting, a photographic survey of

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Tobago's Catering & Café at 1845 7th Street, NW (202-332-1473) is a great example of the small but high quality businesses that are prospering in the Shaw neighborhood. The Caribbean food carryout is owned and operated by Antoinette Charles, who moved from the investment finance and real estate world to cooking for a living because "cooking has always been my passion." Jerk chicken, fish in Trinidad sauce, roti bread and ginger-pineapple juice are just a few of the treats waiting for customers. Tobago's recently was featured in the *Washington Post* and *DC North*.

The restaurant has a couple of tables near the windows and plans to add more outside when good weather comes. The hours are centered around mealtimes, with the longest day being Friday, from 11:30 am to 7:00 pm. The rest of the week is 11:30 am to 6:00 pm, except for Sunday and Monday, when they are closed. This is already a favorite of Shaw Main Streets staff and volunteers, and it is right around the corner from the office at Manna CDC. Come on down to Tobago's and join them for a great meal at reasonable prices. ♦

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Shaw Main Streets Annual Meeting

MARCH 23, 2004 @7:00 PM

SEE FOREVER/MAYA ANGELOU PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

1851 NINTH STREET, NW

Please attend the first annual meeting of Shaw Main Streets! In addition to a presentation about the Maya Angelou Public Charter School and its historic home, we will present the proposed Board of Directors slate to the membership for their approval. Persons elected to the board will serve a two-year term (except for persons who already serve on the board – they will serve a one-year term). Anybody who is on our membership rolls (persons who have attended at least one SMS business meeting or at least one SMS committee meeting) is eligible to vote.

Proposed Board of Directors Slate

Letha Blount
Matt Comstock
Maudine Cooper
Kate Damon
Tim Downey
Helen Durham

Priscilla Francis
Al Gonsouland
Tim Mack
Alex Padro
Greg Thomas

Refreshments will be served, and tours of the historic Odd Fellows Hall will be available. See you there!

to point to:

- Shaw Historic House Tour—October 2003.
- Several public meetings to engage all Shaw stakeholders.
- Media coverage of several restaurants in the Shaw Main Streets area in *DC North*.
- Black History Month Celebration—February 2004.
- Small Business Development Course (30 students)—February to April 2004.

As executive director of Shaw Main Streets, I am dedicated to working with residents, businesses and property owners, non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, and other stakeholders work together across the boundaries of race, income, sector, politics, and geography. Together we can work to enhance everyone's respective talents and resources in order to increase the economic competitiveness of the area, to support historic preservation in the neighborhood, and to improve the quality of life for everyone. I look forward to hearing from you in the weeks and months to come to talk about how we can all work together to preserve and enhance the historical, cultural, and ethnic diversity of our community by focusing upon the retention of existing businesses and the recruitment of new commercial ventures that meet the community's needs. ♦

BUSINESSES LOOKING FOR SPACE

in the Shaw Main Streets area should check out the former Watha T. Daniels Plumbing Shop, at 1525 9th Street, NW, which is about to be renovated. The building's total square footage is approximately 2,800, on two above-grade floors (~1400 SF each). There is alley access, but no parking. The lease rate is \$5,000/month (\$2,500/floor), NNN (tenant pays taxes, utilities and insurance), negotiable. A total renovation, as basic commercial space, paid and managed by the owner, will be complete by July 1, 2004. For more information, contact Gallatin Capital Partners, (202) 256-0853

Newly renovated office and retail space is also available at 1503 9th Street, NW. A 600 square foot office on the second floor rents for \$1,295 per month. The rent for the 600 square foot retail space on the first floor is negotiable. The rest of the building has already been rented. Contact Guang Li at 703-898-6206.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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the commercial corridors, adapting our historic police and fire call boxes as historic markers, boulevard banners and the establishment of SMS' design review process for renovations and new construction along 7th and 9th Streets.

To learn more about the Design Committee or to get involved, please come to our next meeting. Please contact Shaw Main Streets for details.

Promotion

By Matthew Comstock, Chair

The Promotion Committee's job is to create excitement in commercial districts. Street festivals, parades, retail events, and image development campaigns are some of the ways Main Street encourages customer traffic. Promotion involves creating and marketing an enticing image to shoppers, investors, and visitors.

Types of activities already completed or underway include:

- Creation of a new logo for SMS.
- Establishment of a revised website.
- Development of printed informational pieces about the program.
- Design and publication of this quarterly newsletter and a monthly update.
- Development of new promotional events.

We're always looking for new ideas to promote our historic commercial corridors. If you're interested, just attend our next meeting. The committee meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 pm at the SMS offices at 614 S Street, NW. If you are interested in being a part of, or would like additional information about, the Promotion Committee, please contact Shaw Main Streets. ♦

HAPPENINGS

Delegate Norton Honored at Black History Salute

On February 12, 2004, in the theater at the City Museum of Washington, DC, Shaw Main Streets paid tribute to the legacy of Dr. Carter G. Woodson. At the event, SMS presented the first Shaw Main Streets Shaw Champion Award to DC Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton in recognition of her work in obtaining passage of the legislation authorizing the National Park Service to develop a National Historic Site honoring the father of Black history at 1538 9th Street, NW. This new National Historic Site will draw tens of thousands of visitors each year, generating foot traffic for businesses in the Shaw commercial district. The National Park Service and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History also paid tribute to Norton that evening, followed by presentations on plans for renovation of the O Street Market and a proposal for redevelopment of the Howard Theatre and the block on which it stands. ♦



SMS Board Chair Alexander M. Padro presents etched glass Shaw Champion Award to Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton. Photo: Pleasant P. Mann.



The Story Behind Our Logo

Shaw Main Streets uses an image of the historic O Street Market, located at 7th and O Streets, NW, in its logo. Built in 1881, it is one of the last three public market buildings still standing in DC. It cost \$15,000.00 to construct, a considerable amount at the time. The market has long been a city landmark identified with the Shaw community. The stylish, red brick Romanesque structure, with Queen Ann detailing, was chosen to complement the homes that were already part of the community in the late 19th century. The market's history of commercial activity spanned 100 years and was an integral part of the social fabric of the city. Around 1900, the market maintained a bustling clientele of over 1,000 people daily, many of whom traveled by trolley car along 7th Street, NW. Customers shopped at the stalls of 284 merchants, including bakers, dry goods dealers, butchers, fish mongers, vegetable farmers, blacksmiths, and cloth traders. The stalls rented for \$6.00 per month. Shaw's O Street Market brought people together, a history that bears repeating. ♦