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Quick Hits

Pretty catchy, eh?
Yes, those are brand new street banners on display along Jos. Campau. And they were designed by Hamtramck native Dan Zwolak who owns a design company called Seeds. "He's been doing a ton of pro bono work for the city," said Darren Grow, the director of the city's DDA. The logo says, "You fit in here." "We really embraced it," Grow said. The logo is so good, the school district latched onto it, and uses it to attract new students. Sign us up.

Quote of the week ...

Who said this, and what is it about? You can find the quote and the story it belongs to somewhere in the pages of this issue.

"We are going to continue to have these events."

— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

Sometimes a tree is not as lovely as a poem

(With all apologies to the poet Joyce Kilmer.)

By Charles Sercombe

At first glance, it seems counter-intuitive. Just plain wrong.

Even a big, husky guy like Darren Grow, the city's Director of the Downtown Development Authority, admits "it breaks my heart."

All right, go ahead and call us tree huggers, but to watch a work crew chainsaw down trees along the side streets of Jos. Campau, you want to yell, "Noooooo."

But, Grow said, it had to be done.

They were the wrong kind of trees to plant from the get-go. Why?

Because the roots of these trees, locusts to be exact, spread out, not down. And when tree roots spread out, they become a mighty destructive force. Just take a look. The sidewalks around the trees have buckled up. The iron grates around them have cracked.

Curbs have even been bent out of shape.

"We've been getting tons of

complaints about them," Grow said.

And the buckled sidewalks have resulted in some trip and fall lawsuits against the city, he said.

The program to take down the trees started last year. In total, over 40 trees will come down. But there is an upside to all this.

Thanks to a grant from DTE Energy, worth \$3,000, the city will be able to purchase and plant replacement trees with roots that grow straight down, not out.

Believe it or not, Grow said, there are some merchants on Campau who would rather have no trees at all. That's not an option, Grow said.

"No tree cover would make it sparse," he said.

And besides, trees soften the urban landscape and protect pedestrians from summer's brutal sun and heat.

Grow said the replanting effort will begin in a few weeks, and he hopes to find funding sources to continue the program next year.



The city is taking down trees on the side streets of Jos. Campau because their roots are destroying the sidewalks. New trees will be planted thanks to a DTE Energy grant.



City gets into loft development at a bargain price

By Charles Sercombe

Imagine being able to live in a finished loft here in Hamtramck that's also loaded with top-of-the line appliances.

Seems pretty nice, eh?

But it gets better. You can own one of four of these lofts for the insanely low price of

\$40,000. The only catch is, they're not for sale yet.

All of this is possible because the city was awarded a \$15 million grant from a national Neighborhood Stabilization Program. It's actually from the tail-end of Obama's stimulus plan.

The city will be using most of the money to rehab abandoned vacant housing and to build new ones. The grant will also cover the partial redevelopment of the former Shoppers World.

One of the housing improvements includes a loft project

that went broke. Veterans Lofts was a project that developer Chris Bray attempted to complete a few years ago, but then the 2006 housing meltdown occurred.

"He tried to market it for awhile, but he couldn't do it,"

Continued on page 2

Flooding lawsuit will soak taxpayers

By Charles Sercombe

There's good news and bad news for the residents who sued the city because their basements flooded.

First the good news.

The City Council agreed to settle two separate lawsuits regarding basement flooding for \$1.6 million.

But don't start popping the champagne corks. Here comes the bad news.

You likely won't get diddley-squat.

In fact, in an ironic twist, the plaintiffs in the lawsuit will have to pay a special tax - along with everyone else - that will just about equal what they will get from the lawsuit settlement.

Guess who makes the most money?

You guessed it, it's the attorneys. Their share is one third of the settlement - plus their costs.

City Attorney James Allen estimated the attorneys for the plaintiffs will walk away with \$600,000.

To pay for the settlement, a court-imposed tax will be placed on this December's property tax bill, if all things go on schedule. That tax will amount to 5 mills. Another 3 mills will be placed on next summer's tax bill.

If the city fails to meet all the time deadlines for December's bill, all 8 mills will be placed on next summer's tax rolls.

For the average Hamtramck property owner, it will mean paying an extra \$140 to \$180.

That's just about the same amount of money most of

Continued on page 2

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Flooding lawsuit will soak taxpayers Cont. from front page

the plaintiffs in the lawsuit will eventually receive.

There are a few plaintiffs who will receive about \$7,000 each because they were the lead figures in the case.

The council agreed to the settlement in order to "avoid further legal expense," said Mayor Karen Majewski.

If there is anything resembling a silver lining in this matter, it's that Hamtramck is suing Detroit. Hamtramck is arguing that Detroit failed to properly hook up its main sewer and water lines to Hamtramck's lines.

Hamtramck says this is what causes backups in basements when heavy rains occur.

The lawsuit covers two flooding events, one that happened three years ago and another one that occurred last spring. In total, several hundred residents claimed their basements flooded with foul sewer

water.

The Review is seeking the names of those individuals who joined the lawsuit.

City Council candidate Robert Zwolak has been outspoken of his criticism of residents who joined the lawsuit, saying they were essentially "suing each other."

City Attorney Allen said that, unless the city fixes its sewer problem, "we are going to continue to have these events."

However, the cost of repairs is estimated to be about \$60 million, said City Manager Bill Cooper.

In a related move, the council agreed to seek a state grant worth up to \$1 million to fund a study on how to go about making those repairs. If the city wins the grant, it would have up to two years to begin repair work, or face having to repay the state grant.

City gets into loft development at a bargain price Cont. from front page

said Community & Economic Development Director Jason Friedmann.

At one time the building was listed for \$230,000. Eventually a bank took ownership, but then even the bank walked away from it.

The loft, at Jos. Campau and Goodson, was then picked up by the city for the bargain price of \$44,000 – basically the cost of taxes owed.

Friedmann said the city will spend \$360,000 to finish the project.

When they do go on the market, Friedmann said the units will sell for \$40,000 to \$60,000.

Stay tuned. We'll let you know when they're ready to be snatched up.



City Hall Insider ...

What is our City Council up to these days? We have the scoop and the highlights – as well as the lowlights – of the latest council meeting.

By Charles Sercombe

The City Council met on Sept. 27, with Councilmembers Kazi Miah and Shahab Ahmed absent. The meeting ran for over two-and-a-half hours, which also included a closed meeting.

Sit back and crack open a beer. It might also be a good idea to push in that Deep Purple 8-track. Start out with "Smoke on the Water" – just for old time's sake.

Councilmember Catrina Stackpoole introduced two interns from Wayne State University who will be setting up an education program on recycling for the public school district and who will also talk to the community about the power of the bicycle pedal and starting up a car share program.

Yes, you read that right. Hip cities across the USA have a program where folks can share cars for short trips around the city. Google it.

Attorney Alexis Krot was introduced as a new attorney working for the Allen Brothers law firm, which is the firm that represents the city. Krot will

act as a prosecutor for Hamtramck in the 31st District Court.

Asked by Councilmember Cathie Gordon if she will pursue city-issued code enforcement tickets, Krot said: "I hope so, I live here."

From the public, City Council candidate Robert Zwolak stepped up first and started out with questions about the absentee record of certain councilmembers.

The topic came about because Councilmember Kazi Miah was asking the council to excuse him for tonight's meeting as well as the next two meetings because of personal reasons.

That request was later denied.

Zwolak, a former councilmember, said there's been a "serious pattern" of some current councilmembers being absent from meetings.

OK, we will take out our decoder ring and share. Zwolak was referring to Councilmember Shahab Ahmed, who has several unexcused absences.

Zwolak posed the question:

Continued on page 5

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This week at the library...

Computer Classes for Advanced Users -

Tuesday, October 4 at 11 a.m. Adults with basic computer skills can enhance their computer literacy each Monday at the library. Number of participants is limited to available computers.

Math Club Meeting - Tuesday, October 4 at 4 p.m. Mr. Nuo is the instructor for the math club and math tutoring

Financial Activists Club - Tuesday, October 4 at 3:30 p.m. If you want to expand your knowledge of budgeting and investing, play financial literacy games and learn how to grow your money, join the club. It is free of charge.

ESL Conversation Group - Tuesday, October 4 at 5 p.m. Conversation sessions with Ms. Trisa for advanced ESL students are free of charge to Hamtramck residents.

ESL Class with Ms. Templin - Wednesday, October 5 at noon. Christine Templin is the instructor for the ESL class for beginners. Everyone is invited. Free to the public.

Computer Classes for Beginners - Thursday, October 6 at 11 a.m. Basic instructions on computer use for beginners will be held on Wednesdays. Number of participants is limited to available computers.

Michigan Reads Fall StoryTime - Wednesday, October 5 at 3:30 p.m. This month children's book program features the book "Memoirs of the Goldfish" by Michigan au-

thor, Devin Scillian.

Family Game Night - Thursday, October 6, at 5 p.m. Join your friends and family members in friendly skill and knowledge games. This month the features game is monopoly.

ESL News for You - Friday, October 7 at 3:30 p.m. ESL reading and discussion class with Latisha Edge. Free to the public.

Cooking and Nutrition Class #1 - Friday, October 7 at 10 a.m. Gleaners Food Bank is sponsoring cooking and nutrition classes taught by a chef and dietitian at the Library. Classes are free to the public. Sessions last for two hours.

StoryTime for Children - Saturday, October 1, at noon. All children are invited for the weaned edition of readings from your favorite books.

ESL Class with Christine Templin - Saturday, October 1 at noon. Intermediate ESL class conducted by Christine Templin, free to the public.

Meeting of the Library Board - Thursday, October 13 at 6 p.m. Regular meeting of the Library Board will be held in the auditorium. Open to the public

Friends of the Library Meeting - Thursday, October 20 at 6 p.m. FHPL President Kathy Kristy and Treasurer George Gorday invite all members and volunteers to participate in the regular monthly meeting.

For more information about events at the library call (313) 365-7050, or visit our website at <http://hamtramck.lib.mi.us> where you can also access our online catalog.

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Second Front Page

School employees make a bid to save their jobs

By Alan R. Madeleine

Last week at a special School Board Meeting, Gerald Butler, the attorney for the school district, laid it out. It wasn't the prettiest picture, but it's the best one custodial employees can paint.

That picture being the wage and benefit concessions proposed by AFSCME Local 257 – which also includes maintenance workers and bus drivers.

The city, per the edict from Gov. Snyder's office to explore cost reductions, had solicited bids for the next three years' worth of work from outside contractors. It received seven bid proposals, of which five met the appropriate specifica-

tions.

This was not a meeting to decide the issue. Rather, the union was feeling out the Board's general sentiment as to whether it was even worth spending the time and money to formalize their proposal legally.

Of the two companies that failed to meet specifications, one, AmeriSource, was actually just about as expensive as the union's proposal, which would have almost certainly meant losing out on the bid anyway.

The five proposals that came in on time and which were filled out correctly would all cost the city less money than the union's proposal, even with a 30 percent wage reduction.

However, as School District Attorney George Butler noted, the union cannot hope to compete "with a group of people willing to work for \$9 per hour."

The five outside proposals range from \$1.6 million for three years, to \$2.1 million, with an average of \$1.8 million. The union's proposals would cost the city \$1.7 million for only two years of service or (at a wage concession of 25 percent across the board) or \$1.6 million (at a wage concession of 30 percent).

Part of that equation is that the second year of the contract is not nearly as spartan as the current one would be. Wage costs would rise back up about

20 percent in the second year (2012-13), under the offer.

Extrapolating those figures to a third year, it would still cost the district and the taxpayers something close to three quarters of a million dollars over the next three years to retain the current staff.

Still, the advantages of keeping people on, with whom everyone was already familiar, were gone over more than once. In fact, it was that very familiarity that both Butler and the boardmembers kept bringing up.

Boardmembers stressed that, while the union might not be able to match the cost of the other bids, there is concern over allowing strangers to work at the schools.

Thus, when Butler brought the numbers out – and he did most of the night's talking – the school board nodded in agreement with his conclusion that, given all the factors, including those above and beyond price alone, the union's offer was competitive enough to warrant proceeding with the next step of formalizing the offer.

The motion to allow the union to make a formal offer was brought by Hedy Shulgon, and seconded by Titus Walters. It passed unanimously. (Boardmember Dennis Puchalski was absent.)

What was not clear is why the union is allowed to make an offer after the bids from the other would-be contractors were submitted.

City's largest commercial building is one step closer to new life

By David Piestrzynski
Special to The Review

The former Shopper's World building is drawing a lot of attention these days.

Last week, 50 developers toured the site with Jason Friedmann, Hamtramck's Director of Community & Economic Development.

The city is seeking proposals for the building's redevelopment.

The city wants the ground floor to be used for commercial purposes and the second floor to be residential apartments or lofts.

"Everybody we talked to seemed enthused," Friedmann said of the potential developers. "They all had good ideas for what to do with the commercial (floor)."

The city has received several suggestions from residents about what type of business they would like to see, such as a bookstore or office supply store.

But Friedmann said the developers are free to make their own suggestions in their proposals.

At this time, he was unable to release the names of any

potential developers for the Shopper's World project.

The developer chosen will finance the commercial part, while a portion of the city's \$15 million Neighborhood Stabilization Fund will cover the development of the residential floor.

The fund will also be used for other redevelopment jobs, such as the Veterans Park loft and several other demolition projects.

Proposals from the potential developers are due by Oct. 17.

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Walking in the footsteps of history

(In an ongoing series, Greg Kowalski of the Hamtramck Historical Commission writes about Hamtramck's colorful past.)

By Greg Kowalski

As you walk along Jos. Campau, look down.

Look at the pavement beneath your feet.

You're standing on some two centuries of history. Just about a foot below the surface are the tracks of the old Baker Street Car line. They were covered over years ago, when the street cars were discontinued and the street repaved. Below them is the earth the horses trod and the original settlers of this area - including maybe the real Mr. Joseph Campau - walked.

In fact, some mighty notable people have come this way. Presidents Franklin Roosevelt

and Harry Truman drove down Jos. Campau. John Kennedy was on the road twice, once just before he was elected president and once just after. Pope John Paul II raced down this road in his famous "Popemobile" when he visited the city in 1987.

And there have been so many others, most lost in the pages of time. Yet each of them contributed to the story of Hamtramck.

And what a story it is.

Hamtramck has one of the most colorful, interesting histories of any community in Michigan, even the nation. From its earliest days, Hamtramck played a pivotal role in the development of this area. The community, if it could be called that at the beginning, came into existence in 1798 when a portion of land adjoining the city of

Detroit was formed as Hamtramck Township.

It was a sleepy farming area mainly inhabited by Germans in those days.

The area where the annual Labor Day festival is held was forest, then later orchards and fields. At one point in the early 20th century there was a horse farm just west of the festival site.

As Detroit grew through the 19th century, Hamtramck Township shrank.

In 1901 a group of several hundred people living in this area got together with the aim of protecting their community from being swallowed by Detroit.

They formed the Village of Hamtramck, a 2.1-square-mile town just at the northern border of Detroit. At that time there were a few factories, several businesses along Jos. Campau, mainly south of Holbrook, and a smattering of houses.

In 1910 Hamtramck began a new life. That year John and Horace Dodge came to Hamtramck looking for a site to build a factory. The Dodges were machinists who produced parts for Henry Ford. Ford had just built a new factory in Highland Park, which was connected to Hamtramck by a rail line at the south end of the village.

In June 1910 ground was broken for the new factory. By November the Dodges were producing parts for Ford. But the Dodges had bigger ideas. They wanted to build their own cars. The Dodges put out a call for workers. It was answered in a big way as immigrants began to flood into the city.

In 1910 Hamtramck had a population of 3,500 people. By 1920 that had swollen to 48,000. Hamtramck was the

fastest growing, most densely populated town in America. By 1930 the population would reach 56,000 - all in 2.1 square miles.

Hamtramck was suddenly transformed from a farming village into an industrial city. Almost all the new immigrants were Poles who came to work in the factories. They joined a small but active population of African Americans, who played a key role in forming Hamtramck as a city in 1922, ending once and for all any threat of Hamtramck being annexed by Detroit.

Like a grimy butterfly emerging from a cocoon, Hamtramck was utterly transformed - for better and for worse.

Going into the third decade of the 20th century, Hamtramck had taken a place as one of the great industrial cities of America. Dodge Main, as the Hamtramck plant became known, was one of the biggest factories in America.

Hamtramck became noted on other fronts as well. To teach the new immigrants, the Hamtramck schools developed a landmark educational system.

The School Code of 1927 drafted by School Superintendent Maurice Keyworth was so progressive it was adopted by school districts across the nation.

Hamtramck also became known as a political powerhouse.

The new Poles and the long-time African-American residents valued the power of the polls, and voted religiously. It was not uncommon for Hamtramck to post a more than 90 percent voter turnout at elections. And because of Hamtramck's association with labor unions and the auto industry, they almost always voted Democratic.

Hamtramck constituted a huge voting bloc, which is why president Franklin Roosevelt came here in 1936 to dedicate Keyworth Stadium, and why President Truman visited several times.

Hamtramck also made history in other areas, including entertainment, science and sports.

At the south end of Jos. Campau is Veterans Memorial Park, where tennis coach Jean Hoxie trained Wimbledon champions.

And right in the festival site on the east side of Jos. Campau north of Commor stood The Bowery, one of the best night clubs in North America, which featured such stars as Gypsy Rose Lee, the Three Stooges, Danny Thomas and many more.

The festival site also was known as Automobile Row, for the host of auto dealerships and car-related businesses along this strip. (Be sure to check out the historical marker on Jos. Campau by PNC Bank.)

The Bowery is gone. So is Dodge Main, and almost all the auto businesses on Jos. Campau. But two critical elements remain: One is the unwavering spirit of Hamtramck that continues to breathe new vibrancy into the town.

The other is a deep appreciation of Hamtramck's fabulous history. That is now being preserved in a new venue. Work is now going on to establish the Hamtramck Historical Museum.

This "new" building was built in 1925 as the Polish Legion of American Veterans hall on Holbrook Avenue at McDougall Street. Last year the building was purchased by the city to be operated by the Hamtramck Historical Commission and its fundraising arm, the Friends of Historical Hamtramck, as the Hamtramck Historical Museum.

More than a repository of old things, the museum will be a living facility where programs of all kinds will be held, focusing on the city's rich history and cul-

ture.

Hamtramck is no longer predominantly Polish as new waves of immigrants have come to the city, making it one of the most diverse towns in the nation. But we all are a part of the story of Hamtramck, and the new Hamtramck Historical Museum will be a source of pride for all Hamtramckans - past, present and future.

To learn more about the museum go to www.hamtramckhistory.org, and follow us on Facebook.

And by the way, Joseph Campau was an early 19th century Detroit merchant who had extensive land holdings and a large family. One of his houses still stands. It's on Jefferson Ave., appropriately, at the foot of Jos. Campau.

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Review: Opinion Page

It's the lawyers who make off with the cash in flooding lawsuit

When you get stuck with paying an extra \$140 to \$180 in property taxes this December, you can thank your neighbor.

There are several hundred of them, actually, that you can thank.

That's because they were part of one of two lawsuits filed against the city after their basements flooded three years ago, and then again last spring.

At Tuesday's City Council meeting, the council agreed to settle the two lawsuits for \$1.6 million. To pay for

the settlement, a judge will have to order a special tax on the property tax rolls.

In total, homeowners will be socked with an additional 8 mills.

It's going to be a frustrating irony for many of those who are a part of the lawsuit. According to City Attorney James Allen, most of the plaintiffs will receive a small lump sum that will be equal to what they, too, will be forced to pay in additional taxes.

The people who will make the most money in this

case are the lawyers representing the plaintiffs. Again, according to Allen, the attorneys will take home one third of the settlement and also get reimbursed for their costs.

Allen figures that will be around \$600,000.

The next time you get a phone call from an attorney fishing for clients to join a class action suit, it might be better to just hang up. In the end, we all pay and it's the lawyers who get to laugh all the way to the bank.



City Hall Insider ...

Continued from page 2

"If you live here and don't come to the meetings, why run for office?"

(Editor's note: "If you live here"? Is Zwolak implying that there is a councilmember who doesn't live here? Dang, our decoder ring isn't working.)

Zwolak also said that the city needs to change its contract with the police officers' unions about how a police chief is appointed. He said the city's administration needs to have the right to select a chief from outside of the department, if so desired.

The city's contract with the officers' unions (there are two unions in the department) requires someone from the department to be appointed as police chief.

Steve Shaya was the next to walk up to the lectern. Shaya, who is also a candidate for council, advised the council to make a decision about whether to appoint Lt. Ron Mathias as police chief. City Manager Bill Cooper had placed the appointment of

Mathias as police chief on the agenda.

This was the second time the appointment was presented to the council. In the previous meeting, the council did not even make a motion to accept the appointment.

This week wasn't much different. Councilmember Tom Jankowski made a motion to accept the appointment, but no one else on council offered a support to allow the motion to go toward a vote.

(Editor's note: Here comes a labor grievance.)

A final go-ahead was given to a private company to demolish an ex-factory on Denton St. (it's that building with an all glass facade), and rebuild a new facility.

That facility will be an industrial recycling center, which will not be recycling home items.

Sorry. November's General Election Day is coming up. It's on Nov. 8. Remember, in a small town like Hamtramck, every vote counts.

OK, we're off the soapbox, but the reason we bring this up is because a council meeting also happens to fall on Nov. 8. The council decided to cancel that meeting and reschedule it for two days later on Nov. 10.

What a difference two weeks make. Instead of a divided council at the previous meeting which split two-to-two tie on whether to apply for a state grant, tonight the vote was unanimous.

The council agreed to apply and accept the terms for a possible \$1 million grant to figure out how to fix our sewer backup problem.

If the city accepts the grant, it has to make repairs within two years. If the city fails to do that, the grant has to be paid back, and if the city is unable to repay the state, a special property tax will be levied against homeowners.

(Well, the 8-track machine just chewed up our tape, so that's it for this week. Part two is next week)

Odds & Ends

On the stage ... "The original play "Unlocking Desire," written by local playwright Barbara Neri and directed by John Jakary, will be presented at the Boll YMCA in Detroit (SE corner of Griswold & John R) the next two weekends.

Performances will be Fridays & Saturdays at 8 pm. There will also be a Sunday

show at 3 p.m. on Oct. 2, and a Thursday performance the final weekend, at 8 p.m. on Oct. 6.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors and \$10 for students, with student I.D. Featuring Hamtramck resident Kenny Kono among its large cast, the play speculates on the apparent fate of

Blanche DuBois from Tennessee Williams' "A Streetcar Named Desire" after her institutionalization - except that all is not what it seems to be. The play has previously had a table reading in Ypsilanti, but this will be its premiere as a fully produced work.

Letters • Letters

City's bark is worse than its bite

I would really appreciate answers to the questions I posed in my last letter to the Editor that was published in The Hamtramck Review.

What is the earliest time we can put our garbage cans out? Is it on our garbage pick-up day or the night before? And, specifically, what time? Who will be enforcing the code and driving around the city at 9 o'clock at night?

Also, why doesn't Rizzo have to follow any rules? A few times I had to call the city because my garbage hadn't been picked up. I was asked if the can was too heavy or if

I had left the lid open allowing water in the can. (My answer to both questions was no.)

So, why isn't Rizzo told to close the lids? Especially when it's pouring rain! I'm sorry they're getting rained on but it is their job. I'm sure they have rain gear, and I know a lot of people who work outside in the rain.

They need to close the lids when they empty the garbage. Also, it would be very nice if they could replace the can at least in the near vicinity from where they picked it up.

My can has been at my neighbor's house, my neigh-

bor's can has been at my house and the can was placed in the middle of my garage doorway thereby blocking my exit on my way to work. I don't appreciate having to get out and move that huge monstrosity in my work clothes.

Some of my neighbors are not taking the city's code enforcement threats seriously. They know they're empty threats. Like I said before, stop barking when you need to bite!

**Christine Komisarz
Hamtramck**

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HALL OF SHAME

"Hall of Shame" presents some of the worst cases of blight in the city with the hopes that someone from City Hall will take note. Well, one can only hope.

By Charles Sercombe

Sometimes when you are driving or walking around town, all of a sudden something pops out that really grabs your attention.

And the funny thing is, it's likely that you have passed this spot numerous times without noticing.

That happened the other day. While driving down Alice St., a wreckage of a structure of some sort flicked by at the corner of my eye. I did a double take while still driving forward.

"What was that?" I wondered.

I circled around the street again, and this time I slowed way down. And then there it was at 2265 Alice.

I still don't know how to describe it. Maybe it had been a camper at one time. Or part of the house. Maybe it was an extended room. Whatever it was,

it looked like someone blew it up.

Splinters of wood were scattered here and there, exposing a rumble of broken down wood



pieces inside. A toilet lay nearby, as if it had been ejected by sheer force.

You can see similar scenes in some of the worst neighborhoods bordering Hamtramck. I guess scenes of this kind of blight are all too common in Detroit.

But when you see it in Hamtramck, hopefully your pride swells up.

One could go on and on about some of the other bizarre

sights on this street. You have to wonder: Did the city at one point just give up trying to enforce its blight laws on the southend?

I looked into who owned the house. It now belongs to what's called the state Land Bank. That's a good thing, because it means this site will soon be

tle old lady.

I do know that she is just as outraged over the growing blight as we all are.

A letter she mailed to us, reads, in part:

"Wouldn't it be nice, to come together and help cutting those empty lots that the city does not? ... There are so many young, able-bodied men. Can't they alternate and get together and clean up the city? Some people don't care. Let's show them that there are lots of us who do."

I couldn't have said it better, and it reminds me of a favorite tune. Here are the lyrics to part of it:

"Wouldn't it be nice if we were older

Then we wouldn't have to wait so long

And wouldn't it be nice to live together

In the kind of world where we belong. ..."

"Wouldn't it be nice" by the Beach Boys

Hey blight-busters, give us a call or an e-mail if you know of a problem spot in the city. You can reach us at (313) 874-2100, or email us at: news@thehamtramckreview.com, or just stop by the office at 3020 Caniff.

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Coming events

OCTOBER 12, Wednesday, 11 a.m. – The Daughters of Isabella Mystical Rose Circle 736 will meet at the Queen of Apostles Activity Center, entrance on Harold St.

Obituaries

BUNGER

Norma Jean Bunger, 65, died September 20th, 2011.

She is survived by her husband Henry, her sons Billy (Carol) Sturgill and Buford Wayne (Pamela) Sturgill, her daughter Tamara Gennette (Mohamed) Alghazali, nine grandchildren and many great grandchildren. Sister of Margaret Baker and Wayne (Barbara) Sturgill. Also survived by thirteen nieces and nephews and many great nieces and nephews. Arrangements were made by Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home. Burial was Monday, September 26th at Christian Memorial Cemetery, Rochester, Michigan.

NOTICE OF CLOSE OF REGISTRATION GENERAL ELECTION TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2011

To the Qualified Electors of HAMTRAMCK CITY – WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Notice is hereby given that Tuesday, October 11, 2011 is the last day to register to vote or change your address for the above stated election.

If you are not currently registered to vote or have changed your address in the above stated jurisdiction in which you live you may do so at the following locations and times listed in this notice.

IN PERSON:

- At your city or township clerk's office or at the office of any county clerk during normal business hours.
- At any of the Secretary of State Branch offices located throughout the state during normal business hours.
- At the specified agency for clients receiving services through the Family Independence Agency, the Department of Community Health, Michigan Jobs Commission and some of the Commission for the Blind.
- At the military recruitment offices for persons enlisting in the armed forces.

BY MAIL:

- By obtaining and completing a Mail Voter Registration Application and forwarding to the election official as directed on the application by the close of registration deadline. Mail voter registration applications may be obtained by contacting:

T. EDWIN NORRIS, CITY CLERK
1-313-876-7700 – OPTION 3
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Cosmos' defense comes through, but offense falls short

By David Piestrzynski
Special to The Review

The Cosmo's hopes of making the state football playoffs took a hit after losing to Harper Woods last Friday in a defensive battle.

The team fell to 2-3 after losing 8-6, in a game that didn't see any scoring until the fourth quarter.

"We had opportunities," said Leo Wells Hamtramck's head football coach.

The Cosmos moved the ball consistently, but were unable to capitalize in the scoreless first half.

Their best opportunity came on an interception, which was nearly returned for a touchdown, late in the second quarter by Wontay Jackson, a junior defensive back and running back.

Meanwhile, Hamtramck's defense was able to keep Harper Woods out of the end zone until a touchdown and two-point conversion made it 8-0 early in the fourth quarter.

The Cosmos were able to respond with a touchdown of their own on the next possession.

After marching to midfield, Wontay Jackson broke free on a 50-yard reverse play to give Hamtramck its only touchdown.

However, the Cosmos were unable to make the two-point conversion to tie the score.

The defense was able to get the ball back, but a final drive for the Cosmos stalled on a failed fourth-down conversion attempt.

Despite the loss, Wells said he was pleased with his team's effort, which included shutting down Harper Woods' offense in the red zone on several occasions.

The Cosmos got solid defensive performances from several players including senior running back and linebacker Jonathan Blanding, who had 16 tackles in the game.

Also, DeAngelo Frontray had seven tackles and a quarterback sack, and Wontay Jackson had 12 tackles, on the defensive side.

Next up for Hamtramck is a home game vs. Melvindale ABT this Friday.

The Cosmos have four games remaining, and need to win all four to qualify for the state playoffs with a 6-3 record.

"We have to run the table," Wells said. "But we match up well. We'll be in every game."

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