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# The Review

*Hamtramck*

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## Quick Hits

**Clarification...** In last week's City Life column, writer Walter Wasacz wrote about his frustration in getting the city administration to live up to its promise to install new crosswalks near schools and other traffic/pedestrian safety issues.

He said that emails to the administration went unanswered.

However, at the insistence of City Manager Kathy Angerer, Wasacz checked his junk mail file, and yes, indeed, she had answered his concerns in a timely fashion.

The Review apologizes for the oversight.

**Reminder...** Like tacos and helping out the needy?

Detroit Friendship House is hosting a taco buffet today, Friday, Sept. 20 from 4-8 p.m. at the Hamtramck Moose Lodge, located at 9421 Conant (west side, between Doremus and Comstock Streets).

The cost for the all-you-can-eat event is \$7 per person, and all proceeds go toward helping the DFH feed other hungry families in turn.

**Continued on page 2**

## — HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

# 'Banglatown' development has some high rollers on board

By Alan Madlane

A Detroit neighborhood revitalization project is likely to have a spillover effect for Hamtramck.

And a familiar business name is heavily involved. More on that momentarily.

In a recent article in Crain's Detroit, several Detroit city departments are combining to formulate a neighborhood development plan, to build or remodel various existing buildings or now-vacant sites into housing, stores or restaurants in the Banglatown area of Detroit.

This is the area roughly bordered by Davison to the north, the railroad tracks west of I-75 to the west, Carpenter to the south, and Conant to the



There are big development plans for the Banglatown neighborhood just north of the Detroit-Hamtramck border. It is hoped that development will eventually spill over into Hamtramck.

east.

The city has been soliciting bids by developers, and a number of sites have drawn concrete plans.

Prominent among the buildings awaiting bid

quotes was the two-story one at 12449 Conant that once housed a strip bar named Starvin' Marvin's and then a club called the Adult Playground.

The deadline for those

quotes had been set at last week Friday, Aug. 30.

Bingham Farms developer MHT Housing has an ambitious plan of its own. It seeks to build a nearly

**Continued on page 2**



Plans call for renovating the entrance to Hamtramck City Hall. The building will also be renamed the Robert Kozaren Municipal Center, in honor of the late mayor.

# City officials fret over the cost of a city hall upgrade

By Charles Sercombe

In the coming months, Hamtramck City Hall will get a new name and a new look.

Or, maybe not.

Some members of the city council bristled at the \$200,000 cost estimate for the project.

Councilmember Ian Perrotta was straightforward in his concern: "It

seems like a lot of money."

The project includes giving the building a new façade, and making the entrance compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act – which it technically is not, said City Manager Kathy Angerer.

Angerer also pointed

**Continued on page 4**

# Poletown plant may survive

By Charles Sercombe

As they say in baseball, it ain't over 'til it's over.

GM is now offering to keep its Poletown and Lordstown, Ohio plants open, if UAW members agree to contract terms laid out by the automaker.

The United Auto Workers went on strike this past Sunday, shutting down work at all GM plants.



UAW members are striking at all of GM's auto plants, including the Poletown plant.

Several months ago, GM announced that it was closing the Poletown and Lordstown plants, as well as one in Warren and another in Canada. The company said it was shifting its production to electric cars and driverless cars.

Poletown is slated to close down this January.

GM is now offering to build electric pick-ups there, and batteries at the Lordstown plant.

**Continued on page 2**



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## ‘Banglatown’ development has some high rollers on board

Continued from front page

\$17-million dollar apartment complex on the northeast corner of Carpenter and Charest that it is dubbed the Carpenter Apartments. It will feature 50 affordable units when completed.

The former Washington Trade School building at Dequindre and Lawley will likely be made available soon for bids, if it hasn't been already.

And here's where the “familiar business name” pops up.

Folks moving into these

places should have some better surroundings to enjoy also, courtesy of a \$5-million-dollar grant from Hamtramck's old friend, American Axle.

The grant is intended to be used to improve streetscapes, parks, storefronts and housing. The city eventually envisions a complete rejuvenation of the area.

Not everything moves at a proper pace however; the Crain's article makes mention of the old Transfiguration School building

on Luce St. west of Mound, which has had a planned \$6.4 million dollar transfiguration of its own into a 19-unit apartment building see little progress since announced back in 2017.

Is that the smell of money going “up the chimney”? Let's hope not.

For while this is all, strictly speaking, within Detroit geographically, it's entirely likely that it could spur Hamtramck to spruce up the north end a bit, in order to “keep up

with the Joneses.”

And if that doesn't happen? It'll still be good to know that there would be some nice shops, restaurants, and parks just a stone's throw away, for Hamtramckans to enjoy.

Tote that barge! Get those quotes! Break that ground!

We can't wait to see what it'll all look like when it's done.

And what Bingham Farms developers' idea of “affordable rents” are, too.

## Poletown plant may survive

Continued from front page

The UAW wants all four plants to remain open.

News of the Poletown closure came as a shock to many, including Hamtramck officials.

Hamtramck relies on GM as a major revenue source. Part of the Poletown plant is on the Hamtramck side of the Detroit border.

Hamtramck receives about \$800,000 a year in lieu of taxes. That loss of revenue would be devastating to the city. Since the announcement of the plant's closing, officials

here are still scrambling to figure out ways to adjust the budget.

GM's offer to keep the plant open raises more questions than answers.

The major question is, just how sincere is GM about keeping the plant open?

Could this just be a bargaining chip?

It also raises the question of whether GM would continue to make its yearly payment to the city.

City Manager Kathy Angerer has been in contact with GM during the past several months, along with state economic development officials, to come up ways to keep the plant operating, or else suggestions for repurpos-

ing it.

The Review asked Angerer this week if she had any inside knowledge of the plant's future.

She would only say that she has “none to share.”

The UAW strike is predicted, by those knowl-

edgeable about the matter, to possibly last several weeks to even a few months.

One striker The Review talked to, said union members are “prepared to stay here as long as it takes.”

## Quick Hits

Cont. from front page

There will be a vegan option, they promise, and also there will be ongoing drink specials for the entire duration.

Detroit Friendship House is a faith-based non-profit organization that bills itself as “the

only public food pantry in Hamtramck.”

The organization provides about 60,000 pounds of food per month to hundreds of cash-strapped families in the area.

Call (734) 507-9825 for more information.

## This week at the library...

**Toddler Time** - Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. September 12-December 19. Children up to age 5 and their parents and caregivers are invited for stories & songs followed by playtime.

**Detroit Fringe Festival Presents “The Cloud Spinner”** - Join us for this family friendly Theater performance! Friday, September 20 @ 4:00 p.m.

**Talking is Teaching** - Thursday, October 17 @ 11:30 a.m. Do you love and care for a child who is a baby, toddler, or preschooler? Join us for this discussion with guest presenter Great Start Wayne.

**Movie Night** - Tuesdays @ 4:00 p.m. September 10 - December 17. Family Friendly Movies. Snacks provided!

**Library Trick or Treat!** - Thursday October 31, 11:00 a.m. - 6:45 p.m. Come to the Library dressed in your costume for a treat.

**November is Family Literacy Month** - Join us for a kick-off event: Friday November 1, 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. November 6 - November 27.

**Computer Science Week** - December 9-15, 3:30 - 4:45 p.m. Grades 3 and up are invited to Tech Club  
Monday 12/9  
Wednesday 12/11  
Friday 12/13  
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**Santa at the Library** - Thursday, December 12, 5:00 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.

**ANIME CLUB** - Every Thursday 3 - 5 p.m., September 6 - December

20. Hang out, share and discover Anime and Manga. Grades 6 and up. Adults are also welcome.

**Public “Narcan” Training** - Provided by the HDFCC and the Piast Institute, Thursday, September 26, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

**Game Night** - Thursday October 10, 4:00 - 6:30 p.m. Grades 6 and up.

**Messy Art** - Freestyle craft program, Thursday November 14 @ 5:30 p.m. Grades 6 and up.

**Classic Banjo Concert and Album Tour Aaron Jonah Lewis** - Friday, November 1 @ 5:30 p.m.

**Computer Tips - Workshop for Seniors** - Friday, October 11, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

For more information about events  
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# Second Front Page



## School Bell

### Early Childhood Elementary School News

The classrooms at ECE are buzzing with students learning.

Students began testing this week in Reading and Math NWEA. Once these tests are completed students will work on skills needed to help with their reading and math.

Preschool began this week. Parents met with their child's teacher on Monday and learned about the preschool program.

Superintendent Mrs. Jaleelah Ahmed visited ECE, stopping in different classes to visit the students.

ECE Principal Colleen Stevens and Superintendent Ahmed joined Ms. Janice Rakoczy's first grade class in taking a brain break on GoNoodle to the song "Milkshake!"

The students also met

our new librarian, Mr. Matthew Brock. He has worked very hard getting the library ready for classes to visit and check out books.

Students enjoyed listening to a clever story entitled, "7 Ate 9, a Mystery." We are looking forward to a wonderful year of student learning at ECE!

#### Student care

Now that the new school year has started, the American Academy of Pediatrics has this advice for parents to make sure their kids succeed:

#### Before & After School Child Care

- During early and middle childhood, children need supervision. A responsible adult should be available to get them ready and off to school in the morning and supervise them after school until you return home from work.

- Children approaching adolescence (11- and 12-year-olds) should not come home to an empty house in the afternoon unless they show unusual maturity for their age.

- If alternate adult supervision is not available, parents should make special efforts to supervise their children from a distance. Children should have a set time when they are expected to arrive at home and should check in with a neighbor or with a parent by telephone.

- If you choose an after-school program for your child, inquire about the training of the staff. There should be a high staff-to-child ratio, trained persons to address health issues and emergencies, and the rooms and the playground should be safe.

#### Develop a Sleep Routine

- Getting enough sleep

is critical for a child to be successful in school. Children who do not get enough sleep have difficulty concentrating and learning as well as they can.

- Set a consistent bedtime for your child and stick with it every night. Having a bedtime routine that is consistent will help your child settle down and fall asleep. Components of a calming pre-bedtime routine may involve a bath/shower, reading with them, and tucking them in and saying good-night to them.

- Have your child turn off electronic devices well before bedtime.

- Try to have the home as quiet and calm as possible when younger children are trying to fall asleep.

#### Developing Good Homework & Study Habits

- Create an environ-

Continued on page 5



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**October 5** – Polish Dinner with Mike Zawojksy,  
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**October 12** – Soup Kitchen 2-4 pm All are welcome!

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# City officials fret over the cost of a city hall upgrade

Continued from front page

out that there is a committee, comprised of former City Clerk Ethel Fiddler, former Councilmember Joe Karpinski and former Hamtramck 31st District Court Judge Paul Paruk, that will be fundraising for the project.

Angerer said that some funding will also come from the district court's building fund, as well as from other sources. No general fund money will be spent on the project, Angerer added.

Bids for the project will be coming in soon, so the final cost is not known.

The new name of city hall will be the Robert Kozaren Municipal Center, in honor of the late mayor who is, so far, the city's longest serving, (although Mayor Karen Majewski is only one term short of matching Kozaren's 18 years in office).

Concern over the cost was also voiced on Facebook. At a Facebook

page called "I love Hamtramck," there was a lively debate on whether the project was worth the price.

Waleed Ahmed gave it a thumbs down.

"Let's take the perfectly working entrance and replace it with a more expensive one because there is no better way to spend this money on the community? I don't care if it is a grant, we don't need a new entrance," Ahmed said.

Jeff Fournier called it a "vanity project," and added that, in light of the city's financial woes, he questions the timing.

"Does city hall really need a porch cover and a sign right now, while the city is running in a deficit?" he said.

But others gave an enthusiastic thumbs up.

Robert Zwolak, a former councilmember who is now seeking another shot at the seat, was often at odds with Kozaren, but these days has nothing but praise

for both him and the city hall project.

"Mayor Kozaren was the ultimate public relations man for Hamtramck. He built bridges from Lansing, with Paczki to state representatives, and Washington DC with President Carter as well as other political and industrial leaders in the region," Zwolak said.

"I believe he had a photographic memory, and never forgot you or the rest of your family. It was uncanny, his memory, and how he knew so much about people and sports. More often than not, we were foes, but we had great respect for one another. The Robert J. Kozaren Municipal Center is but a small tribute to him for all his dedication to the Hamtramck community."

The project is not necessarily a done deal. The city council will still have to approve the final bids and cost.

# At this 'coven,' its all about art, not witches' spells

By Joe Myrick  
Special to The Review

The word "coven" is used to describe a community of witches taking part in, well, witch activities.

Like "Fire burn and cauldron bubble" – you know the spiel.

On a recent Saturday morning in Hamtramck at the KO Gallery, the only cauldron "bubbling" was that of three certain artists, preparing to hold their figure drawing event later in the day.

These three artists comprise the Coven of Roses: Sierra, Amber, and Callie. Prior to the event, this trio had the chance to sit down with The Review to discuss their artistic escapades.

Their initial meeting was simple: Sierra met Amber online; Sierra met Callie through Amber; and Amber met Callie through Instagram. T'was a regular Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon if there ever was one, and thus was this coven born.

Amber's girlfriend helped the trio come up with their new name, as previously they and their friends had addressed themselves as "Easy Bake Coven."

In Sierra's own words, they are a "group of artists trying to provide for other artists."

Amber then further explained that they want "to provide other artists in the community with low cost things that they can learn from."

Since May, the Coven of Roses have held figure drawing classes, with Au-



Artists Callie, Sierra and Amber have formed a collective known as the Coven of Roses.

gust marking their fourth such event (their fifth will come at the end of September – more about that in a minute). These figure drawing events showcase models who have volunteered to appear either nude, or semi-nude, for an audience to sketch them at the KO Gallery.

These events are free to the public, although a \$5 donation is always appreciated, and will help finance future shows or even generate potential sponsorships.

Callie explains that their intention, with these events, is to give aspiring artists opportunities that they may not be able to find elsewhere.

"If you're not in school, you don't really get the opportunity to draw from nude or semi-nude models," she said. "We basically wanted to provide the tools and the skills they can use to better themselves."

Furthermore, their goal is to provide an uncensored space where bodies of all genders, colors, shapes and sizes can be both seen and validated.

Amber, an abstract pastel painter outside of Coven, said their mission is to "Highlight the importance of bodily autonomy and acceptance of the way people look no matter how thin, fat, deformed, old, or young (they may be). We want to make a space safe for everybody, and that's a part of our mission as well."

Sierra, whose artwork outside of Coven tends to focus on identity and women of color, said the get-togethers are also a way to battle censorship.

"I feel like there's a war on women's bodies, especially women of color, and I think that there shouldn't be a censorship on what's natural," she said.


"It stunts artistry that there's that censorship there, and I think it should be gone. That's why Coven of Roses is so important to me. It's because we're fighting that through giving people a sensibility. We're also giving people the opportunity to comfortably present themselves to the world,

Continued on page 5

**PUBLIC NOTICE:** Cellco Partnership and its controlled affiliates doing business as Verizon Wireless (Verizon Wireless) proposes to build a 40-foot Utility Pole. Anticipated lighting application is medium intensity dual red/white strobes. The Site location is 2766 Norwalk St, Hamtramck, Wayne County, MI 48212, Lat: 42-23-43.764, Long: 83-3-27.792. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Antenna Structure Registration (ASR, Form 854) filing number is A1142493.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS – Interested persons may review the application ([www.fcc.gov/asr/applications](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/applications)) by entering the filing number. Environmental concerns may be raised by filing a Request for Environmental Review ([www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest](http://www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest)) and online filings are strongly encouraged. The mailing address to file a paper copy is: FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Washington, DC 20554. HISTORIC PROPERTIES EFFECTS – Public comments regarding potential effects on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to: *Trileaf Corp, Trileaf Corp, Alison, a.cusack@trileaf.com, 10845 Olive Blvd, Suite 260, St. Louis, MO 63141, 314-997-6111.*


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# Review: Opinion Page

## In Our Opinion

### For students, our public schools offer the world

We've said this before, but it's worth repeating: If you are enrolled in the Hamtramck Public School District, chances are that you will have an amazing cultural experience.

Why is that?

According to the district, 16 different languages are spoken in the schools. Years ago, it was thought that around 40 languages and dialects were spoken here.

Sixteen is still plenty impressive.

Hamtramck has long been known as a community of immigrants, many of them fleeing countries that are, or were, war-torn, or have oppressive regimes.

Hamtramck residents bond easily because many have escaped inhospitable countries, and are among sympathetic friends here.

The languages that can be heard in the hallways of our schools expand the educational experience of our students.

There is a reason why the high school is nicknamed "The Cosmos" – as in cosmopolitans – we are truly citizens of the world.

We are a city that truly embodies the American concept of an ethnic "melting pot."

If you graduate from our schools, you will already have a step up among your peers from outside the city. In a way, we are a United Nations of cultures, all living under one collective "roof."

Enjoy the experience, students, now that you are starting a brand-new school year.

Get to know one another, and you will be amazed at what you can learn about others.

## Odds & Ends

**Condolences...** Hamtramck lost a big heart this past week. Renee Savage, a retiree of the Hamtramck Public School District, died recently.

You can read more about her life on page 6 of this issue.

On Sept. 28, from noon to 4 p.m., a memorial will be held at the D Loft, 9427 Jos. Campau.

Also, today, Friday, Sept. 20, there will be a memorial balloon launch at Zussman Park. That will take place at 4 p.m.

## Dig deep into the story of Dodge Main at city's historical museum

**By Alan Madlane**

Ever wonder what's made Hamtramck grow so big and strong?

One could easily make the argument that it was the old heart, so big and strong was it in turn.

A heart called the Dodge Main plant.

Opened in 1910, and then operating for some six decades until it was shuttered up in 2010, the plant was to be found on the city's south end, on Hamtramck Drive.

In more recent years, that building and area have been overtaken themselves by the GM Poletown plant.

Ironically, General Motors has announced plans to now close that plant as well, although union bargaining may end up salvaging it, at least temporarily.

You can learn about the importance of this building, these companies, this process and all the rest, by attending two separate presentations (with an accompanying exhibit) on consecutive Sunday afternoons at the Hamtramck Historical Museum.

First up, see and hear how the plant was first founded, and how it grew over time until its ultimate closure and demolition in the 80s. "The Life and Death of Dodge Main" presentation will be Sunday, September 29 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Light refreshments will be furnished, and the talk is free. Of course, donations are always welcomed. There is also a new Dodge Main exhibit area now open at the museum, to further enhance the experience.

The following Sunday, October 6, again from 2-4 p.m., "The Meaning of Dodge Main" will extrapolate on precisely the ways this plant transformed the town, and the greater meaning this all had, arguably for the entire region, transforming Hamtramck and the surrounding environs from a farming community into a hub of the industrial rust belt.

Both talks, as well as the exhibit, were funded by a grant of \$1,500 from the Motor Cities National Heritage Area. Under the banner of the U.S. National Park Service, the MCNHA is a federally designated area that protects and promotes the critical legacy of the southeastern Michigan automotive industry. Check them out at [www.motorcities.org](http://www.motorcities.org).

And come, enjoy some local history and feel a swell of pride.

(The Hamtramck Historical Museum is located at 9525 Jos. Campau.)

## At this 'coven,' its all about art, not witches' spells

Continued from page 4

and to allow themselves to be drawn."

Trying to spread the word on social media, the group has also run into censorship issues. Social media platforms, for example Instagram, have deleted their posts (specifically, those of plus-sized women).

Callie said a way to counter this obstruction is to put a greater focus on "body neutrality," which she defines as "not being terrified of (nude body im-


ages) and feeling like you need to cover them up, or feeling offended if you see different body types."

Amber put it more bluntly: "Just mind your business. It's not that big of a deal. If you see something you don't like, then look away."

You can join the Coven of Roses' figure drawing sessions at the KO Gallery (9536 Jos. Campau) on the last Saturday of every month. This month, September 28, the session will run from 4 pm to 6 pm.

You can also track the trio's journey on both Facebook and Instagram @CovenofRoses. You can also find them, and their work, individually on Instagram: @translucentfeels (Sierra), @Pastel\_pwussy (Amber) and @Nazzpuller (Callie).

Contact them if you're interested to volunteer as a model for their next event.




## School Bell

Continued from page 3

ment that is conducive to doing homework starting at a young age. Children need a consistent work space in their bedroom or another part of the home that is quiet, without distractions, and promotes study.

- Schedule ample time for homework; build this time into choices about participation in after school activities.
- Establish a household rule that the TV and other electronic distractions stay off during homework time.
- Supervise computer and Internet use.
- Be available to answer questions and offer assistance, but never do your child's homework.
- If your child is struggling with a particular subject, speak with your child's teacher for recommendations on how you or another person can help your child at home or at school. If you have concerns about the assignments your child is receiving, talk with their teacher.
- If your child is having difficulty focusing on or completing homework, discuss this with your child's teacher, school counselor, or health care



**ECE students met the school's new librarian, Matthew Brock.**

provider.

- For general homework problems that cannot be worked out with the teacher, a tutor may be considered.

**Enrollment Information**

Hamtramck residents may enroll their children in Hamtramck Public Schools at the HPS Business Office, 3201 Roosevelt.

You will need to bring with you: an original birth document (raised seal birth certificate, passport, green card, visa), an up-to-date immunization record, a final 2018-2019 report card/transcript, parental identification, two current proofs of residency (utility bill, mortgage statement, formal signed lease, pay stub, etc.) and proof of income (required only for preschool applications).

**Upcoming Events:**

- October 2 – Fall Count Day
- October 2 – End of Progress Report Period #1
- October 10 – Progress Report #1 Distributed
- October 10 – Half day for Hamtramck High School and Horizon High School. Parent teacher conferences 12:30-3 p.m. and 5-7 p.m.

**Recreation Department News**

For information about recreation activities, give us a call at (313) 892-2635. Follow us on Facebook for the most up-to-date information: [www.facebook.com/HamtramckRecreationDepartment](https://www.facebook.com/HamtramckRecreationDepartment)

**Compiled by Janice Gandelman**

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## Obituaries

### FARVAR-SAVAGE



Renee Farvar Savage, now being called Ms. Hamtramck, passed on Friday, September 13, 2019.

Renee was an upstanding citizen of our community and spent her life serving within it. Renee started off working in the City Hall and was lead to serve children in the Hamtramck Public Schools where she retired.

She also served on the library, recreation, and Concerned Women of Hamtramck boards and was an active member of the NAACP of Hamtramck.

Ms. Renee lead many grassroot operations, helping elect numerous officials, get multiple millages passed, and contracts revised and renewed.

She prepared monthly meals for the police department and helped families in untold ways.

We will miss Renee's big personality, contagious laughter, and her ability to pitch in where ever needed. She shared her gift of servitude with us, to honor her, we will SERVE!

In lieu of flowers we're asking for Pencils and Donations. Drop-offs for this can be made at Randy's Barbershop, 11527 Jos. Campau.

By Tissua Franklin

### KACZMAREK



Carla Kaczmarek, 66, died September 13, 2019.

Carla was the loving wife of Andrzej Poplawski; stepmother of Paulina Poplawski and Sylwia (Mike) Lambert; sister of Paula; step-sister of

Karen (Paul) Novara, William Schwanke, Robert (Barbara) Nowak, and the late Eugene Nowak; sister in law of Antonia Poplawska. She is also survived by many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Visitation was September 16 and 17, at Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home, 2396 Caniff, Hamtramck MI 48212. The funeral Mass was Wednesday at Our Lady Queen of Apostles Catholic Church. Interment was at Mount Olivet Cemetery, Detroit, MI.

### MOROSKY



Arnold Morosky, 80, died September 15, 2019.

Mr. Morosky was the dear husband of Janet; father of Arnold (Michelle); Pappy of Drew, Austin, Sophie, and Elena; uncle of Bob (Sharon), Michelle Slezak, the late Rickie Levock; brother of the late Phyllis, Diane, and Nicky.

Arnie was honorably discharged from his service in the United States Army. He was a Lieutenant in the Hamtramck Police Department where he retired. He was also a coach for Hamtramck Chancellor football, Hamtramck Little League, and St. Florian baseball.

Private services were held by the family with interment at Great Lakes National Cemetery, Holly MI. Arrangements were made by Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home, Hamtramck MI.



## City Hall Insider ...

What is our City Council up to these days?  
We have the highlights of the latest council meeting.

By Charles Sercombe

The city council met on Aug. 27, and all councilmembers were present. Mayor Karen Majewski was absent.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, Robert Zwolak said the "primary issue" of the meeting is the approval of city hall's façade improvement, and also to seek bids to get the job completed.

The city is renaming city hall in honor of former Mayor Robert Kozaren. When the project is completed, the building will be called the Robert Kozaren Municipal Center.

Zwolak, a former city clerk and current city council candidate, praised the late mayor.

Reading from a Face-

book post he made about the subject, Zwolak said:

"Mayor Kozaren was the ultimate public relations man for Hamtramck. He built bridges from Lansing, with Paczki to state representatives, and Washington DC with President Carter as well as other political and industrial leaders in the region," Zwolak said.

"I believe he had a photographic memory and never forgot you or the rest of your family. It was uncanny his memory and how he knew so much about people and sports. More often than not, we were foes but we had great respect for one another. The Robert J. Kozaren Municipal Center is but a small tribute to him for all his dedication

to the Hamtramck community."

Later in the meeting, the project was approved, but the council will still have to vote on the final cost proposal.

A town hall hearing was held for a request by Dr. Sami Bilani to have a Brombach alley vacated for a housing development he plans to build.

The project, called the Brombach Town Homes, will consist of six units.

Shannon Lowell opposed the plan. He said Bilani will benefit from the project "at the expense of three" other people who live next to the alley.

He said three other houses, including the one he lives in, will not have access to their garage, or in Lowell's case, his back-

yard.

Later in the hearing, Bilani pointed out that was not accurate. He said Lowell will still be able to access his backyard, and that the two other dwellings will not have their garages impeded.

Lowell insisted that vacating the alley "will take away from the common good."

Joe Grzecki, a former Hamtramck treasurer, cautioned city officials from approving the project until they know for sure that no underground utilities will be impeded.

He said that years ago, the city allowed a building to be built at a site without first making that check. As it turned out, a water line ran underneath

Continued on page 8



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## Continued from page 7

a weapons offense.

- A resident in the area of Neibel and Jos. Campau reported that a suspicious note was placed on their porch.
- A Detroit resident was arrested for being wanted on a Detroit felony warrant.

## Friday, Sept. 13

- At 3:30 a.m., a Ferndale resident was arrested in the area of Edwin and Lumpkin for being wanted on a Hamtramck warrant.
- A person was arrested for driving a stolen vehicle.
- Child Protective Service reported an incident of sexual assault involving a minor.
- An agent for a business in the 2200 block

of Caniff reported that a male suspect stole ice cream from the store.

## Saturday, Sept. 14

- Officers recovered a stolen vehicle in the area of Conant and Caniff.
- A Sobieski St. resident reported damage to her property.
- At a little after 9 a.m., a resident reported being robbed while at Jos. Campau and Carpenter.
- A Grand Haven St. resident reported damage to their property.
- A Belmont St. resident reported an attempted theft.

## Sunday, Sept. 15

- A resident reported that the front and rear windows of his car were broken out.
- At 2 a.m., a person was arrested at Conant and Belmont for being disorderly.
- At about 5 a.m., a resident reported that while driving, he was rear-ended by a person driving a black Dodge Charger. The driver of the Charger then fled the scene.
- A resident reported

being assaulted in the 12000 block of St. Aubin St.

- Several Detroit residents reported that their cars were struck by rocks as they drove in the area of Conant and the train tracks overpass.

## Monday, Sept. 16

- At almost 3 a.m., a resident said that, while in the area of Oklahoma and Circle Dr., they were assaults by suspects.
- A Mitchell St. resident reported that her dog was stolen.
- A hit-and-run accident occurred at Holbrook and Conant. Another hit-and-run accident happened at Pulaski and Mackay. One more hit-and-run happened at Nagel and Carpenter.
- At about noon., a Detroit resident reported that, while walking on Carpenter near McDougall, a suspect grabbed him, stuck a black pistol into his stomach and robbed him of \$80, and then fled on foot. The suspect was described as a black male, 40 years old, 5-foot 7-inches tall, weighing 110 pounds, and wearing a black and white shirt with black pants.

## City Hall Insider ...

### Continued from page 6

the building and later began to leak.

The building's floor had to be dug up in order to fix the leak.

It was later pointed out that the city had indeed checked to make sure there were no underground utilities in the alley.

Grzecki's son also spoke, saying the request should be denied because kids play in the alley.

Justin Petrusak said alleys are part of the city's "cultural landscape."

"It's a beloved alley," he said.

(Photos of the alley were later shown, and large weeds were seen growing in the alley.)

He said the alley is also worth more than the \$2,000 purchase offer to the city. Petrusak offered to buy the alley for

\$4,000, although it wasn't clear if that was a serious offer.

Carrie Beth Lasley, who is a candidate for city council, said that, although the proposed development is "excellent," vacating the alley may set a precedent.

She said, for example, someone might request to expand the size of their house.

"How do you say yes to this, and no to others?" she said.

Dr. Bilani said the city will collect around \$25,000 in taxes from the completed project.

Councilmember Fadel Al-Marsoumi praised the project. He said that rejecting the request will discourage "future investors" from developing in Hamtramck.

"We need to not only motivate people to invest,

but also encourage them," Al-Marsoumi said.

Councilmember Andrea Karpinski said that she is "not a fan of declining development in Hamtramck."

But, she said, vacating the alley is a "hard" decision.

She asked Bilani whether, should the request be denied, it would then kill the deal. Bilani said that it would.

Karpinski added: "I sympathize with you, and I don't want to see this project go dead."

Later, when a vote on the request was held, Karpinski cast the only vote against it.

City Manager Kathy Angerer said that, at the request of Councilmember Ian Perrotta, she will have the alley appraised for its value.

## The lore of Hamtramck ...

## When we almost had a trailer park

By Greg Kowalski

The one thing Hamtramck never had but always needed is ... a trailer park.

You know, the kind that Eminem lived in for a while. Well, maybe not.

But we almost had one. Before we get to that, though, let's look at the reasons why one was considered.

Following the opening of the Dodge Main factory in 1910, Hamtramck's population exploded. We went from 3,500 people in 1910 to 48,000 in 1920 – all in a city of 2.1 square miles.

Builders took note of the huge influx by throwing up whole blocks of houses almost overnight. Look around town and you will see some houses are near perfect copies of each other, because the same plans were used all over town. If there were any zoning regulations or building codes on the books at that time, they were ignored.

Most of the houses were built on lots 30-feet wide by 90-feet deep, and many were multifamily houses. By 1930, Hamtramck's population reached 56,000 people, and there were about 11,000 houses in this 2-square-mile city.

The building boom eased during the Great Depression, but even in 1939 new houses were being built. "Home building volume in Hamtramck during 1939 ranked 13th in the state," The Citizen newspaper reported in September, 1940.

By the end of World War II, as the guys were return-

ing from the service, the city began to really be squeezed for space. It got so bad that the city began to seriously look at buying trailers and placing them on whatever piece of property they could.

In September, 1948, city Housing Director Stanley Wojcik and Welfare Director Barney Kloss reported to the Common Council about a used trailer sale being held in the City of Center Line (around 10 Mile Road and Van Dyke) where a trailer park was being sold off.

Wojcik reported that three types of trailers were available: "A standard trailer, suitable for a family of four; an expandable type, large enough for six or seven persons. The third is a community type, consisting of separate trailers, two of which are large rooms, while the third has a kitchen and two toilets.

"All have beds, springs, folding tables and chairs, ice refrigerators, cooking and heating stoves. They are in good condition ex-

cept for painting and minor repairs," Wojcik told the council.

Prices ranged from \$150 for the standard trailer to \$249 for the expandable to \$500 for the community type.

But that was the end of the road for the trailer park story. For whatever reason, likely the lack of space to put the trailers on, as well as the responsibility of maintaining them, the council didn't buy into the idea.

It probably was better that way.

You can learn about Hamtramck's housing and much more at the Hamtramck Historical Museum, 9525 Jos. Campau. Hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday and by appointment. Call (313) 893-5027. Email hamtramckhistory@gmail.com.

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