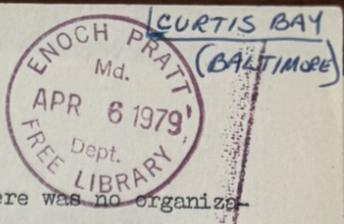




*I thought you may be interested - Blk.*

HISTORY OF THE CURTIS BAY IMPROVEMENT ASS'N.

1962 to 1977



During the planning years of the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel there was no organization to represent the residents of Curtis Bay.

Acting Mayor Goodman after a number of times, requesting the community to organize so the City would have someone to deal with as our streets were very much involved in the planning, succeeded in having a group meet at the Curtis Bay Recreation Center at Curtis Ave. and Filbert St. Benjamin F. Poe, 4015 Pennington Ave. was selected to conduct the meeting.

The question to be considered was a offer from the City of Baltimore to the residents of Curtis Bay as alternate of traffic through the community.

1. Baltimore City would spend a sum of money at Pennington Ave. and Patapsco Ave. whereby Pennington Ave. and Curtis Ave. would become one way traffic with parking permitted 24 hours a day on both sides of the streets.

If the residents did not accept the one way traffic, no parking would be permitted on either side of Pennington Ave. or Curtis Ave. 24 hours a day.

Another meeting date was selected. Residents were notified of the meeting. Mr. Poe visited the business people on Pennington Ave. and Curtis Ave. advising them of the City's offer. At this meeting which was well attended Mr. Poe advised the business people remarked, if no parking was permitted, they may as well close their business. A vote was called for with the exception of (1) vote, one way traffic was accepted.

At this meeting it was agreed to organize a community ass'n. Mr. Poe was asked to serve as its leader. Mr. Poe accepted under the condition that the ass'n. be non-political and non-sectarian. A constitution and by-laws committee was selected. This Committee presented the following which was accepted.

Article 1

Section 1 - This ass'n. shall be known as the Curtis Bay Improvement Ass'n. Inc.

Section 2 - Recognizing the need for cooperation among themselves, the citizens in the neighborhood of Curtis Bay have formed an organization known as the CBIA inc. for the purpose of promoting by legitimate and appropriate means the following objects:

- A. This ass'n. shall endeavor to obtain for this section of Baltimore all such neighborhood improvements to which it is rightfully entitled.
- B. This ass'n. shall promote good fellowship, cooperation and a better understanding among the merchants and residents of this community.
- C. Non-political and non-sectarian, this ass'n. shall have as its ultimate aim the general development and well-being of the neighborhood of Curtis Bay.

Article 2 Membership

Section 1 - The membership of this ass'n. shall be open to all persons having an interest in the neighborhood of Curtis Bay.

Section 2 - The names, addresses and other pertinent data of all applicants desiring to become members of this ass'n. shall be submitted to the membership committee for its approval and presentation to the ass'n.

Section 3 - Membership in this organization shall be assessed at \$1.00 per year per person.

Article 3 - Officers

Most of the present officers Benjamin F. Poe, President; Walter Miles-First Vice president; Ann Scott-Second Vice President; Kay Reed-Secretary; Marge Campbell-Treasurer; George Delost-Sargent at Arms, have served faithfully over these many years. One of the former officers, Mr. John Hahn-Funeral director, served as Vice President until his death.

Article 4 - Meetings

The ass'n. has never changed its meeting night, the last Monday of the month, have never increased its dues of \$1.00 per year, has never held any money raising schemes, has never failed to supply refreshments at its meetings and contribute to the recreation center fund yearly.

Many services has been rendered to the residents such as personal help with health problems, reading and explaining letters received which they did not understand, tax forms, etc. completed at no cost.

Following are some of the projects the ass'n. records as completion to make our community a better place in which to live and fulfill our obligations as set forth 15 years ago.

1. One way traffic, Pennington and Curtis Aves. as explained in the beginning.
2. Objection to the Arundel Expressway passing through Curtis Bay which would have taken hundreds of our homes. Some still believe the Curtis Bay Imp. Ass'n. saved our community by their continous objection.
3. Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Coal pier alteration

At the time the Curtis Bay Coal pier was erected lump coal was brought to the pier by railroad cars. The coal was screened at the mines leaving most of the dust and dirt at the mines. The railroad cars were pushed up a ramp to approximate 40 feet in the air and turned upside down. The coal dropping on a huge coveyer belt, which carried the coal to ships and barges.

After later years, pulverized coal in place of lump coal was in demand.

The Railroad company installed a water sprinkling system, in an effort to block much of the coal dust being carried by the wind to industry and residents of Curtis Bay as the cars were turned over at the top of the ramps. This condition became so bad at times of high winds that industry had to close down. Residents' clothes were ruined, painting became a thing of the past. At times the sun was blanked out by the tremendous clouds of dust.

After several months of contacting the officials operating the coal pier and getting nothing but promises. Officials of the B&O railroad from the city office were requested to attend a regular scheduled meeting of the CBIA. Nine officials attended the meeting and were surprised of facts presented such as the sprinkler system was not operating because of frozen pipes and loading of ships had to continue regardless of rain or any other conditions. At the end of this meeting the officials of the B&O railroad thanked us for inviting them to our meeting. They also advised that no more unloading would be allowed unless all operation equipment was in order. Later we received a letter asking our cooperation for approximately 3 years for design and installation of equipment to correct the condition.

The cars are now dumped inside of a building properly designed for the job plus other equipment at a cost of \$10,000,000 dollars. Results - we once again can paint, our clothes are not ruined, and thousands of tons of coal goes in the ships, not in the air.

1. Closing of Heittelman Co. Ninth St. Brooklyn

The Heittelman Co. was salvaging all types of materials by a melting process which discharged large quantities of dust and fumes which attacked paint on residents automobiles destroyed window curtains, clothing, etc.

After many months of health department complaints, and threatening lawsuits, the plant finally ceased operating.

5. Settlement of John Cwak's problem with insurance company's for damages received during the collapse of the Saint Rose Lima's church roof. After over 80 letters to anyone we felt may help with this problem, including the governor of our State, judges, State officials, etc. the case was finally settled at Mr. Cwiaks' satisfaction out of court with various clients paying their share.

6. Bay-Brook Park

Supported Mrs. M. Farring by attending meetings etc. during her battle of securing the property turned over to the City of Baltimore after the duration of the war, where the war time homes were demolished, supported her until the park was completed, which is now one of the most beautiful viewing spots of the harbor and City of Baltimore. May her name be remembered forever as the park has been renamed in her honor.

7. Harbeson Walker Refractories

After hundreds of complaints, compiled at the Baltimore City Health Dept. and almost daily complaints to the CBIA. about the odor, and eye burning complaints from the residents of Patapsco Ave. area, an investigation was started to find the cause of the complaints. As the General Refactories on 7th St. in Brooklyn produced the same product as Harbeson Walker, and receiving no complaints from the residents in that area, proved Harbeson Walker process of manufactering was at fault.

After months of questioning Harbeson & Walker's employees, it was found that H & W was using crude oil to fire their furnaces while G.R. used gas fired equipment. Confronting H & W officials with these facts, H & W finally consented to change to gas in place of oil. After the change over, very few complaints are ever received. This proves that industry and residents can live happily together if available equipment is used.

8. Fairfield

Residents of Fairfield requested our help in securing sewers and paved streets. After many neetings with Baltimore City officials and residents, the City finally agreed although the City maintained the plans for Fairfield was an industrial park area and the Fairfield residents would not want to pay the plumbing expense if sewers were installed, the CBIA insisted industrial park or residential, sewers were needed. Today this is another area without the sight outhouses.

9. Wagners Point

Several residents of this area requested help from the CBIA of having the City, State or Industry purchase the homes in this area due to danger of fire or explosion of storage tanks of gasoline and other highly explosive materials, within a few feet of their homes. After many meetings with City, State and federal officials, no agreement was ever reached.

During the years the Waste disposal plant at Wagners Point was being built. Thousands of truck loads of earth was required to fill in a section of the harbor, this heavy traffic completely ruined sections of the roadways. Residents and industry workers using these roadways requested help from the CBIA. Requests from the CBIA were honored and new roadways were installed on overtime and Sunday work.

10. Food Machinery Co.

The Food Machinery Co. purchased the U.S. Industrial plant and began to produce many types of inceticides. The odor emitting from these processes were carried to Curtis Bay, Brooklyn and other areas causing many hours of discomfort to residents. Officials of the company were invited to one of the CBIA meetings and advised of the problems their plant was causing. The officials insured the CBIA they would do everything possible to correct the condition.

Several months later these officials were again invited to a meeting of the CBIA for the purpose of thanking them for their cooperation in correcting the odor problem. The plant manager advised that he should thank the CBIA for their help in correcting the condition because without the help of their complaint, higher management would have done nothing. The plant manager stated that when he would go home at nights his family complained of the odor he was bringing home. When he went to church people would move from the seat next to him.

11. U.S. Coast Guard Depot

During a meeting of the CBIA an employee of the U.S. Coast Guard of Curtis Bay Depot presented a petition bearing the names of 600 employees requesting a flashing light on Pennington Ave. at the overhead roadway crossing of the railroad leading into the Davison Chemical Co. now the Grace Co. Also walkways for the sailors returning to their vessels being repaired at the Depot. When asked why the petition was given to the CBIA the answer was they were advised by some City official. The petition stated a flashing light at the overhead crossing was required due to a traffic stop light at the Coast Guard Depot entrance. Cars traveling on Pennington Ave. could not see cars stopped by the light until they were over the raised roadway which resulted in many accidents and even deaths. Also no pavement was installed or embankments removed alongside of Pennington Ave. from the end of the Curtis Bay car line which at that time was some distance from the depot. A number of sailors had been killed due to walking in the roadway.

The Commander at the depot threatened to take action to have the depot removed from Curtis Bay unless action was taken immediately to correct the unsafe conditions. Action was taken within 24 hours when the City officials received the petition from the CBIA. Walkways installed, removal of embankments and a flashing light installed within 30 days. Coast Guard depot is still here. No accidents reported due to flashing light. No deaths due to nowhere for the sailors to walk.

12. Zoning Change - Curtis Ave.

Being advised by Senator Harry McGuirk during the time of re-zoning in Baltimore City to change the west side of Curtis Ave. to B-2 zoning in place of M-3 zoning.

As M-3 zoning is heavy industrial while B-2 zoning is restricted, the residents of Curtis Bay can be very thankful. Without the zoning change, Curtis Ave. would have become the replacement for the block on Baltimore St. and many other questionable places of businesses.

13. Taverns

The CBIA has voted to protest any further outlets of alcohol. Our community is saturated with these outlets. Any additional outlets effects the present outlet owners and the clientele drawn disturbs the peace of the residents. Many requests for license have been protested during the past several years and with the support of the residents and elected officials we have always been successful.

14. Air and Water Pollution Transportation Committee

With representatives of the CBIA serving on air and water pollution committee and with the support of the Baltimore City health department installing air & dirt devices in our community, Curtis Bay 95% of the time has air as clean as any section of the City of Baltimore although we are in a heavy industrial area.

15. Streets & Sidewalks committee

A number of streets, sidewalks have been improved with letters to the city officials on improvements to be made.

16. Health Clinic

Several years ago the CBIA was advised by Dr. Farber, Commissioner of health in Baltimore City that the health clinic over the Curtis Bay Pharmacy would be discontinued because no one was using the clinic. Personally as president of the ass'n., I did not know there was a health clinic in Curtis Bay. I asked Dr. Farber to give us time to investigate the health clinic operation.

After several attempts to find a nurse or doctor at the clinic at the posted time I waited several hours one day when the nurse finally arrived. On questioning the nurse, I found she and a doctor were being paid by the Baltimore City health dept. a sum of money for their services, but the nurse could not remember the last time the doctor visited the clinic. The nurse also advised that very few people visited the clinic. Further investigation proved no one knew when the clinic was open.

Knowing if the health dept. closed the clinic we would never get another one, the CBIA contacted the Bureau of Recreation and Parks requesting space and time for the operation at the Curtis Bay Recreation Center, Curtis Ave. & Filbert St. After receiving this request, Dr. Farber was advised of our favorable action and asked to close the clinic over the pharmacy, transferring the funds to operate the clinic at the recreation center. The CBIA entered into a contract with the Baltimore City Recreation dept. whereby the Center would provide the space for the clinic's operation at no cost to the ass'n. Dr. Farber agreed to this arrangement.

This has been a God's help to the senior citizens and others in our community. The nurse's hours are 10 to 12 Mondays and Wednesdays. The nurse's service is free to anyone. Blood pressure and other ailments are checked. The nurse will advise you of her findings and make immediate arrangements with the South Balto. hospital clinic if such emergency exists.

As the Curtis Bay Senior Citizens group meet on Wednesdays, with the nurse's service available in the same building. Many senior citizens take advantage of this service and are found to need medical attention often. Without this service so convenient, some of these persons would not visit their doctor until it was too late. Records prove the nurse checks over 750 persons each year. Divide this number with the cost of a visit to your doctor and you will find a great savings to our community.

17. Landfil-Pennington Ave. & Aspen St.

Baltimore City was planning a landfil at Pennington Ave. and Aspen Sts. a area which was in the rear of a number of homes on Church St. from the city line to Prudence St. This area was a continued trouble area with boys with rifles going into the wooded area to shoot birds etc. Many times these shots were found to hit the homes breaking windows, etc. The residents were actually afraid of bodily harm. The city and county police were being continually called but because of the wooded growth and actual evidence that the shot came from a individual's gun or rifle could not be proven, nothing could be done to correct the problem. The CBIA had been advised that this area was being considered for a low rental project homes.

After considering the facts available the CBIA inquired into what was to happen when the landfill was complete, how long would the landfill be in operation, how would the landfill be operated, etc. The city's reply was at the completion of the landfill which estimated time was 6 years, the City of Baltimore would turn over to the Bureau of Parks 65 acres of land for a park for Curtis Bay. Designs and plans were given to the CBIA. The CBIA presented these plans along with the operation procedures. The residents on Church St. primarily concerned were invited to these meeting to voice their opinion on what was best for them. After all had their say a vote was unanimously passed to accept the landfill.

The CBIA was advised that approximately 80% of the landfill would consist of building and street materials. 20% trash from the Paralus plant on Russell St. which was in operation at the time. Due to the complete failure of the Parayolus plant and the closing the Reed Bird Ave. incenerator at Cherry Hill the Aspen St. landfill years of operation was reduced to 3 years operation. Its completion expected by 1980. The CBIA continues to watch the operation of the landfill and calls meetings of the proper city officials when questions arise.

The CBIA has also requested the city to advise Mr. Doug Tawney, director of all city parks and recreation centers to start funding procedures to have available funds to complete the parks immediately after its completion. This request was presented to Mayor Donald Schaefer through his representative Mr. Thomas Marader at a meeting held at the Curtis Bay Recreation Center on Tuesday, February 28, 1978 in the presence of Sixth District Councilman, Wm. Meyers.

#### 18. Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Historical Book

Mayor Donald Schaefer requested Baltimore City civic organizations to prepare something for the approaching Bi-Centennial year. As Brooklyn and Curtis Bay holds many years of history, the CBIA appointed Mr. Hubert McCormick, chairman, Mr. Benjamin F. Poe-Co-Chairman to print a book of history of the Brooklyn-Curtis Bay area. 1,000 copies of this book was printed and sold for \$7.00 per copy.

This book has been considered one of the best by many sources. To date it is in 7 countries and many schools and libraries.

May the youth of today, the leaders of tomorrow continue to take time out of their busy lives to keep this organization operating so that Curtis Bay may remain forever a better place to live in a highly industrial area.

--Prepared by Benjamin F. Poe, President, CBIA  
year of 1978