



SHAW MAIN STREETS NEWS

SPRING 2013



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Shaw Main Streets is a designated D.C. Main Streets program and is funded in part by the D.C. Department of Small and Local Business Development, Vincent C. Gray, Mayor.



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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: *A ROOM WITH A VIEW*

From the seventh floor of the office building at Progression Place, you can see almost 360 degrees of the city of Washington spread out before you. Regardless of the time of day, seeing our changing neighborhood at your feet through the floor-to-ceiling windows is an opportunity to marvel at what's been happening along 7th Street for the past decade.

It's hard to believe that Progression Place was an empty, grass-covered field next to the Shaw-Howard Metro station's north entrance for over a decade. The southern half of the site, across an alley from the former Wonder Bread Factory whose entire length was visible from Seventh Street back then, was cleared as part of the construction of the Green Line. Among the buildings that were lost were the one-time home of Waxie Maxie's, the 20th century vinyl music chain that got its start there. The historic buildings that remained along 7th Street housed a number of small businesses, almost all of which closed in preparation for the development of what was originally called Broadcast Center One. The urban broadcasters Radio and TV One were going to relocate their radio and TV operations to 7th and S. Radio One founder Cathy Hughes, who got her start in broadcasting at Howard University, was going to live in the penthouse of the complex's residential building.

But on the evening of March 27, 2013, the United Negro College Fund was the organization whose logo was on the entrance to the office building lobby at 1805 7th Street, NW. The nonprofit purchased a 50,000 square foot office condo in the building and relocated from Fairfax County, VA, the previous October. The broadcast industry's troubles made it impossible for Radio and TV One to make the move, but made it possible for UNCF to come back to the District.

That evening, Shaw Main Streets held its 10th annual meeting on a vacant 14,000 square foot floor at Progression Place. As guests arrived, they marveled at the view in all directions, with Rosslyn highrises and the National Cathedral on the western

horizon and the U.S. Capitol and Washington Monument to the southeast and southwest.

But what many folks were most impressed to see was much closer to home. Right next door, Douglas Development's Wonder Bread Factory, with additional stories and a new roof, made it clear that the former domain of Twinkies was well on its way to new life as offices and retail after being vacant for decades.

Down 7th Street, a cluster of cranes marked the construction sites where Jefferson Apartment Group and Roadside Development are building nearly 900 units of housing and nearly 100,000 square feet of retail space as part of their Jefferson at Market Place and CityMarket at O projects. The cranes, the tallest structures in the neighborhood, dwarfed the highrise apartment buildings nearby. Beyond that set of cranes could be seen their siblings on New York and Massachusetts Avenues, where the new headquarters for the Association of American Medical Colleges and the Washington Marriott Marquis hotel are rising. Walking around the windows of the cavernous space revealed a citywide crane invasion that would have confirmed the worst fears of the panicked listeners huddled around their radios during Orson Wells' 1938 "War of the Worlds" broadcast.

As the sun set and the full, orange glowing moon rose, the magic was palpable. After a decade of struggle to get the neighborhood's development jumpstarted and sustained, everyone in the room could take pride in the role they played in transforming dreams into reality. The vision the community crafted through countless hours of planning meetings was right outside the huge windows, lit by spotlights and the glow of neon. Seeing is believing, and the true believers and even the doubting Thomases had to agree, it was worth the wait.

Alexander M. Padro



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NOW OPEN!

By Alexander M. Padro

Taylor & York Salon opened in December 2012. Owner and master stylist Ashleigh Taylor's goal is to have her salon be a place where clients can relax and transform their look into timeless beauty. 1604 7th Street, NW, 202-817-3688, www.taylorandyorksalon.com.

Vita Lounge, a nightclub in the former Be Bar/EFN Lounge/Mood Lounge space, opened in January, along with **Penthouse 9**, a second floor whiskey bar offering American and imported spirits and cocktails made with them. Chef Howson Chm's menu (shrimp and grits, mole lamb chops, fried artichokes with lemon aioli) nicely complements the drinks. Owner Mimi Birru wants PH9 to become a neighborhood destination. 1318 9th Street, NW, 202-332-0170, www.vitaloungedc.com.

Xtend Barre DC, one of the 75 locations worldwide offering this combination of Pilates and ballet barre exercises, opened in November 2012. The Xtend Barre system sculpts the body proportionally so that all body parts are equally challenged. Classes taught by studio owner Kelly Griffith (who also owns Georgetown's Fuel Pilates) and her team of 10 instructors strengthen, lengthen, and stretch the body from top to bottom, from inside out. 1228 Blagden Alley, NW, 202-289-2020, www.xtendbarredc.com.

Vigilante Coffee This pop-up coffee shop at Hogo (itself a restaurant pop-up concept) opened in March. Six mornings and early afternoons a week, owner Chris Vigilante's team offers a changing selection of small batch roasted specialty coffees, teas, and baked goods. Winner of the *Washington City Paper's* Best Pop Up designation, the pop-up is scheduled to run until this fall. 1017 7th Street, NW, www.vigilantecoffee.com.

Mockingbird Hill Named for a place referenced in The Clash's "Spanish Bombs," owners Derek Brown (The Passenger, Columbia Room) and Chantal Tseng's foray into sherry and ham, a classic Spanish combination, opened in June. Sample 54 varieties of sherry and sherry cocktails, along with hams, olives, nuts, cheeses, and breads selected to complement them. 1843 7th Street, NW, 202-316-9396, www.drinkmoresherry.com. 



└ Old City Farm & Guild's Frank Asher

Table Chef Frederick De Pue's long awaited first restaurant opened in a former garage (more recently, The Space) in January. Since then, the restaurant, which offers seasonal fare on its handwritten menus, was named the *Washington City Paper's* Best New Restaurant and received 2-1/2 stars from the *Washington Post's* food critic. 903 N Street, NW, 202-588-5200, www.tabledc.com.

The Barber of Hell's Bottom opened in April. Owner Kelly Gorsuch (who also owns Immortal Beloved on Church Street, NW) has brought high-end men's services to Shaw. This men's salon features scissor haircuts and straight-razor shaves, antique barber chairs and tile floors. 818 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, 202-332-0200, www.barberofhellsbottom.com.

Reformation Fitness Owner Mike Huling's Pilates studio opened in January. Classes at the mirrored, well-lit studio include the Reformer apparatus for strength training that maintains flexibility while "working the heck out of your core." 1302 9th Street, NW, 202-813-3647, www.reformationfitness.com.

Old City Farm & Guild Owner Frank Asher had to move outdoor garden center Old City Green from 9th and N Streets, NW, in preparation for that site's development. But Old City Farm & Guild opened in April at a larger location that includes a small amphitheater for events, on-site farm plots for rent, and an education program for DCPS students. 925 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, 202-412-2489, www.oldcitygreen.com.



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Alexander M. Padro

Steve Cruse and Sean Reydi own Simon Vintage, an antique furnishings and home decor store.

IS SHAW BECOMING A NEW INTERIOR DESIGN AND DECORATING DESTINATION?

By Alexander M. Padro

In 2008, nationally acclaimed DC-based interior designer Darryl Carter bought a long-abandoned historic rowhouse at 1320 9th Street, NW, envisioning a showroom and studio space for his growing business. The neighborhood was excited that Shaw had attracted a rockstar like Carter, and hopes rose for a cluster of design and decorating businesses in Shaw along the lines of what 14th Street had cultivated. Then the world financial crisis hit, and the project, like most in the neighborhood, had to hit the pause button.

But after an antique furnishings and décor business opened in Little Ethiopia a month after Darryl Carter's long anticipated eponymous emporium and offices in November 2012, it looks like that vision is on the way to becoming a reality.

Simon Says, "Shop"

Steve Cruse loves going to auctions and estate and yard sales, finding antiques and bargains. Life and business partner Sean Reydi told him he should find a way to turn that hobby into a business. So after spending nine months building up inventory and finding a space on 9th Street, Simon Vintage became a reality.

DARRYL CARTER, INC

1320 9th Street, NW
202-234-5926
www.darrylcarter.com

SIMON VINTAGE

1911 9th Street, NW
202-629-2517
www.simonvintage.com



JBG proudly supports
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by investing in the momentum
of the Shaw neighborhood.

Acclaimed interior designer Darryl Carter opened a showroom and boutique and moved his design practice to Shaw.



"We like to think of the store as a fun place, and a green place," Cruse concludes. "Reusing all this is the ultimate recycling."

"179 Shades of White"

Whether the overall "style personality" is Traditional, Modern, Town, or Country, Darryl Carter emphasizes comfort as he creates personal environments for his clients by combining classic and contemporary elements in subtle colored spaces. Carter has observed that "There are 179 shades of white," and that color predominates in his sophisticated interiors, including those at Darryl Carter, Inc.

The bronze lion sculpture in the store window, and the stone archway visible beyond, signal to passersby that design rules in this space. Even the skylit attic displays Carter's eclectic mix of one-of-a-kind antique objects, new artwork and artisan-crafted accessories, and modern fixtures. Items are displayed in relevant rooms, with areas dedicated to bed and bath, kitchen, and the like.

The store is named for Cruse and Reydi's eight-year-old pet Chihuahua, who appears on the logo that adorns the shop's windows. It occupies a space that was once home to a Madame C.J. Walker Beauty School, but more recently housed women's clothing boutiques.

The shop offers home décor and furnishing from three periods: Art Deco, Mid Century, and Contemporary. Over 4,000 items are on display on two floors, in all sizes and shapes, priced from \$0.25 to \$1,200. The antiques have come from as far away as upstate New York.

The selection is wide-ranging and eclectic, from tables, chairs, and lamps to Polaroid cameras, typewriters, Coca Cola vending machines, and license plates. Glassware, dishes, toys, and art from all three periods are also available. Customers often come up with interesting ways to reuse the items they buy at the store. "It's amazing how many things you can turn into lamps," Cruse observes.

Cruse, a *Washington Post* agent, still goes out every weekend looking for new inventory, but also has buyers send him photos of items. Reydi, an architect, handles the store's website and IT needs.

Simon Vintage attracts customers that are looking for unique offerings and are price conscious. They're attracted by the store's window displays and end up becoming repeat customers.

Darryl Carter-designed furniture, lighting, and paints have pride of place in the restored rowhouse and carriage house complex, which serve as both showcase and atelier. Exposed wood beams, original brick walls, and rustic and antique furnishings, all in soothing multi-floor white and pale neutral colored spaces, are a window into the Darryl Carter style. (Carter declined to be interviewed or respond to questions for this article.)

Carter-designed products on display and for sale in the retail boutique include sofas and chairs, his line of Benjamin Moore paints, and lighting fabricated by Urban Electric Company.

His two books, *The New Traditional: Reinvent-Balance-Define Your Home* (2008) and *The Collected Home: Rooms with Style, Grace, and History* (2012) make Carter's aesthetic accessible and help guide readers' thinking about design. But words and pictures alone won't create a Darryl Carter original. For that, clients have to enlist Carter and his team's assistance. The design firm, which Carter formed in 1998, is housed in the Naylor Court carriage house behind the 9th Street building. Carter's design work has recently been featured in *Elle Decor*, *Architectural Digest*, and *Country Living*.

"I see a great renaissance in this neighborhood that is craft-driven," Carter said of Shaw in an interview with the *Washington Post*. "I see artisanal chefs, art galleries and a vibrancy and a return to a communal spirit. We are all pioneering together."



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BicycleSPACE's service, product selection, and events earned owners Erik Kugler (pictured) and Philip Koopman second runner up in the annual new business poll.



Nicolene Dutoit



Alexander M. Padro

Bistro Bohem's creative cocktails helped earn owner Jarek Mika first runner up honors in the Best New Shaw Business of 2012 competition.

BEST NEW BUSINESS AWARDS PROVE SHAW IS IN HIGH GEAR

By Alexander M. Padro

Two of the top three new businesses that opened in Shaw in 2012 have something in common: wheels and gears.

Off Road Indoor Cycling took top honors in the Best New Shaw Business of 2012 poll conducted in February and March. BicycleSPACE was voted Second Runner Up, while Bistro Bohem received the First Runner Up nod. The winners were announced at the Shaw Main Streets Annual Meeting on March 27, 2013 at Progression Place.

Cycling-centric exercise studio Off Road Indoor Cycling's co-owner Tammar Berger received the award at the event. "It's such an honor to be chosen over all the other businesses that opened last year," Berger remarked. "We knew we

had a lot of loyal supporters, but this award will make us work even harder to keep earning that confidence every day."

Bistro Bohem's Lenora Yerkes accepted the first place award on behalf of the Central European restaurant's owner, Jarek Mika. The bistro's cuisine, lively bar, and the café component, Kafe Bohem, have helped make the southwest corner of 6th Street and Florida Avenue, NW, a citywide destination.

BicycleSPACE, which relocated to Shaw from the Mount Vernon Triangle, has been voted Best Bike Shop in DC by the *Washington City Paper* and *Washington Post Express* newspapers. Their group rides draw hundreds of people, and the shop carries a number of brands that are DC exclusives.



BISTRO BOHEM

600 Florida Avenue, NW
202-735-5895
www.bistrobohem.com

BICYCLESAPACE

1019 7th Street, NW
202-962-0123
www.bicyclespacedc.com

OFF ROAD INDOOR CYCLING

905 U Street, NW
202-681-1319
www.offroadc.com



Councilmember Vincent Orange with American Classic Queen Tuere Marshall.

Mixologist Derek Brown serves a guest his American Rum Punch as Filibuster Bourbon owner Sid Dilawri (center) looks on.

SAVOUR SHAW GALA A HUGE SUCCESS

By Oni Yebiye Hinton and Alexander M. Padro

As the clock stuck seven on Thursday, April 18, 2013, guests began to fill Long View Gallery's two spacious rooms. An excited buzz filled the air, as attendees were welcomed to the 2013 Shaw Main Streets Gala. This year's theme was Savour Shaw, a celebration of the neighborhood's culinary success. The five chefs and a mixologist comprising the host committee offered signature cocktails and hors d'oeuvre-sized examples of their culinary artistry to over 200 attendees.

The gallery was decorated with large gold, pearl, and metallic green balloons hung from the ceiling, and green and white floral arrangements. Live jazz from Laissez Fouré filled

the venue with tunes that mimicked a classic Dixieland band as guests mingled, drank and ate. Two bars featured a range of wine and spirits, including Tito's Handmade Vodka and Shaw's own Filibuster Bourbon.

Guests enjoyed meeting representatives from the developers responsible for many of the exciting new projects in the neighborhood and the owners of Shaw businesses, old and new. The silent auction tables were visited regularly by bidders interested in securing great offers such as lunch with Mayor Vincent Gray and dinner at The Inn at Little Washington. The gala host committee members were Corduroy's Tom Power, The Passenger/Columbia Room's Derek Brown, Rogue 24's R.J. Cooper, Seasonal Pantry's Daniel O'Brien, Table's Frederik de Pue, and Thally's Ron Tanaka.

Brown, a renowned mixologist and cocktail authority, described the punch he prepared for the event. "We served the American Whiskey Punch, a simple punch recipe dating from the 19th century using rye whiskey, fresh lemon, and oleo sacchrum, which is Latin for sweet oil and means pulverizing the lemon peels with sugar."

A great Shaw booster who will be opening two new Shaw venues this summer, Brown was thrilled to be part of Savour Shaw. "We live in the greatest neighborhood in the greatest city in the world, as far as I'm concerned," he explained. "Anything we can do to come together as a neighborhood, meet and greet, and share our experiences as well as simply celebrate our past and future is worthwhile. We see Shaw Main Streets as our partner and thank them and Alex Padro for putting together a great event."



ANC 6E Commissioner Rachelle Nigro, PEPCO President Thomas Graham, SMS Executive Director Alexander Padro, and Ethiopian Yellow Pages owner Tutu Belay enjoy the crowd at the Shaw Main Streets Savour Shaw Gala.

KBK Enterprises' Lori Wynne, Dantes Partners' Buwa Binitie and Inle Development's Hashim Hassan smile for the cameras.

Power, who will open his second Shaw restaurant this summer, presented Corduroy's Chilled Burdock Soup and Michel's Chocolate Hazelnut Bars. "I thought it was a very well attended event that showcased Shaw's new restaurant scene. It is exciting to see the area offer so many new dining options," Power observed.

"We raised over \$80,000 in cash and over \$30,000 in in-kind contributions," reported Gala Chair and SMS Treasurer Mary Margaret Porterfield. "Every penny raised helps us greatly in our mission of making Shaw a better place to live, work, shop, play, and pray."





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SMS ANNUAL MEETING CELEBRATED 10 YEARS OF PROGRESS

By Oni Yebiye Hinton

As the sun set over Shaw, excited guests flocked toward the floor-to-ceiling windows of the unfinished seventh floor office space for the breath-taking panoramic views of the neighborhood.

"Now this is one of the things I love about Shaw Main Streets," explained one guest to another. "This isn't your ordinary Wednesday night event. Don't you feel highly exclusive?"

The 2013 Shaw Main Streets annual meeting was held on March 27th at 1805 7th Street, NW, the Progression Place office building, now home to the United Negro College Fund. Developer Four Points provided the venue for the meeting, which brought together over 125 residents, developers, councilmembers, and business owners to celebrate the first decade of Shaw Main Streets' service to the neighborhood.

After enjoying the setting sun, Executive Director Alexander Padro walked those in attendance down memory lane with a PowerPoint presentation on highlights from each of the organization's 10 years, a recap of exciting developments from the past year, and plans for 2013.


The highly anticipated Best New Shaw Business of 2012 awards were announced following a rundown of the winners since 2005. Off Road Indoor Cycling won Best New Business, with Bistro Bohem and BicycleSpace winning first runner up and second runner up, respectively.



Notable guests included Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells and At Large Councilmember Vincent Orange, who received one of two Shaw Champion Awards this year. "Alex has been going a great job in making Shaw develop," said Councilmember Vincent Orange. "This (award) is a testament that we are still moving in the right direction. At the end of the day, we have all worked diligently to ensure that this is where D.C. comes together." The second award was presented to Roadside Development, with partner Richard Lake accepting.

Attendees elected a slate of new and returning members of Shaw Main Streets' Board of Directors. The approval of current members Ralph G. Brabham, Gerry M. Coates, and Matthew A. Thompson, and new members Paul W. Hughes and Nooni D.L. Reatig was announced by Cristina Amoruso, DC Main Streets Coordinator at the Department of Small and Local Business Development.

The meeting was adjourned and everyone enjoyed the free reception with food, beer and wine donated by Azi's Café, Bistro Bohem, Dove House Liquors, Etete Ethiopian Cuisine, Log Cabin Liquors, Nellie's Sports Bar, The Passenger, Pizza D'Oro, Queen of Sheba Restaurant, Rahama African Restaurant, Red Toque Café, and Yetenbi Restaurant.

After all the food was gone and as residents started leaving after an event-filled night, Councilmember Wells observed whistfully: "Shaw is a place of radical change. With its ability to maintain diversity, economically and culturally, it's one of the best places to showcase the future of the city." 

L DC Councilmember Vincent Orange (center) receives a 2013 Shaw Champion Award from SMS Executive Director Alexander Padro and Board Chair Ralph Brabham.



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ROADSIDE
DEVELOPMENT

TRAINS, BUSES AND BUSINESSES: SHAW STARS FEATURED IN AD CAMPAIGN

By Oni Yebiyi Hinton and Alexander M. Padro

You've probably seen familiar smiling faces of Shaw business owners featured in ads on the side of Metro buses and on Metro rail platforms in recent years. The most recent round of ads features three businesses that opened in 2011 and 2012: Rouge 24, BicycleSPACE, and the winner of the Best New Shaw Business of 2011 award, Seasonal Pantry/Supper Club. All three businesses are independent and unique, contributing to the excitement and character of Shaw's historic commercial district.

Each of the seven DC Main Streets neighborhoods selected three businesses to represent their service area in the campaign. Three businesses appear on each neighborhood's stand-alone bus ads, and one business, in Shaw's case, Seasonal Pantry/Supper Club, was featured on the backlit transparency ads on Metro station platforms. Rogue 24's R.J. Cooper, BicycleSPACE's Erik Kugler, and Season Pantry's Daniel O'Brien posed for the campaign's photographer.

Four years ago, the D.C. Department of Small & Local Business Development (DSLBD) kicked off its first city-wide transit advertising campaign celebrating Main Street businesses to increase awareness of local retail and encourage spending at independent neighborhood businesses by residents and visitors to each area. The latest ads were placed at Metro stations including Shaw-Howard University, U Street/Cardozo, and Columbia Heights, and on

buses serving various bus routes that crisscross the city, including the 7th Street/Georgia Avenue #70.

Initially installed in January, the advertisements were scheduled to run for three months, but often stay on buses much longer. David Dorn, a merchandise buyer at Bicycle Space, says he hopes that the ads are still visible in the spring and summer.

"It's always awesome when customers come in and say 'Hey! I saw your business on the side of a bus!' chuckled Dorn. "The advertisements will help bring in more bikers wanting to explore what we have to offer and explore the city in warmer weather."

According to Shaw resident Cristina Amoruso, the DC Main Streets Coordinator at DSLBD's Commercial Revitalization Division, the campaign has been a major success since it first started.

"The campaign is a great way to bring exposure to the corridor and to the businesses located within it," Amoruso said of the ads' impact in Shaw. "It's nice to see that come fall and winter, everyone anticipates (the campaign) will happen and that they'll see the posters on the sides of the Metrobuses and on Metrorail platforms."

Daniel O'Brien, chef and owner of Seasonal Pantry/Supper Club, appreciated the opportunity to be featured in the campaign and finds that being honored by Shaw Main Streets has generated ongoing rewards.

"The recognition from Shaw Main Streets as 2011 Best New Business allowed Seasonal Pantry to continue slowly winning the neighborhood over," O'Brien said. "The ads let people all over the city see that this neighborhood is becoming more developed. Marketing the neighborhood is just like running a business. It's not about how big you are, it's about putting a good product together, and slowly things will fall into place."



Three Shaw businesses appeared on this year's bus advertising campaign.



The John F. Kennedy Memorial Playground was originally filled with vintage train locomotives, military tanks and fighter planes, and even a DC streetcar.



SHAW HISTORY: HOW THE WICKEDEST PRECINCT BECAME SHAW

By Pleasant Mann

When the *Washington Post* designated the Second Police Precinct as the "Wickedest Precinct" in its series of 1954 articles, it drew attention both to the area's crime and the problems of blight and poverty that were associated with it. While the notoriety of the Second Precinct led the police to work on methods to reduce crime, others started to work on a plan to physically revive the area. There had been an urban renewal survey of the slums of Northwest DC in 1951, but the earlier plans envisioned flattening the area and building all-new housing, similar to what was being done in Southwest Washington. The new survey that the National Capital

Planning Commission (NCPC) presented in 1954 would be something different.

First of all, the survey area would be much larger, going from 14th Street north to U Street and Florida Avenue, west to Union Station and south to Massachusetts Avenue, taking in almost the entire Second Precinct. The survey would comprise over 900 acres with a population of about 60,000 people. The plans for the renewal area would not call for a replacement of all housing, but would try to preserve and rehabilitate as much housing as possible. In November 1954, the Commissioners who ran the District approved the proposal for a 30-month long urban renewal plan for the Second Precinct.

In November 1957, a 57-page guide for the renewal of the Second Precinct was issued. The *Washington Star* said that it intended to "convert 915 acres of the slum-saddled northwest into a neat and airy home and shopping area. Wide boulevards, ample parks, schools and other community facilities would be combined with business centers to hold prosperous Washingtonians close to the heart of the District." Among the major features was a new freeway connected to the Southwest Freeway, called the Inner Loop that would sweep "through 81 acres just east of First Street along the general line of Florida Avenue." The new freeway would serve as "a means of absorbing traffic now forced to zig-zag through the area." The plan would have the commercial businesses on Seventh Street

“consolidated into a super center between Seventh and Ninth Streets south of O Street and a new neighborhood center at R Street and Vermont Avenue.” Shaw Junior High School would be moved to a new “13-acre site between Rhode Island, O, Seventh and Ninth” Streets.

There was some skepticism about the plan. The District’s Sanitation Engineer said that the plan would require moving his central garage and shop for street cleaning equipment then stored in Naylor Court. The Civil Defense Director noted that there were no provisions for nuclear attack shelters in the plan to protect neighborhood residents. When businessmen questioned the number of streets that would be closed under the plan, the NCPC Chair declared that “The District has too many streets. Fifty percent of its total area is taken up by streets while in most American cities the comparable total is only 30 percent.” When someone asked if the construction of the Inner Loop freeway would eliminate too much taxable land, he replied that while “No man can predict the future, I can tell you this. Suburban expansion made possible by the automobile has just about reached its limit.” He thought that the plan would encourage more people to live in the central city.

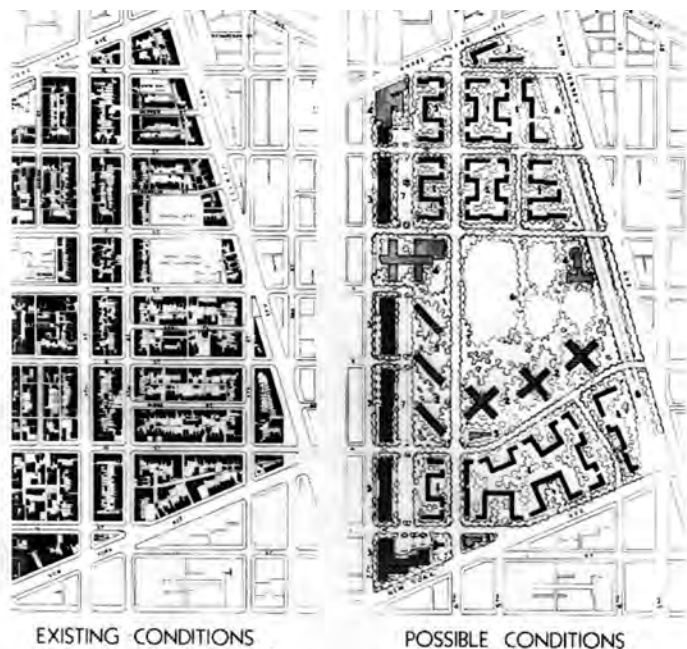
In May 1960, the District Commissioners shelved the whole plan. In general, they thought that the 10-year plan to renew the Second Precinct was too ambitious, with questions about the displacement of residents and financing of the plan left up in the air. There was the specific problem of knowing where the Inner Loop freeway and its interchanges would fall in the neighborhood. Until the route of the Inner Loop was set, the Commissioners decided to limit urban renewal in the Second Precinct to an 80 acre site eventually called Northwest Project Number One. For the rest of the Second Precinct, the Commissioners “proposed a ‘stop gap’ program of health and welfare aids until the city had time to develop a comprehensive plan for the renewal of its worst slum area.”

Grants to support health, recreation and more housing inspections was all the Second Precinct

saw for a number of years. U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy worked to establish a playground for the Second Precinct at 7th and O Streets when he found out that there were 10,000 kids in the neighborhood without recreational facilities. The site chosen was at 7th and O Streets, a parcel purchased in 1951 as a replacement for Shaw Junior High, but then used by the District as a lot to store abandoned cars. The playground, set up with jet trainers, a tugboat and an old locomotive, saw half a million visitors the month after it opened on June 3, 1964. While the John F. Kennedy Memorial Playground was supposed to be a temporary one, President Lyndon Johnson asked Congress the next year to make it permanent.

The Attorney General made another visit to the neighborhood that summer to dedicate a new community center at 1600 8th Street. The center was to be the headquarters of Better Homes, Inc., a nonprofit led by James P. Gibbons and Bruce Terris, the latter a Justice Department attorney, dedicated to the repair and remodeling of rundown homes. When Kennedy arrived, “hands reached out to touch him, voices murmured, ‘God bless you,’ children swarmed to his side, housewives begged autographs.” After the dedication, the crowd moved across the street to inspect one of the Better Homes projects at 1543 8th Street. The building had been occupied by “seven families living in eight one-room units, sharing a common kitchen and bathroom.” Now it was a four unit apartment building with completely renovated apartments, with the total rent for the building being one-third less than it had been in 1962.

The need for a major renewal of the Second Precinct became more obvious as the years went on. A major symbol of neighborhood blight turned out to be Shaw Junior High School. A 1949 school report declared that the “educational adequacy of the plant” of the building on the southeast corner of 7th and Rhode Island “was so low that no reasonable amount of rehabilitation could correct its deficiencies.” As the years rolled on, the school of 1,500 students was frequently referred to as “Shameful Shaw” by educators, residents




A 1950 urban renewal proposal would have demolished a huge swath of central Shaw.

and eventually by the editors of the *Washington Post*. A proposal by noted DC architect Chloethiel Woodard Smith envisioned a new school being built east of the existing one, with a neighborhood recreational center, library and a playground elevated over 8th Street. While Ms. Smith's plan got some attention, there was not much effort to implement it. A female student fell through a trap door on the school playground one day, dropping nine feet until she landed in a trash dumpster. When Oregon Senator Wayne Morse, on a tour of the school, learned that 21 rats had been killed at Shaw over one week, he suggested that the school be torn down immediately.

While the managers of the District of Columbia were not doing much about planning for the revitalization of the Second Precinct, members of the community started to get involved. In December 1965, mortician R.N. Horton brought together 200 local businesses and professionals to form the Uptown Progress Committee. The mission of the committee was to "prevent what happened in

Southwest [DC] from being repeated." Horton reiterated that the committee "does not intend to stand idly and watch the same thing happen to Northwest." In April 1966, the Rev. Walter F. Fauntroy of New Bethel Baptist Church formally brought together 150 community organizations, churches and a variety of neighborhood civic groups to form the Model Inner City Community Development Organization (MICCO). MICCO was devoted to taking "urban renewal, a tool often used to destroy black neighborhoods, and fashioned it into an instrument by which the people can preserve and upgrade their own community." Both the Uptown Progress Committee and MICCO intended to guide city planners to ensure that neighborhood residents avoided displacement by the urban renewal process and got the facilities they wanted when the planners moved to revitalize their community.

District city planners did start to pay attention to what might be needed in Northwest Washington. NCPC announced that they were planning to "establish a new urban renewal area in the neighborhood surrounding Shaw Junior High School." The project, if established, would emphasize rehabilitation of housing for neighborhood residents rather than wholesale replacement. NCPC planners let it be known that they had been working closely with community groups and leaders, including Rev. Fauntroy and James G. Banks of the United Planning Organization. The *Washington Post* noted that Shaw Junior High School, "one of the oldest and most decrepit of Washington's schools, reflects the neighborhood in which it is located." After NCPC members took a tour of the Second Precinct to get an up-to-date image of the area, they set up "The 675-acre Shaw urban renewal area roughly bounded by Florida Avenue on the north, 15th Street on the west, M Street on the south and New York Avenue and North Capitol Street on the east."

Finally, the Second Police Precinct, no longer as wicked as it had been, had an urban renewal plan. And the neighborhood now had a name - Shaw - instead of just a notorious police precinct number. Furthermore, the urban renewal plan would involve Shaw residents in rebuilding the community. But progress on renewal in Shaw was to be interrupted. As Chuck Stone, a columnist for the *Afro-American* noted in early 1967, "There isn't a colored person in this city who has not been aware of the explosive situation developing among the District's poor and deprived." The riots of Washington, DC, in 1968 would have a major impact on how Shaw would develop in the future. 



Alexander M. Padro

Andrea Gourdine in front of Douglas Development's Wonder Bread Factory, currently under renovation.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: ANDREA GOURDINE

By Oni Yebiye Hinton

Shaw Main Streets volunteers make the organization's many projects and activities possible. Andrea Gourdine, one of the newest members of the Shaw Main Streets Board of Directors, is co-chair of the Promotions Committee.

Why are you involved with Shaw Main Streets?

As a developer and project manager with Douglas Development, I have a vested interest in the community. And I've worked with Alex Padro on several occasions. Douglas Development was one of the organization's first sponsors back in 2003, so we

have a longstanding relationship with SMS. We want to see the community grow.

Where do you currently live?

I live in Dupont Circle right now, but I really want to move to the Shaw area soon. Hopefully really soon.

What do you believe is your biggest contribution to Shaw Main Streets?

I believe I bring a different perspective. The board is made up of business owners, developers, local community members. My perspective is, "What do I see, real estate-wise, that will help Shaw grow?" As a developer, I feel a responsibility to communicate that to other board members and get other developers to create a long term relationship with the community. Also to help Shaw Main Streets to expand the recognition of what Shaw has to offer to the whole of D.C. Shaw is one of the fastest-changing neighborhoods in the District and one of the most influential.

In one word, Shaw Main Streets is...

Blooming. Shaw Main Streets is a catalyst for business opportunities, community engagement and it gives the neighborhood a "sense of place."

How would you describe Shaw to folks who aren't familiar with the neighborhood?

It's one of the unique neighborhoods of D.C. Literally, one of the best places to live because it's practically right in the center of everything.

When I was little, I wanted to grow up to be...

A lawyer, or an Olympian. I had big ambitions.

When I'm not working hard volunteering with Shaw Main Streets, I'm probably...

Reading five books. Right now I'm reading *A Long Walk to Freedom*, the Nelson Mandela autobiography, *The Jungle*, which is a book I read in middle school by Upton Sinclair, and *Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follett. Those are just three of the five that I'm reading now. 🏠

Interested in volunteering with Shaw Main Streets?

Email info@shawmainstreets.org or call 202-265-SHAW.

ABOUT SHAW MAIN STREETS

Shaw residents and community leaders founded Shaw Main Streets, Inc. in March 2002 to promote the community-driven economic revitalization of central Shaw's 7th and 9th Street commercial corridors.

Shaw Main Streets' mission is to promote the economic development of Shaw's commercial corridors in a manner that meets the needs and desires of the community's residents and existing businesses and preserves the neighborhood's history and architecture. Shaw Main Streets is a nonprofit, community-based, volunteer driven organization that relies heavily on the time and talents of volunteers in the community and beyond.

Partial funding for Shaw Main Streets, Inc. is provided by the Department of Small and Local Business Development's DC Main Streets program.

The organization relies substantially on the tax-deductible donations and the generous time of volunteers like you. For more information or to make a contribution to support our efforts, contact:

Alexander M. Padro Executive Director

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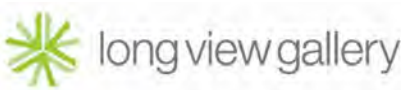
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