

Metro

Muted impact

Howard Levin Clubhouse to stay put during Forward Square development

BY JANE MUDER

Chronicle Correspondent

The Howard Levin Clubhouse sits just outside of the Murray Avenue demolition zone for Forward Square, the multistory, mixed-use project planned for the corner of Forward and Murray avenues. The facility's parking lot, dumpster and adjacent bus stop might change locations during construction — but inside the building, life will stay largely the same.

The facility, one of 400 clubhouses worldwide, offers a secular, daytime psychiatric rehabilitation program to its adult members.

Clubhouse participants work alongside staff to run the program. Common tasks at the Clubhouse include cooking and cleaning, manning the front desk and café and writing and editing the program's monthly newsletter. Members also have the option to participate in a Friday Shabbat meal.

"[The Clubhouse] provides an opportunity for social interaction with friendly people, and that is a real strength," said Debbie Friedman, executive director of Jewish Residential Services, the umbrella organization for the Clubhouse.

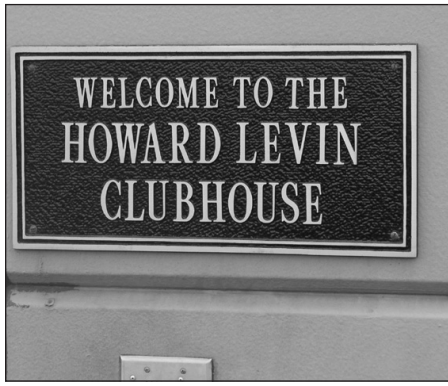
How will the Clubhouse members be affected by the loud noises and increasing traffic that are part and parcel of building Forward Square?

"Through Doug [Shields'] office, R.E. Crawford Construction (the project contractor) actually contacted us," said Friedman. "We became aware of the plans for the project because they contacted us, which was very forward thinking of them. That put us at ease and made us feel that our concerns weren't going to be ignored."

Concerns for the Clubhouse include parking availability, distance to the nearest Port Authority bus stop, escalating traffic and safe pedestrian sidewalk conditions.

Project principals estimate that traffic flow will increase, especially after construction. It's also likely that the Port Authority bus stop at the intersection of Forward and Murray avenues will need to move.

City Council President Doug Shields, who represents Squirrel Hill's District 5, wrote in an e-mail, "Certainly the impact on residents and existing businesses and organizations is



Chronicle photo by Angela Leibowicz

A plaque outside the Howard Levin Clubhouse in Squirrel Hill. Clubhouse officials expect to be relatively unaffected by the proposed Forward Square development.

an important component in any major development. The process will certainly involve the community. The developers are already engaged in that dialog — and I feel comfortable that all stakeholders will be engaged."

Lynette Lederman is Shields' executive assistant. She says that Tom Churchick, executive vice president of R.E. Crawford Construction, approached Shields' staff at the project's inception to gain a

better understanding of the Squirrel Hill community's needs.

"We are keeping that open dialogue with the development company," said Lederman. "They understand that during the construc-

tion, there has to be some sensitivity to the [Clubhouse] population. When we left that meeting, we all felt pretty satisfied that we had immediate access to each other."

Russell Mills of Cambridge Venture Partners, the Forward Square project developer, said Lederman played a big role in championing Clubhouse members' needs. Now, he said, "we can be conscious of the disruptions the process will have on the community — and we will do everything possible to minimize them."

Friedman is satisfied with Clubhouse-inclusive efforts so far. She said that project principals assured accessible parking spaces for the Clubhouse and noted that Churchick passed out his contact information at the July group meeting, encouraging direct calls.

"They seem to really want to be good neighbors," she said, and added that, in this stage of the project, she feels Clubhouse concerns won't be abandoned.

(Jane Muder can be reached at jmuder7@yahoo.com.)

Correction/Clarification

Healthcare Foundation, not the Jewish Hospital Foundation.

...

Pat Siger was hired as development chief at the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh, not the YWCA as indicated in the headline of an Aug. 28 story "Siger named development chief at Y(M)CA." Also, Siger is a vice chair of the Jewish

In the Aug. 28 story "Building Bridge," The Chronicle would like to clarify that Lou Joseph did not use any nicknames in referring to his teachers at Taylor Allderdice High School. Any extraneous character references were added by the author and not the interviewee.

BRIGGS & RILEY
THE ENLIGHTENED TRAVELER

**100% GUARANTEED
20% OFF**
SELECTED STYLES



Discontinued Baseline styles up to 20% off. Lifetime guarantee even covers airline damage. Simple as that®.

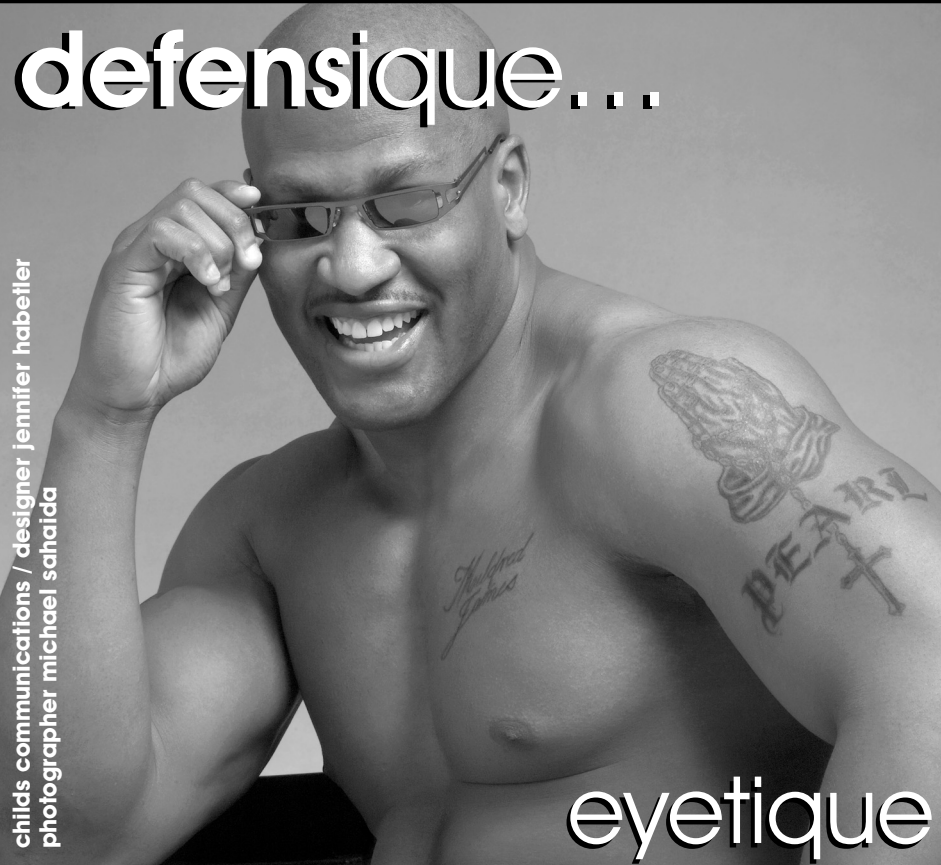
briggs-riley.com

RYNN'S
LUGGAGE & MORE...

SouthSide Works 2755 East Carson Street
412-481-8862

HOURS: 10 am - 9 pm Monday - Saturday
12 pm - 6 pm Sunday

defensique...



eyetique

James Harrison, Pittsburgh Steelers, wearing Christoph Broich sunglasses

eyetique®

the world's finest collection of unique eyewear

squirrel hill . wilkins township . wexford . shadyside
south hills village . south side works . www.eyetique.com

childs communications / designer jennifer habetter
photographer michael sahatida