—Harlem Park group to aid School No. 39

Continued from Page A3

Rioux, director of With and For Parents to get some answers to questions about the group's operations.

The group was designated one year ago to work with 150 parents at Harlem Park Middle School to reduce the dropout rate.

"I'm not saying these people are not doing their job," Cummings said after the meeting. "I'm investigating and the jury is still out on them."

Cummings said he was most alarmed to learn of the group's existence at a community meeting where he was informed that the group operates on a $435,000 grant from the Prudential Foundation.

"I was shocked to learn that there was such an organization," Cummings said.

"More and more public schools are having to depend on private organizations for funding, I think the city needs some type of clearing house to be a vehicle by which accountability is brought about."

He added, "When organizations come into our city and are granted funds to work with students, I think that it's incumbent upon them to at least be in touch with community organizations, elected officials, and community leaders."

The Harlem Park Community Association, one of the leading forces in the Harlem Park area, was never contacted by the group, according to Cummings.

Contrary to Cummings's concern, Rioux claims his organization reached out to the community.

"I made two presentations to the school board to the board of school commissioners, and I talked to Mayor Schmoke, while he was running for mayor, who approved of what I presented to him."

Rioux said he followed up with a letter to the mayor once he was elected and received a favorable response.

He said there are about three community associations in Harlem Park, and he contacted numerous Harlem Park groups.

Rioux views his program as potentially successful, but cited parental participation as a major set back.

"We have a project with an educational goal to monitor achievement with parents," Rioux said.

"We were not successful getting parents to come to meetings, many of them don't like meetings," he said.

With and For Parents has recently moved from its original headquarters in Lafayette Square to 839 N. Fulton Ave. in an attempt to attract more parents.

Rioux said he discovered many of the parents were opposed to meeting in Lafayette Square. Lack of parental interest proved detrimental to the program's progress.

"We could see that kind of a thrust wasn't working, so we began to shift our strategy in March and April," Rioux said.

He feels, however, that interest is growing because they've begun to receive phone calls from parents soliciting their help with their kids' problems.

This year, Rioux expects the program to continue its efforts to aid parents while working closely with those already involved in the program.

Out of the original group of 150 6th graders, 12 failed and 19 were promoted provisionally.

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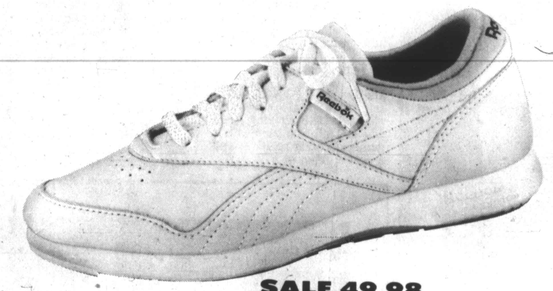

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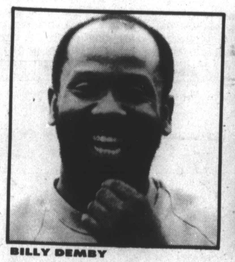

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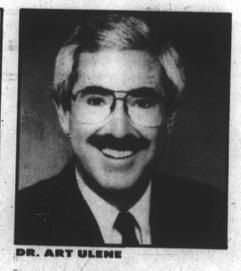

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BARBARA A. GREEN

City zoning board member claims a 'Common sense approach'

By Alisa Samuels

Barbara A. Green personifies determination.

Twenty-five years ago, the 52-year-old city zoning board member was left to die on an East Baltimore street. A hit and run driver had knocked her under a parked car as she crossed the street exiting a corner store.

Two boys found her under a car and told nearby adults, 'there's a drunken lady under a car', Mrs. Green recalled. She was then rushed to St. Joseph Hospital immediately.

The impact of the collision fractured Mrs. Green's pelvic bone, right hip and left knee cap.

Green said doctors told her she would never walk again.

"They were shocked when I told them I had feelings in my toes, while watching television one day in 1968," Green said. "It didn't happen again, until one or two weeks later."

The accident and recovery, which included surgeries, physical therapy and a wheelchair-confinement, cost Green almost 10 years of her life and ended her dream of becoming an interior decorator.

But in 1971 or 1972 she was able to walk again.

"It's been so long, you try to forget in a sense," Mrs. Green said.

Mrs. Green, the mother of four professional children and wife, said she credits her recovery to determination and God.

"I've always felt determination plays a part in whatever you do in life," Green said. I don't regret anything. It hasn't made me angry with the world," said Green. " If anything, it could have been worse."

Years later she still does not succumb to life's most difficult and challenging moments.

In January, the Baltimore City Council's Third District delegation met Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke head-on on his nomination of Green to the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals.

Councilmen Mike Curran, Joseph "Jody" Landers and Wilbur "Bill" Cunningham charged Green, who lives in their district, was not qualified to serve on the four year board. There really is no standard qualification.

Mrs. Green was Schmoke's campaign manager and aide in Schmoke's battle against Question K, a defunct charter amendment that would have enabled the Council to set its own budget without the mayor's approval.

Schmoke called the opposition to Green's appointment personal. He said she was unequivocally qualified to sit on the zoning board.

"I took it personally, but I thought it was political," Green said about the Third District councilmen's treatment of her. She served on the Ednor Gardens, City Planning and Housing Development and the Northeast Community Organization.

After several hearings were held, the Council approved of her nomination to the zoning board in a special meeting on Jan. 13. The Third District abstained from voting.

Eight months later, Green said she and the Third District Delegation are just "polite to each other."

"I don't have any bad feelings about her," said Councilman Cunningham Sept. 26. "I really have no professional contact with her, except when I address the board zoning as a whole."

What about her relationship with the mayor?

"I look at the mayor as I would a son, although no one takes his mother's place," she said.

Apparently the mayor has special feelings for Green also.

During a press conference Sept. 23, the mayor took time out to give Green a birthday present and card and wish Green a happy birthday.

Armed with a city map and a 200-paged Zoning Ordinance of Baltimore City handbook, Mrs. Green hears dozens of cases each day at the zoning board ranging from small businesses to industrial developments.

The board hears testimony from community residents, business people and city agencies when deciding the fate of a property.

"I bring a common sense approach to the board," Mrs. Green said.

"I'm not going to vote if I don't know what is going on," Mrs. Green said. She is paid $7,000 annually as one of the five zoning board members.

Green called Fells Point an "up and coming area" for the city, because there are plenty new property owners trying to buy property in Fells Point.

Herbert Brown, a black man, is the board's chairman.

The zoning board, established in 1931, regulates residential, business and industrial districts in the city and decides what a piece of property can be used for.

Believing it is never too late, Green jokingly said, "Maybe I'll become an interior decorator when I'm 60."

AFRO Photos by Paris Gray