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Downtown Eyesore Becomes Discotheque

By John W. Templeton
Staff Writer

Two months ago, the barons of Buzzards Roost held court in the entranceway of an abandoned former furniture store at 550 North Liberty St., at the corner of Liberty and 6th Sts.

As the weeks went by, subtle changes began to occur. The wine bottles got cleared away. Paneling was put up to cover the windows. The doors were greased to make sure you couldn't see what went on inside.

And after hours, a stream of black workmen filed quietly in and out of the building, working on renovation.

All the activity is designed to turn this once vacant eyesore into a disco palace--the biggest one in the area, says Rick Clark, president of Investments Limited and manager of what will be known as Disco 2,000.

"We're going to bring Winston-Salem a total entertainment package they haven't seen before," said Clark. "It's going to be total disco--sight and sound." Inside the building, Clark and his associates have laid

out a 30-foot dance floor with twice as much seating space. At the rear is a 30-foot bar.

The walls are decorated with mirrors and geometric designs in all colors of the rainbow, but the real impact will come from the light show, complete with strobes, chasers, flashers, and several other exotic sounding lights, and the "glass house".

In the glass house will sit the disc jockey with his array of turntables and sound and light controls. "The DJ is the heartbeat of all disco operations; his job is delivering funky music, giving the people what they want."

The significance of the new establishment goes beyond the creation of another nightspot. Downtown Winston-Salem is currently a wasteland after dark, but Clark believes in its potential.

"Downtown is not dead," he said. "There are too many people down here." Standing in front of the building, he gestured up and down Liberty Street. "Look at all the free parking after hours."

"I think that Disco 2,000 will do a lot to help

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Rick Clark at the bar as work is completed on Disco 2000.

NAACP Suit Depends on Test Results Turnabout Denied New Thrust Planned

By John W. Templeton
Staff Writer

CHARLOTTE--NAACP legal and education experts have concluded that the civil rights organization would not have grounds on which to challenge North Carolina's competency testing program until after the test is actually administered statewide on November 1 and 2.

"If it appears from the test results that our children are going to be penalized, then we are going to have to seek judicial intervention to have the program thrown out or modified," NAACP general counsel Nathaniel E. Jones told delegates to the 35th annual convention of the N.C. State Conference of NAACP Branches.

In a Chronicle interview, Jones said, "We have to have a patient, so to speak.

We couldn't demonstrate the impact until we actually get the results".

"The dry run they had last year, that doesn't count (in a legal sense)," said Jones. He said students knew it wouldn't count and that several different tests were actually given, making comparisons between that test and the official one difficult.

Jones said an NAACP suit would try to strike down the negative effects of the test, the denial of diplomas and the issuance of certificates to persons not passing the test.

The state NAACP has come under fire from the Durham-based North Carolina Coalition for Quality Education, whose leaders, Nelson Johnson and Rev. Leon

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By John W. Templeton
Staff Writer

CHARLOTTE-- Delegates to the 35th annual convention of the N.C. State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People resolved to launch a "new thrust" against an old enemy--discrimination.

Following the lead of national executive director Benjamin L. Hooks and state president Kelly M. Alexander, Sr., the more than 300 delegates decided to establish program task forces in such areas as housing and communications in each local branch.

To underwrite that effort, Alexander announced plans to double the statewide NAACP membership from 25,000 to 50,000 and to raise \$100,000 this year.

"We're faced with an unfinished agenda," Alexander, conference president since 1948, proclaimed during his yearly report.

In a Chronicle interview, he said, "We face a more sophisticated type of racism. We must deal with it using new methodologies".

Kenyon C. Burke, NAACP associate director for programs and one of a dozen top national staffers who tutored convention delegates in the new program effort, said the objective "is to strengthen the local units so that they can impact on issues that have an impact in their communities".

"One cannot be an advocate about anything if they're ignorant," said Burke.

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all for you

•The planned extension of a super-highway through a predominately black community in Durham would disrupt families, according to a Duke University study, page 2.

•Neighborhood groups in Winston-Salem carry a lot of clout, page 3.

•The day of reckoning for the competency test. See editorials, page 4.

•Kelly M. Alexander, Jr., the 30-year-veteran president of the state NAACP, is featured in Q and A, page 5, which also has Getting Along with Drs. James Comer and Alvin Poussaint.

•TV game show host Bob Barker is on his way to the Triad and local artists open a new museum, see Vibes, pages 8,9.

•Johnson C. Smith won its first game of the season last week, but their next opponent is the mighty Rams, page 11.



Some people aren't accustomed to the sight of a black man in a business suit.

And some of those folks are black. Two recent incidents in the 400 block of Liberty Street come to mind.

Just the other morning, as I strolled to the Chronicle "penthouse" atop the Pepper Building, a brother came down the street past me.

"You're looking good, brother," he said unexpectedly. Of course, that made me feel good. Then he added, "You going to a job interview".

He had kept on walking and so did I so I didn't want to go into a detailed explanation that I had a job which required me to dress that way every day. I replied, "Yep."

"Where at?" he responded, now 20 feet behind me.

"The Chronicle," I said.

"R.J. Reynolds," he replied. "That's good, brother; hope you get it".

A few days before that, an older gentleman turned the corner of Fifth and Liberty, just as I crossed the intersection.

"What are you practicing?" he asked.

"Well, I'm trying to be a journalist," I replied.

"I thought you were a lawyer or a doctor or something," he replied.

What does it all mean? I asked myself. It could mean I'm a good dresser. But I immediately dismissed that notion.

More likely, the two conversations point up the impact of years of discrimination in employment and negative images in the media. For many years, the only place blacks could go to get a job would be the tobacco mill; and the range of occupations for professional blacks was similarly limited.

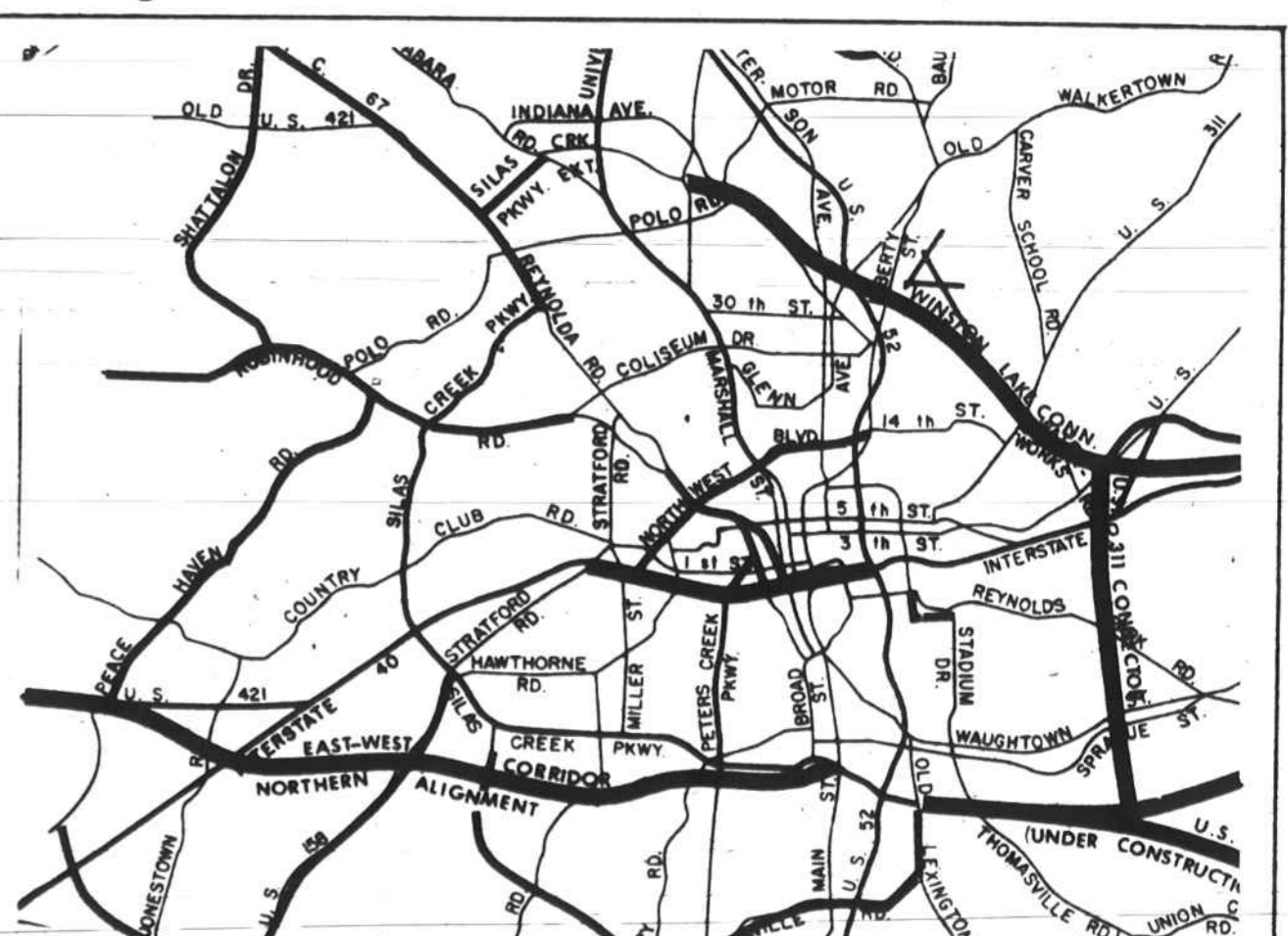
However, nothing has changed if one relies on the images the overwhelming majority of the mass media portrays of blacks. We're all just doing a few things, one would be led to believe.

It isn't so. By John Templeton



Above are three highway projects in various stages of planning which would impact on traffic flows in the north and east of Winston-Salem. Left is a sketch of plans to extend the Liberty-Main Streets one-way pair from 8th Street to U.S. 52.

The project has been funded by the state Department



of Transportation and the estimated date for the start of construction is 1986.

Right is one of four alternatives being studied for a new thoroughfare plan for the city. Two of the projects, the Winston Lake Connector near the airport and the widening of Northwest Boulevard, would make

it easier to get from one side of East Winston to another and possibly stimulate new development, say city planners.

The City-County Planning Board is currently seeking public input on these and other changes. If you have an opinion, call 727-2717.

City Housing Needs Outstrip Solutions

By Sharyn Bratcher
Staff Writer

Low income households make up 40% of the total in Forsyth County, Alderman Virginia Newell told the audience at Tuesday night's housing forum. Of the low income houses 60% are substandard.

However, the panel was short on solutions to the problems associated with low-income housing. "If you expected me to come up here and give you the solution, then I apologize," Larry Little told the audience. "Because I don't have one." His statement summarized the feelings of the assembled panelists.

Five local speakers and two representatives from the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development discussed various aspects of the housing problem before an audience of approximately 60 people in the auditorium of the St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church on 12th Street.

Gary Brown, Winston-Salem's director of Community Development, pointed out that the city needs 12,000 new units of housing by 1980, but HUD so far has approved only 1400.

"Even if the government keeps approving housing at its present rate we'll still be far behind," Brown said.

Benjamin Erlitz, an attorney with Legal Aid, told the group that the city has not co-ordinated development money, and revenue sharing funds, he noted, but so far no co-ordinated effort has been made to use these funds toward a single purpose in housing.

The value of a well-organized neighborhood group was discussed by Crystal Towers president Chuck Dizard.

"The city staff is most effective when it is responding to clear ideas of organized groups of people," said Dizard. "Unfortunately, the organized groups are usually politicians, businessmen, or other city departments."

Dizard went on to say that a neighborhood group is basically defending its own interests. For good housing for the maximum number of people, a city-wide effort is required.

"We can't work if we're divided racially or by neighborhood organizations".

"We have very few resources to deal with a large problem," Alderman Larry Little began. He explained that income is the key to better housing.

"If you give someone a decent house without a decent income it will be a slum in a few years anyway."

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