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Where angels fear to tread: Hotel Brunswick to have new tenant

The **Intelligence Journal New Era** reports
“Troubled Hotel Brunswick in downtown Lancaster being taken over by noted developer John Meeder.”

‘We’re just rolling up our sleeves,’ said real estate developer John Meeder, who announced Monday that he and partners have completed an agreement to take over operations of the nine-story hotel.”

“Meeder, of Meeder Development Corp., will lease the hotel with the intent of purchasing the property at 151 N. Queen St. within two years.

“Meeder credited [Mayor Rick] Gray and city Economic Development & Neighborhood Revitalization Director Randy Patterson for helping to broker the agreement.”

According to the web site of Meeder Development Corp (<http://meedcor.com/>), the company has built or is constructing several moderate size housing redevelopment projects in the City of Lancaster. There is no mention of any hotel development, ownership, or management experience...

The article further states: *“On Monday, [Mayor Rick] Gray blamed out-of-area ownership for the hotel’s problems.*

“Now that the negotiations have concluded, we can begin to improve it to make it the asset that it can be,” Gray said of the hotel.”

The article continues: *“The five owners of the Brunswick in recent years have been based in various areas, including Lewes, Del., Santa Monica, Calif., and Los Angeles.”*

Not mentioned is that Hamid Zahedi, partner in the Brunswick and manager until this past year, resides in New Jersey and spent days each week in Lancaster.

NewsLanc has three observations:

- 1) We wish John Meeder and his partners success in what we consider a Herculean task. Unlike this current redevelopment projects, the hotel industry is more about strength of market place than brick and mortar.
- 2) We perceive the article as a puff piece to exculpate the Lancaster Newspapers, Inc. for its role in developing the competing Marriott Hotel and the financially troubled Convention Center.
- 3) We are disappointed that Gray and Patterson failed for eight straight years to have the vision and seize the opportunity to redevelop Lancaster Square East, with its long vacant Bulova Building, the deteriorating Brunswick Annex, and the moribund hotel. We fear the two year Brunswick lease with an option to buy simply amounts to ‘kicking the can down the road.’

We hope we are wrong on all accounts. Time will tell.

New Rule at N.F.L.’s Camps: No Tackling. It’s Just Practice

NEW YORK TIMES: Pro football summer training camps were once filled with two practices a day, grueling sessions that featured helmeted

players clashing gladiator-style under a merciless sun.

That was before the average N.F.L. salary soared to more than \$2 million, forcing coaches and owners to weigh the risk and cost of preseason injuries. At the same time, the athletic community has been responding to research outlining the cumulative, debilitating effects of recurrent head trauma, even in practice. What's left is a training camp landscape that would have been unrecognizable 10 years ago.

practice model virtually prohibits tackling and tolerates only nominal full-scale contact between the players, often no more than five minutes a week...

EDITOR: *There is a message for parents in this. Why expose children to injuries, especially from concussions, when they can play far less dangerous soccer or lacrosse?*

Is Harrisburg Incinerator deal in best interest of Lancaster taxpayers?

By Bill Keisling

As I've been writing, this ridiculously complicated Harrisburg Parking Deal is a state bailout.

A big part of the present problem in Harrisburg was created when Dauphin County commissioners got into the re-financing craze with Mayor Reed in the early 2000s, in exchange for \$2 million in walk-around investment funds. The bond insurer AGM backed these bad loans.

Now the Dauphin County commissioners and the bond insurers look to be writing their own bailout.

The commissioners with state assistance have written for themselves essentially the same sort of complicated bond deal that created this mess. The public is also intentionally left out of the loop, and is not asked to understand or participate. As such, it will probably fail. Why should the public care?

This is a state bailout — dishonest in intention and execution — made to not look like a state bailout.

The same applies to the hidden state subsidies proffered to sell the long trouble plagued Harrisburg incinerator and adjoining 'mountains' containing toxic ash to the Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority at many times its market value.

In the Lancaster case, there has been no third party Financial Feasibility Study. No third party Environmental Impact Study. Just 'trust us.'

How many debacles have followed such reassurances? (To start, let's count Iraq and the Lancaster Convention Center.)

Pa. liquor board reports record \$128M in profits

PHILLYBURBS / AP: ...Robust sales and cost controls generated net income of \$128.4 million in the year that ended June 30 — an increase of \$24.9 million, or 24 percent, over the previous year, the board said...

The positive figures were released in the aftermath of a major but so far unsuccessful effort by Gov. Tom Corbett and fellow Republicans who control the Legislature to privatize liquor and wine sales that the state has controlled since 1933...

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