

Solon

T I M E S

April 12, 2018 · 75c

Volume 39 / Number 39



Photos by Geoff Powers

A crowd of more than 150 turned out at the Tuesday Solon Planning Commission meeting where a site plan modification for a mosque to be built on Liberty Road was discussed. Some residents voiced opposition to the location while members of the Islamic center answered questions.

Mosque discussion heats up

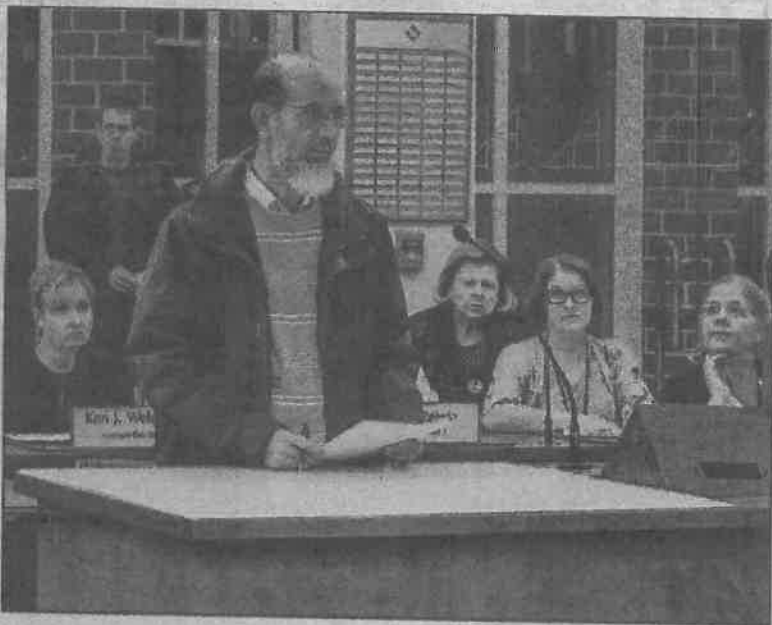
Residents voice objections to center planned for Liberty Road

By SUE REID

A standing-room-only crowd of more than 150 people packed Solon City Hall Tuesday with many speaking in opposition of a \$1 million mosque planned for Liberty Road near Spicebush Lane.

Plans for the mosque have been discussed in public sessions with city panels and council since 2012. The project already has gained approval by the city with construction set to begin this spring.

The city Planning Commission met Tuesday to consider a routine site plan modification for parking



Solon resident Dr. Syed Ishrat Zaidi, a board member of the Chagrin Valley Islamic Center, discusses the plan to reduce the number of parking spaces at the center. Groundbreaking for the \$1 million project is set for this spring.

around the mosque.

Some people in the crowd shouted out objections and criticisms of the city administration during the meeting. In attendance were members of the Chagrin Valley Islamic Center, religious leaders in the community, residents living near the mosque site, members of Solon City Council and law enforcement officers.

At the start of the meeting, commission Chairman Eugene Macke Bentley noted that the matter under consideration is not a variance, but rather a site plan modification of an already approved plan.

"There are no variances or no voting on variances tonight," Mr. Bentley said. "There will be no changes."

He also asked that those who speak on the matter be "respectful, concise and not repeat themselves." Each person was given a 3-minute time limit.

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Consortium would incentivize energy efficient companies

By SUE REID

The City of Solon is considering entering a consortium that would allow businesses to take advantage of a new incentive program helping companies that make energy efficient improvements.

City Council last week heard information about a financing program called PACE, Property Assessed Clean Energy. It allows a company to secure financing from outside lenders and pay the loan back through special assessments on their tax bill spread out over 20 to 25 years.

Solon Economic Development Manager Peggy Weil-Dorfman explained that she received an inquiry from a city business recently about the availability of a financing program for energy efficient

improvements that is available in other communities.

The company would like to make about \$100,000 in improvements to its building in terms of roof, insulation and lighting, she said.

The city's role is to authorize the placement of the assessment on the applicant's tax bill. In order to do so, Ms. Weil-Dorfman explained, the city must belong to an Energy Special Improvement District or ESID.

The district must comply with QRC regulations, she continued, including creation of a board of directors.

Ms. Weil-Dorfman explained that a community may join an existing ESID close to its borders subject to approval of the ESID membership, eliminating the expense and effort

Turn to Energy on Page 4

Senior center members to publish cultural cookbook

By SUE REID

For as long as they can remember, Solon residents Mahaveer and Sarojanee Shetti have cooked together. It's always a dish from their native India with a couple of recipes standing out.

It is those two recipes, both centered on colorful vegetables and flavorful spices, which will be included in Recipes 2 Remember, a project funded by the Ohio Arts Council where Solon's senior citizens are making both a video and print edition of their first cookbook.

The cookbook is set to be released in June and the city received about \$5,000 in funding for the project.

Some of the videos include descriptions and demonstrations

of parts of the recipes, while others include the stories around them.

The cookbook also showcases some of the diversity at the Senior Center including different cultures.

On the streets of south India, Mr. Shetti first recalled seeing pav-bhaji, sold by vendors to mill workers for lunch. The spicy dish, which includes a variety of vegetables like carrots, onions, potatoes, peas and more, are prepared in a pressure cooker then "smashed" and mixed with Indian spices and different types of curry.

A retiree from Swagelok where he worked as a lab technician for 29 years, Mr. Shetti, 67, would bring pav-bhaji to work to share.

For Mrs. Shetti, 65, her recipe contribution is her favorite dish,

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ISSN 0194-3685

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On stage Children bring 'Honk!' to life. **A6**

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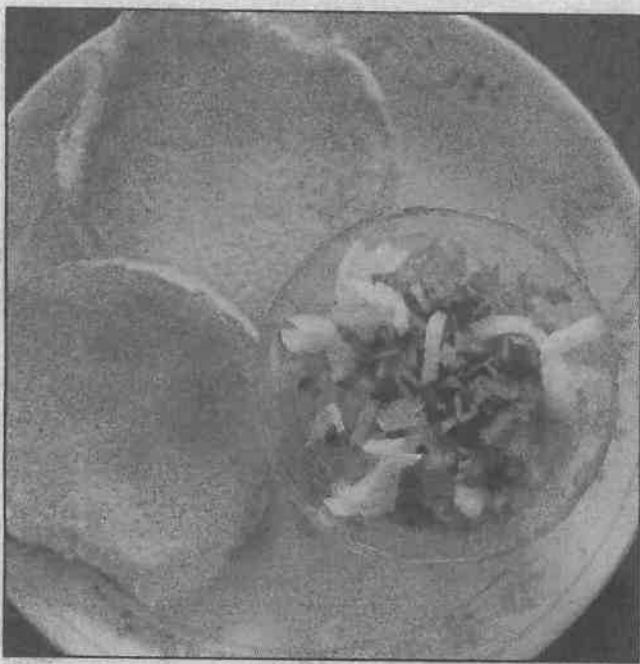
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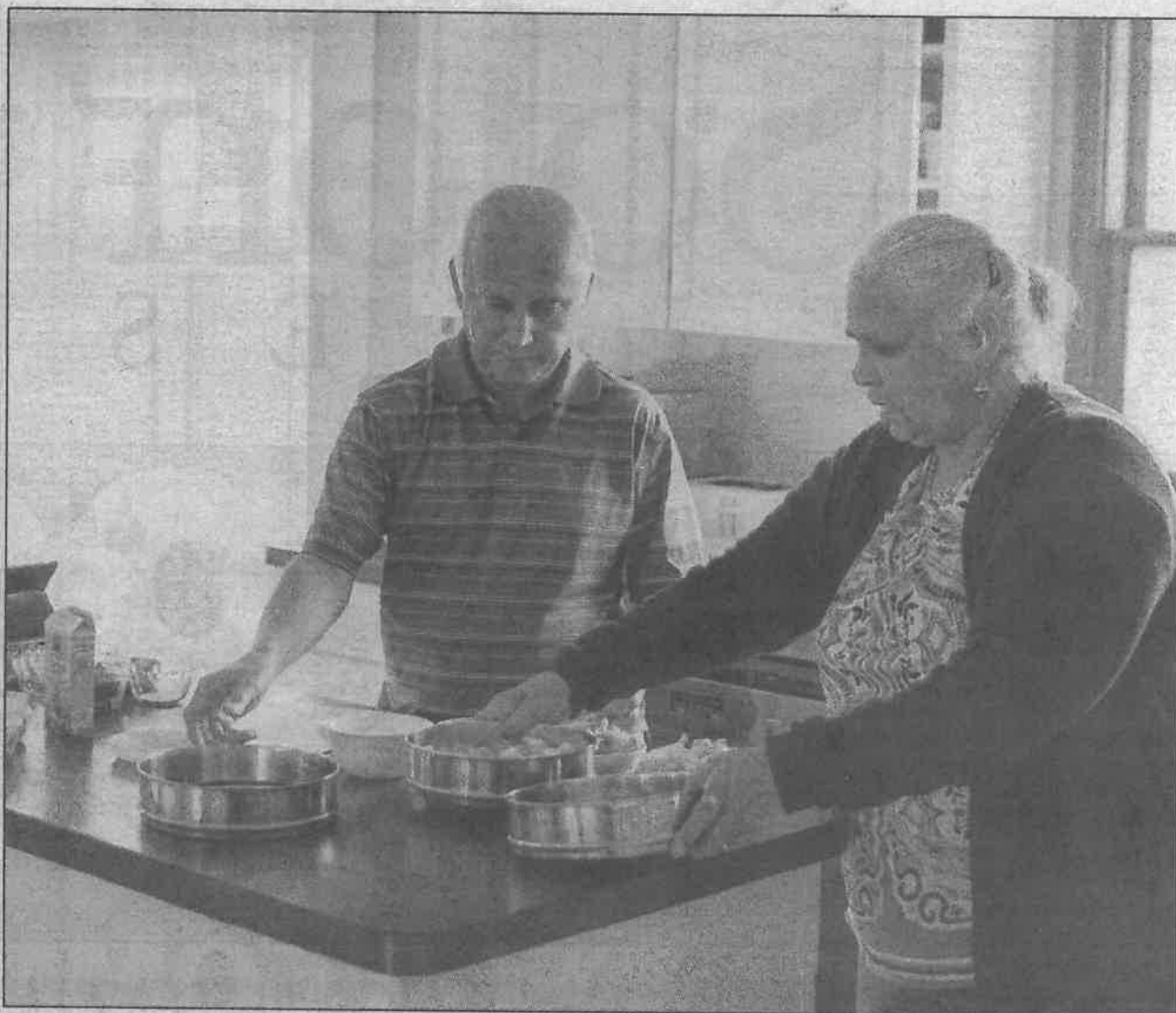
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EDITORIAL, **A10**
EDUCATION, **B5**
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Photos by Alana Clark

Above: Samosa, which is similar to a ravioli or calzone and can be served deep fried, is one of the Indian dishes to be included in Recipes 2 Remember, which features diverse foods from the city's senior population.



Right: Mahaveer and Sarojanee Shetti enjoy cooking together each night in their Solon home. They shared their favorite recipes from their native India for inclusion in Recipes 2 Remember, which will feature recipes from Solon's senior citizens.

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an appetizer called a samosa, which is similar to a ravioli in shape but includes potatoes, peas, red and green chili pepper, dry coriander and cumin. It can be prepared baked or deep fried, and it is a dish she has made for the past two decades, she said.

"It's a nice colorful dish," she said.

The couple, married 41 years and who came to America in 1988, cook each night at their Popham Lane home.

"We cook all vegetarian dishes," Mr. Shetti noted. Their three grown children tend to cook more American cuisine, they said.

Mr. Shetti prefers more spice to his Indian dishes and has been known to also cook American dishes like pasta and tacos, he said. The Shettis get their Indian spices from Sunny's Asian Food and Spices, a grocery store on Aurora Road in Solon. They get other Indian ingredients like eggplant and okra from

other area grocery stores, they said.

"We help each other in the kitchen," Mrs. Shetti said.

When the couple filmed their portion of the cookbook, fragrant spices wafted through the senior center, Director Jill Frankel noted.

"People could smell it coming through the kitchen," Ms. Frankel said. Mrs. Shetti made enough samosas to pass them around to fellow seniors who were playing cards.

Recipes 2 Remember will include at least 20 videos but even more recipes in the book. A kick off with sampling is slated to take place before the book's release.

"It has provided reminiscence," Ms. Frankel said of the project. "Some of the seniors have brought pictures of their

grandparents where their recipes came from."

It has also allowed an opportunity to think of times they enjoyed these foods and who they enjoyed them with, she added. It has also brought a sense of pride to people of many different cultures.

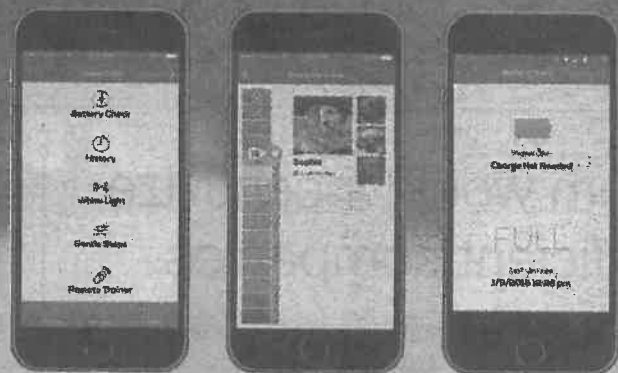
"For many, it makes them feel like they are truly part of the community," Ms. Frankel added.

The book features appetizers, main dishes and desserts. The print edition will include the online recipes, as well as additional recipes and a few stories from members. In addition to the chefs and storytellers, other seniors have provided assistance with design and production, and an opportunity for the future for more people to become involved with the sale of the print edition.

"It is also allowing for an artistic component for them displaying their foods and putting the book together," Ms. Frankel added.

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