

## Hoboken Council rejects ethics code

By Rick Toches

The Hoboken City Council last night defeated an ordinance that would have established a code of ethics for all elected and appointed officials and city employees and would have required them to submit a full financial disclosure statement.

In other business, the council tabled a controversial rent-control ordinance.

The council voted, 5-4, to defeat the code of ethics legislation. Councilmen Robert Ranieri, Anthony Romano, Salvatore Cemelli and Councilwoman Mary Francone and Council President Helen Macri voted against, while Councilmen Pat Pasculli, who introduced the measure, Thomas Vezzetti, Thomas Kennedy and E. Norman Wilson voted in favor.

The council had introduced the ordinance at its Dec. 19 meeting.

That night Pasculli, Vezzetti, Kennedy and Wilson supported it, while Ranieri, Cemelli and Francone opposed its introduction. Romano and Macri were absent.

The ordinance would have also established a seven-member ethics board.

During the public hearing on the ordinance, several local groups, including the Hoboken Neighborhood Alliance and the Hoboken Environmental Committee, supported the ethics code, claiming it was long overdue.

City officials should be required to submit financial disclosures because "in 1985, the city will be faced with some of the most important issues, including a half-billion dollar waterfront development," Pasculli said.

He claimed that such an ethics code would "avoid any problem with conflicts of interest."

"The ordinance has set precedents in surrounding communities," Pasculli said. He said similar financial disclosures have already taken

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place at the local, state and federal levels.

"I urge you to support this ordinance in the best interest of all of the citizens of this city," Pasculli concluded.

Ranieri voiced concern about the ordinance.

"Is this beneficial to the city or is it a detriment to the city?" he asked. "I am concerned whether this coverage is exceptionally broad. I'd like to put on public record that I am concerned if we have enough civically interested citizens to man these boards."

"It is too broad. It goes too far. It can easily be used as a weapon. It can be used against a candidate. This is an invasion of one's privacy. This is an opportunity for a witchhunt. Is that necessary? Does it go too far?"

"An elected official's right to privacy should not be placed above the public's right to know," said Pasculli.

"Every public official should be required to disclose what he has," commented Vezzetti.

Meanwhile, the council tabled a rent-control ordinance introduced by Ranieri designed to better define the city's position toward rent control and to eliminate areas where abuses had been reported.

The council is scheduled to vote on the ordinance at its Jan. 19 meeting at 7 p.m.

The vote to table was 6-3, with Kennedy, Romano, Vezzetti, Wilson, Pasculli and Macri in favor and Ranieri, Cemelli and Francone opposed.

"Under no circumstance is this the most perfect document," said Ranieri. "What we seek here is improvement. What we now have is a rampant displacement in the city of Hoboken. Our goal this evening is to stop displacements as best as possible."

Ranieri said "time is of the essence. We have been working on this for two years. We must do something this evening."

Ranieri said the present rent-control ordinance expires Feb. 1 and would leave city residents "virtually defenseless."

"The ordinance may be creating more questions than we are solving," said Wilson. "Neither side seems to know what the ordinance says. I'm a little confused myself."

"It would be unfair to the homeowners and tenants" to vote on the ordinance last night, said Romano.

"This has been sitting on the desk for six weeks," said Ranieri. "Questions should have come up with suggestions during that time and not right before a vote. That time has expired. Where were you?"

## Assessor beats out tax exemption curb

By James Kepchaine and Rick Toches

Hoboken's tax assessor granted tax exemptions to two controversial developments just prior to the council's scheduled vote last night to curb its exemption powers. The council, however, tabled the ordinance. Councilmen Thomas Vezzetti and Pat Pasculli voted against the delay.

Woodrow Monte said yesterday that he had granted exemptions to developer Ray Lemme for renovations to the former American Hotel property on Hudson Place and to Anthony Dell'Aquila for the rehabilitation of a former factory at 1501 Bloomfield St.

The exemptions are for five years and cover the amount

spent on renovations. The properties' assessments and the amount of yearly property taxes will not change, Monte said.

The council was scheduled last night to vote on amendments to its tax ordinances that would take away Monte's power to grant the exemptions and transfer it to the council. The amendment was sponsored by Councilman E. Norman Wilson Jr., who tried twice last year to curb Monte's power.

Wilson said yesterday he was angered by Monte's action, especially with the vote so near. "I am surprised he chose to act despite knowing that the sentiment of the council was to prevent such exemptions."

"These two properties are

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## Assessor beats exemption curb

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very large properties which would have helped bring more revenues into our city. Now they are lost and we (the council) never had a chance to stop them."

Monte said the timing of the exemptions had nothing to do with Wilson.

He said he granted them because of the demonstrated need of both developers for some help to repay building loans.

The two exemptions were the first his office granted. Monte said, "Both men took over eyesores and did exceptional jobs in returning them," he said.

Lemme took over the

building, which had previously been a rundown hotel, just prior to its suffering a fire which killed two men.

He has finished the renovations, converting the building into a mixed commercial office and condominium complex. Located across the street from the city's PATH station, the property is considered prime office space to investors.

Monte said the building will remain assessed at its present \$152,400 and pay a yearly \$25,235 tax bill.

The Dell'Aquila property is currently assessed at \$250,000 and will pay \$41,395 per year in property taxes, Monte said. Without the investment in the

building, Monte said it would continue to remain empty and an eyesore in the city's uptown section.

Wilson has repeatedly opposed tax abatements and exemptions to developers, terming them unnecessary with investing currently going on in the city due to its "hot" real estate market.

## Hoboken panel to probe developers' tax breaks

The Hoboken Revenue and Finance Committee will investigate the applications of two developers who recently received tax exemptions on their renovations.

Councilmen E. Norman Wilson Jr. and Thomas Kennedy said they wanted to explore the applications of the developers Ray Lemme and Anthony Dell'Aquila, who received separate tax exemptions from city Tax Assessor Woodrow

Monte on Dec. 27, prior to the council's revoking Monte's power to grant the exemptions.

Wilson, who sponsored the revoking ordinance, said he has received copies of both developers' applications.

Wilson and Kennedy have opposed the exemptions. According to Wilson, they had wanted a review to insure that there was nothing improper in the information presented to Monte.

## Hoboken housing OK sought for warehouse

A variance for two 22-story residential towers in Hoboken's northern end will be considered tomorrow night by the zoning board of adjustment.

The towers, containing 412 units and parking for 600 cars, would be built at the site of the former Elser Bros. warehouse at 1601 Willow Ave. by West Bank Construction Corp. of Hoboken.

The variance, sought by West Bank owners Daniel Gans and George Vallone, is the largest residential project yet planned for the city's industrial area.

The board is currently spon-

soring a study of the city's master plan to consider whether to allow more residential construction in this area.

Tomorrow's meeting is scheduled to start at 7:30 p.m. at the council chambers in Hoboken City Hall.

According to Gans, the new buildings would cost an estimated \$40 million to \$45 million to build at current prices. It would consist of four levels of parking topped by a pedestrian plaza level and the two 22-story towers above this plaza.

If approved, Gans said the new project could start construction by the Fall of this year.

## Council to control tax exemptions

By James Kepchaine

Although Hoboken's new law preventing tax exemptions by the tax assessor won't stop two exemptions granted last week, it will bring all tax breaks before the city council.

The council voted 7-to-2 Wednesday night to curb Assessor Woodrow Monte's power to grant exemptions to developers for renovations. It was incorrectly reported yesterday that the ordinance had been tabled.

Councilman E. Norman Wilson Jr., who sponsored the amendment, regretted it came after Monte had granted exemptions to two controversial developments.

Monte granted exemptions on Dec. 27 to developer Ray Lemme for renovations to the former American Hotel property on Hudson Place and to Anthony Dell'Aquila for the rehabilitation of a former factory at 1501 Bloomfield St.

The exemptions are for five years and cover the amount

spent on renovations. The assessments and property taxes will not change, Monte said.

"I'm glad it has been passed to end this practice of tax exemptions and abatements just being handed out," Wilson said.

The American Hotel, located across the street from the city's PATH station, is assessed at \$152,400 and pays a yearly \$25,235 in tax bills. The Dell'Aquila property is assessed at \$250,000 and pays \$41,395 in taxes per year.

## Hoboken picks panel to study business

Hoboken Mayor Steve Capiello, has announced the formation of a task force to oversee the work performed by a group of consultants engaged by the city to study and make recommendations to improve business activity.

Capiello said "this task force will act as more than an overseer and is expected to provide insight into the problems unique to the city's business community."

The task force brings together members of Hoboken's retail, industrial and governmental sectors and will work closely with the consulting group headed by Project for Public Spaces of New York City as they study automobile use, parking, pedestrian activity, shopping patterns and preferences.

The consultants are expected to provide recommendations for both public and private improvements to the retail areas of the city, including physical improvements to the streets and facades and management recommendations to city departments and local business organizations.

A meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday at 6 p.m. in the Hoboken Multi-Service Center on Grand Street to introduce the consultants to area merchants and to explain the upcoming events which includes a merchants' survey that begins on Friday.

The following are the members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force: Wayne Dolly of McCrory's Five and Dime Store; Nicholas Damiano of McDonald's; Paul Kasley of Take One/Two Video; Peter F. Culhane of the Intrepid Management Corporation; Victor Rivera of Hudson Stakes Restaurant; June Frangipane of Straten Offset; Hector Genao of Hoboken Hardware; Jack Shor of Massarsky's Hardware; Michael Mihos of Campus Music; Anthony Calabrese, president of Washington Savings Bank; Anne Pignotti of the Card Boutique; Anthony Esposito of Esposito's Market; Nancy Vance of Crabtree and Evelyn; Giorante Parisi of D'Angelo's Florist; Maureen Singleton of John R. Muller Real Estate; Joseph Hottendorf, director of the Hoboken Parking Authority; George Crimmins, chief of police; Edwin Chius, City business administrator; Daniel Zanetich of the General Foods Corp.; Stanley I. Batkin, president, Universal Folding Box; and Ernest Badaracco, Jr., president, Elysian Savings and Loan.

## Tenant-landlord feud probed by Hoboken agents

By James Kepchaine

Jude Fitzgibbons, Hoboken chief housing inspector, has sent investigators into a 10-unit apartment house on Willow Avenue to check into tenants' complaints.

Fitzgibbons said he got reports of electricity cutoffs and dangerous hallway conditions at 616 Willow Ave.

Fitzgibbons said the tenants also complained of threats by workmen to padlock their apartments.

The tenants said on Thursday they had to force workmen out of the building to prevent them from boarding up their doors.

Their landlord, Alan Richards has said he never gave any such orders.

According to Aaron Miranda-Forman, a representative of the Puerto Rican Congress working with tenants in Hoboken, two women made the complaints.

On Dec. 21, someone flooded a vacant second-floor apartment

stepping up the kitchen sink and turning the water on. The flooding caused extensive damage to the first-floor apartment of Susan Shaftan and Joanne Zerves.

Forman said the workmen only threatened the Hispanics women.

The women, Maria Contreras and Myra Ramirez, said the workmen carried boards and locks and told them that they had been ordered to lock up their apartments, according to Forman.

The house has been the focus of a two-year struggle between Richards and his tenants. The building has been in the courts since 1982 when the city's rent leveling board rejected his application for a substantial rehabilitation rent increase that would have removed the building from rent control for 13 months.

On Nov. 14, Appellate Division upheld an earlier Superior Court ruling granting the owner a new hearing.

## Duo says politics left Hoboken dry

By Peter Weiss

Two anti-administration Hoboken councilmen are blaming their mayor's politics for the possibility that their water supply will be cut off.

Councilmen Thomas Vezzetti and Patrick Pasculli said that Mayor Steve Capiello refused to negotiate new rates with officials of Jersey City, which supplies Hoboken's water, because of his political battles with Jersey City Mayor Gerald McCann.

Vezzetti claimed that Capiello knew for two years that Jersey City planned to increase the water rates.

Capiello called the councilmen's remarks "ridiculous." He said he does not take part in water-rate negotiations, and that they have been assigned to a city lawyer since the existing contract went into effect. "It's ludicrous for them to bring politics into a common governmental problem."

There is a special closed

council meeting tomorrow at 4 p.m. to review the situation.

Because Hoboken refused to acknowledge the rate increase, Jersey City said it would terminate the service at the end of 1985. A spokesman for Jersey City said it no longer wants to supply water to Hoboken, even at the higher rate.

Vezzetti said Hoboken may have to sign a contract with another water supplier at twice the rate it now pays to Jersey City.

Vezzetti and Pasculli said they want to meet with McCann to discuss the situation. The Jersey City mayor's spokesman said he was unaware of such a request.

The Hoboken councilmen said their city also needs to develop long-range water-supply plans. But, they added, Capiello's lack of leadership will prevent that from happening.

They said the watersupply crisis is another example of Capiello's "continuing mismanagement of Hoboken's problems."

## Hoboken rent rehab rule killed

By Rick Toches

The Hoboken City Council last night unanimously passed a rent control ordinance that kills the city's controversial substantial rehabilitation measure.

Under the ordinance which now awaits final approval from Mayor Steve Capiello:

Substantial rehabilitation is eliminated from the legislation. Owners of multi-family dwellings can boost rent on voluntarily vacated apartment by 25 percent once every three years.

Capital improvement costs on a structure can be recovered from the tenant through a temporary rent increase until the cost of the improvements has been paid for by the landlord.

"At long last," said a jubilant Councilman Robert A. Ranieri, sponsor of the ordinance, after landlords and tenants criticized it and urged further revisions.

At the meeting Ranieri, in an emotional speech, pleaded for the council's support in an effort to gain passage prior to the Feb. 1 deadline when the city's current rent control ordinance expires.

Under the previous rent control ordinance, an owner became free of rent control after he made improvements to a structure that equaled that structure's assessment.

In other business, the council passed a resolution commending the city's and neighboring communities' fire departments for efforts in battling Tuesday's general alarm fire.

It also retained the firm of Real Property Appraisers for \$11,000 to evaluate the results of the Landmark Appraisal Co.'s revaluation of city property. Real Property will investigate whether the revaluation figures submitted by Landmark are valid, according to the resolution.

## Sewers must come before fantasies, says Ranieri

By Rick Toches

Hoboken Councilman Robert Ranieri called the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's proposed plan for development of the city's southern waterfront "a fantasy unless you treat the needs of the City of Hoboken."

Ranieri made those remarks during a public discussion last night with the Port Authority and the city's director of community development at St. Mary Hospital. The discussion was sponsored by the Hoboken Environment Committee.

"For the fourth time I've heard this presentation," Ranieri, who is also a state assemblyman, said. He guaranteed "that not one shovel is going into the ground" before the city updates its secondary sewage treatment facility.

"Before anything else, the city of Hoboken must have an

updated sewage plant," Ranieri said. "Our concern is a \$50 million investment in the sewers of Hoboken."

"This (pointing to PA models of development) is fantasy. I want the reality. You had better deal with reality."

Ranieri said high-ranking DEP officials have assured him that there will be no development of the waterfront unless the city updates its secondary sewage treatment facility. DEP has also discussed the possibility of placing a moratorium on development unless this problem is dealt with," Ranieri said.

Ranieri's comments were in response to a presentation by Michael Krieger, manager of the Port Authority's Hoboken development, representatives from the P.A.'s consulting firm and Fred Bado from the city's Community Development Agency.

Jean Forest of the Hoboken Neighborhood Alliance stressed the need for all impact studies to be completed before development begins.

One resident questioned if the PA had plans for additional emergency equipment or the need for additional police, firemen and other emergency personnel.

Plans call for about 15,000 additional citizens along the waterfront, she said.

Tentative development plans call for a 2,000-car parking garage, a 400-room hotel and transportation terminal for the southern portion; a residential area, marina and park for the center portion; and a research and development center to tie in with Stevens Institute of Technology in the northern portion.

The development has an estimated price tag of \$500 million.

## Hoboken studying demolition

The Hoboken City Council is studying a proposal to remain in control of all future demolition work on the city's waterfront.

The council tabled a resolution on Wednesday that would have forced all developers to obtain council approval before demolition work on waterfront developments. In tabling it, the council passed it on to a committee to determine the legality of the resolution.

The resolution had been introduced after several councilmen expressed concern over the plans by the Port Authority to dismantle the workshed atop Pier A at the city's Port Authority Piers.



# Volunteers pitched in to battle the blaze

By Jeff Pandyk

Standing outside the Levolor-Lorentzen complex in Hoboken as clouds of black smoke and members blew east, Edwin Valentine told it again and again to small bands of fellow Levolor employees.

He told how he heard the explosions and started to evacuate the building and how, that done, he returned to the building and fought the fire with a set of extinguishers until the fire department came.

Meanwhile, over on 13th Street, Biff Brady watched the fire burn from his grandparents' window. His work done, he sat quietly and watched the flames and soothed his burnt thigh.

At 10:10 yesterday morning, Valentine, a quality control inspector in Levolor's main building, was lifting some samples from a "slat line" when — boom! boom! boom! boom! — a set of explosions three or four seconds apart rang out from the old Ferguson Brothers furniture factory next door and the building was almost instantly engulfed in flames.

With the wind whipping

down at 35 miles per hour, the third, fourth and fifth floors of the main building were quickly ablaze.

"It crossed right over to the new building," Valentine said.

Valentine said some of the 500 employees on duty at the time began to panic, but Valentine and a security guard managed to control the orderly evacuation of the building.

As the employees hit the street, cars in the parking lot began to explode, first the tires and then the gas tanks. About 30 cars, including Valentine's, exploded in a row. As other employees looked over the damage — the rows of cars reduced to their bare shells — Valentine and the guard returned to the burning building.

"I was under fire in Vietnam," Valentine said, adjusting his beret. "so this doesn't mean much to me."

The pair returned to the fourth floor and fought the fire — emptying about a dozen extinguishers — until the fire department arrived about 10 minutes later.

"I just thank God we got the people out," he said. "Equipment doesn't mean anything, but people."

Biff Brady is in town on vacation, visiting his grandparents. The 26-year-old Cumberland County, Maine, sergeant in the sheriff's office went from the frying pan to the fire.

Yesterday morning, Brady went out to get something to eat, but never made it. He saw the smoke and flames of the fire's early stages and jogged over out of curiosity.

"Several buildings were already on fire," Brady said. "and people were running around in panic. Cars were exploding in the lot."

Brady showed one of the officers his badge and offered his help; he figured he'd direct traffic or help with crowd control.

"The next thing I know I'm in the middle of it."

Brady found himself on a ladder eight feet above the ground, a hose in his hand and flames to his back. An empty wooden water tower stood precariously above him.

"The captain saw me and yelled, 'Who are you?' he said. 'I showed him my badge and he told me to do my thing, but he said to watch out for the tower.'"

Brady and a fireman stayed up there until Brady noticed the tower beginning to waver. The two scrambled to the ground and when the tower fell it was where the two had just been.

Brady next found himself in the parking lot, his hose turned on a set of propane tanks and a dump truck fire. There he brushed up against a burning car and burnt his thigh.

The fire department's first aid unit flushed his unprotected eyes, dressed the six-inch first-degree burn and sent Brady back into action. When he twisted his ankle running with a hose, Brady took himself out of the game.

All told, the visitor from Maine had fought the fire for about 2½ hours without any protective equipment.

"I was just going out of curiosity," he said. "And I saw the need. Then I was just going to take the hoses out of the truck and it grew. I didn't even think twice about assisting."

That's how heroes are.

# 11 municipalities rushed to the aid of Hoboken

By Margaret Schmidt

Firefighters from seven Hudson County communities responded to Hoboken's general alarm blaze yesterday, but the county maintained adequate protection, officials said.

"Everything was covered," said a spokesman for the North Hudson Communications Center, which dispatches equipment from Union City, Weehawken, West New York and North Bergen. "Luckily we had no fires in other areas."

Jersey City sent 12 companies, about 35 firefighters, to Hoboken and the city "wasn't even close to lacking coverage," said Capt. Francis Ryan.

The companies were sent from various parts of the city to be sure all areas had sufficient manpower, he explained.

Secaucus, which has a volunteer fire corps, sent two of its seven units to the scene, police said.

In North Hudson, four companies were dispatched to the blaze, and spare engines were put in service to provide local protection, the Communications Center dispatcher said.

The equipment was moved so that each area had companies nearby, he added.

The center, he explained,

was established about three years ago to centrally dispatch equipment, especially during major blazes.

In addition to Jersey City and Secaucus, West New York sent one engine company; Weehawken, two; Union City, two; North Bergen, one, and Guttenberg, one pumper company. Bayonne sent in a special truck that carries 5,300 gallons of water.

Three Bergen County towns also responded.

The out-of-town companies went to the main blaze at the Levolor-Lorentzen industrial

complex on Eighth and Monroe streets, handled fires caused throughout Hoboken by wind-blown embers, and covered vacant firehouses, officials said.

In all, about 100 firefighters aided the six Hoboken fire companies.

The fire, which erupted in an abandoned four-story wood-frame building, affected 15 buildings and caused minor injuries to nine persons, officials said.

Embers were blown up to a mile away and started several fires.

## Hoboken in flames

By James Kopchansky

A chronology of some of the major fires in Hoboken in the past five years includes:

• Nov. 28, 1984: Flames over 150 feet in the air as an overnight fire leveled an NJ Transit garage and warehouse on Observer Highway. The flames destroyed over \$5 million worth of equipment and supplies and were so hot that they melted light fixtures across the highway. No fatalities were reported, although five firemen were injured.

• May 11, 1984: A fire at the E&S Auto Electric Shop, 588 Newark St. destroyed the garage and left nothing but a brick-strewn lot. No injuries were reported.

• May 2, 1984: A three-alarm fire swept through an apartment building at 320 Monroe St. No injuries, but eight families were left homeless.

• April 30, 1982: An early-morning fire at the Pinter Hotel, 151 14th St., trapped sleeping tenants inside their apartments. Thirteen persons died in the blaze.

• Nov. 22, 1981: A fire that broke out in the room of a family being sheltered at the American Hotel, 80 River St., started a general alarm blaze that killed two men.

• Oct. 25, 1981: Eleven persons were killed as flames rushed through an apartment house at 102 12th St. The fire was listed as arson.

• Oct. 12, 1981: Two young brothers, Javier Rosa and Modesto Echavarria, were killed during a fire at 67 Park Ave. Nine children and five adults were injured in the blaze.

• Oct. 31, 1980: A fire at Pier B at the Port Authority piers swept through a row of empty warehouses, eventually engulfing the entire pier in flames. No injuries were reported as firemen chose to let the fire burn itself out.

## Some jobs went up in smoke

By Margaret Schmidt and Jeff Pandyk

Stunned workers, worried relatives and neighborhood residents huddled outside the Levolor-Lorentzen complex yesterday and watched a series of buildings collapse in flames.

As hundreds of Levolor employees, school children and residents evacuated a six-block area around the Hoboken fire, stories of seeing walls of orange flames and hearing cars explode were swapped.

For some, job security, not personal safety, was the main concern.

"There's talk of 80 percent layoffs," one Levolor worker said. "I'm more afraid of that than anything else."

Steven McKenna of Weehawken, who works on custom blinds for the manufacturing company, said one of his first thoughts was, "Oh my God, our jobs are going up!"

The company expects to resume normal operations at the

plant, which employs about 1,100 persons, "within a reasonable period of time," said Bohdan Porytko, company attorney at corporate headquarters in Lyndhurst.

Mayor Steve Cappiello estimated the damage from the general alarm fire at \$5 million and said he was going to meet with representatives of Gov. Thomas Kean and Hudson County Executive Edward F.

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## Loans eyed for fire recovery

By ROBIN WATKINS  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—City officials are talking to local banks today in hopes of setting up an emergency loan pool, targeted at \$1 million, to help manufacturing firms destroyed by an immense fire believed started by illegal open barrel fires.

"This interim measure will be the fastest way to get money to the seven firms," said Thomas D. Ahern, the city's director of economic development.

Getting the firms back at full capacity could take millions of dollars and many months, according to manufacturers.

Although he had not been contacted by the city, one leading banker expressed reserved interest in the pool.

"If we had a government guarantee backing the loans, we would consider it," said Ernest J. Badaracco Jr., president of Elysian Fields Federal Savings.

About three-quarters of the 1,100 employees at the Levolor-Lorentzen Inc. plant, which escaped the Tuesday's fire but suffered water damage, were back at work yesterday, with full production slated for the end of the month, according to company spokesman Bohdan

Porytko, who said there will be no layoffs.

Fierce winds Tuesday blew embers from open, wood-burning barrel fires, used by workers to warm themselves inside a vacant warehouse being demolished, to adjacent buildings, leveling three and damaging 14 others in a 12-block radius within the northwest industrial district. Many of the estimated 200 workers left jobless by the fire spent the day in the unemployment office, according to local officials.

"I lost close to \$100,000 in equipment alone," said Herb Cohen, owner of Clara Finishing, a lace manufacturing plant at 830 Monroe St. that employs from 12 to 14 people. "If the real estate was available, we would reach full operation six months."

Cohen says he wants to stay in Hoboken.

"I've been here for 10 years and most of my workers live here," he said.

About 300,000 square feet of factory space was lost in the fire, two-thirds of which housed active plants.

"We're looking for equivalent industrial space in the area," Ahern said. "Most of the companies said they were insured, but not for as much as they lost."

Plants housed in the five-story Monroe Street building are owned by Donald Binetti and Ronald Acquaviva, according to city tax rolls.

To aid long-term financing, Ahern said the city is applying for Small Business Administration federal loans, which range up to \$500,000 per firm.

"If approved, these could come through sometime between March and May," he said.

According to Fire Chief James Houn, the arson unit will complete their investigation by the end of next week.

## Officials had feared a fire at factory

By Jeff Pandyk

"We've all speculated about when that was going to go," Hoboken Police Chief George Crimmins said of the building that, like Mrs. O'Leary's famed cow, kicked off a series of fires that spread from building to building.

In Hoboken's case, the building where the fire started was an 85-year-old all-wood factory originally built as the Ferguson Brothers furniture factory and more recently used by the Levolor-Lorentzen company.

Fire officials speculate that the blaze began with the accidental use of a burner or a portable heating unit by some workers from the Artko Wrecking Co., contracted to bring the building down.

Within five minutes the entire four-story building was engulfed in flames.

"The windows turned orange," a worker in the building next door said, "and I knew it was time to get out. That

baby went up." That baby was a wooden factory built in 1900 when the Ferguson Brothers moved their operation from New York to Hoboken. The company, established in 1878, kept its headquarters in New York.

The building was purchased by Levolor, the blind manufacturer, but hadn't been used in many years, Bohdan Porytko, an attorney for Levolor, said.

"We were not using the building," he said. "For various reasons we thought it best to take it down first and worry about what to do with it later."

The seven men in the building, none of whom were hurt, were beginning the demolition work there.

When the building went, the wind quickly spread the fire next door and, in turn, to 15 buildings.

By 1:30, as flames leaped from building to building like a sequence of dominoes, all that was left of the Ferguson Brothers furniture factory was a handful of charred supports and ash.

## Jobs up in smoke

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Clark to discuss what the city can do to help rebuild the companies that were damaged.

Cappiello said that unless the companies are rebuilt or resettled elsewhere in Hoboken it could mean the loss of 250 permanent jobs.

About 400 to 500 workers were in the complex when the fire erupted, he added.

The fire, which began in a vacant wooden factory next to the main building in the two-square-block Levolor complex, quickly destroyed the four-story structure, the old Ferguson furniture factory, and forced workers in nearby buildings to flee, leaving behind coats, gloves and hats.

Once outside, the employees listened as many of their cars exploded.

"I didn't know what was going on," one worker said. "I was putting in an electrical system on the second floor when it hit."

"You're an electrician?" Ted Zdrogowski asked the man. "Do you know my son? Is he all right?"

Zdrogowski, who clutched his wife's hand as they milled through the crowd, went to the factory from Jersey City as soon as he heard about the fire. He'd been assured that everybody got out of the building safely, but wanted to see for himself.

By noontime, he hadn't found his son, a mechanic at the plant.

One woman employee was treated for an anxiety attack at St. Mary Hospital, said hospital spokesman Sam Allalouf.

She was one of nine persons reported to have received minor injuries in the blaze.

Seven workers of the Artko Wrecking Co., Bayonne, were reportedly on the third floor of the old Ferguson furniture company when the blaze erupted beneath them.

They exited safely, said Hoboken Police Chief George Crimmins, and saw the 85-year-old structure crumble within minutes.

The workers declined to speak with reporters at the

scene and officials of the company could not be reached for comment.

Three blocks away, at St. Ann's Elementary School, students were evacuated because of the threat posed by wind-whipped burning embers.

The church, which President Reagan visited during the annual St. Ann's festival last July, had to be hosed down because embers ignited the roof.

The 267 St. Ann's students were either taken from the school by anxious parents or moved to St. Francis School where they waited with teachers and the school principal for relatives to arrive, said the Rev. Ed Rizzo.

Annette Collins, an eighth grader at St. Ann's, said no fire alarm sounded, and a number of parents came running in to retrieve their children.

"I was scared, a little," she said. "The whole school was going crazy."

One girl, who lives near the fire site, began to cry, she added.

Collins, whose bare knees poked from her uniform skirt and were red with cold, remained on the street to watch her uncle's garage burn.

Red Cross officials said that in addition to the students and workers, about 200 students from the area were evacuated to an emergency shelter set up at Jefferson and Third streets.

All around the fire, people filled the streets and gawked at the flames and smoke while clutching hastily put-together belongings in plastic bags.

Others refused to leave their homes and stationed themselves behind windows, some only feet from the fire, or on roofs to watch.

Nearly 1,200 customers were without electricity in Hoboken and Jersey City when the fire's heat melted underground wires, said Ed Anderson, spokesman for Public Service Electric & Gas. Electricity was rerouted by alternate wires and restored to all but 50 customers by mid-afternoon.



# Wind-borne embers ignited many blazes

By James Kopchains

Firemen had to fight two other elements of nature in controlling yesterday's major fire at the Levolor-Lorentzen Inc. plant.

Besides the heat and combustion of the fire, the combined fire companies of 10 communities also had to deal with a treacherous wind that fanned

the flames and swept them to new buildings as well as biting cold temperatures that turned the water being used into ice.

"It was a hell of a fire. I've never had to fight one so difficult in my entire career," Fire Chief James Houn said yesterday.

From the time the first Hoboken crews arrived on the scene, the firemen understood they would have to fight a defen-

sive battle against the fire, striving only to contain it within as small an area as possible.

"The fire (at the frame building at 800-816 Monroe, where the fire began) was already going good when we got there and the winds were threatening to push the flames into the other buildings," Houn said.

Houn decided to station his

men at buildings on Ninth and Monroe streets and across Eighth Street from the burning building and call for reinforcements from other communities. Before the fire was finally controlled, 24 companies from 10 Hudson and Bergen communities were called into the battle.

However, the flames consuming the wood-frame four-story building were so intense

that they soon caused explosions in gas tanks of automobiles parked by Levolor employees in a lot across Monroe Street from the building. Between 40 and 50 cars were eventually destroyed by flames.

The explosions reportedly knocked several firemen off ladder platforms. One of these men,

See WIND—Page 13.

# Winds carried embers afar

Continued from Page 1

Eugene O'Reilly, was taken to St. Mary Hospital where he was treated for a sprained ankle.

Meanwhile, the same winds that fanned the flames at the site were now carrying them to the five-story brick building on Ninth Street and Monroe as well as the main Levolor plant on Eighth.

By noon, Hoboken firemen had contained fires at the Levolor plant on Eighth and watched as flames at the original site eventually burned out.

Houn had also assigned Jersey City units to help fight the fire on Ninth Street and assigned Union City and Secaucus units to fight a fire that had developed on the roof of the Kleon Factory Outlet building at 553 Eighth St.

Houn said that at this point the main sites to protect were Kleon and the Hudson County pistol range, which housed at least 50 rounds of ammunition. Houn said if Kleon went up the flames there could be pushed across Madison Street towards residential buildings.

As the fire crews slowly regained control of the fire site and put out the numerous small fires that started in buildings in the area, the main focus of the crews turned towards the five-story factory on Ninth Street.

Although they had aggressively fought fires at the building, Houn eventually had to recall them at about 12:30 and put his crews in defensive positions on the roofs of neighboring buildings to contain the blaze.

The fire could not be controlled, Houn said, because of the volatile materials inside, he said. The building, which housed different firms, was mainly used for the manufacturing of clothing and lace.

The fire at this building was the most spectacular of all the blazes. With the blaze being fanned by the wind and fed by the materials inside, flames eventually rose to nearly 100 feet and attracted thousands of spectators both on the streets and overlooking it on cliffs leading to the Jersey City Heights.

At about 1:30, the walls began collapsing from the heat. Once the building collapsed, the crews continued to water it and bring it slowly under control late in the afternoon.

"The conduct and bravery of the firemen here were incredible. If it wasn't for this, the fire could have been much worse than it turned out to be," Houn said.

# Six blocks ravaged; few hurt

By James Kopchains

A spectacular, wind-swept fire destroyed two factories and caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage over a six-block area in Hoboken yesterday.

Fifteen buildings sustained varying amounts of damage from the blaze, which took firefighters from 10 Hudson and Bergen county communities over eight hours to bring under control.

Over 1,200 people, including 200 students from a parochial elementary school, were forced to flee due to the fear of flames and a cut-off in electricity caused by the fire.

Hoboken Police Chief George Crimmins said the fire was "the worst fire that has occurred in this city in over 40 years." Hoboken Fire Chief James Houn said the fire was more difficult to control than last November's inferno which leveled an NJ Transit garage and warehouse in the city.

Nine persons were injured, including four firefighters. None of the injuries were serious, although one firefighter, Eugene O'Reilly, suffered a sprained ankle when thrown from a platform by an automobile explosion.

The fire, which began at approximately 9:30 a.m., was reportedly started by workmen

# Fire roars through Hoboken

Continued from Page 1

demolishing a four-story wooden-frame factory at 800-816 Monroe St. in the city's northern industrial section.

Chief Houn said there was a possibility that an acetylene torch being used by the Arko Wrecking Co. of Bayonne set off the fire, which spread rapidly throughout the building.

The building, formerly the site of the Ferguson Furniture Co., is owned by Levolor-Lorentzen Inc., a manufacturer of window blinds and fixtures. Bohdan Porytko, corporate attorney for Levolor, said the building was being demolished to create additional parking

space for the firm's employees.

Construction code official Alfred Arezzo said all proper demolition permits had been issued for the work.

Houn said the main plant for Levolor, located across Eighth Street from the fire, had sustained only moderate damage. Porytko said he expected that it would open again as soon as possible.

Once underway, the fire raced through the building and then jumped to an adjacent five-story brick factory at Ninth and Monroe streets. The building and neighboring factories were evacuated.

Fanned by 40-mile-an-hour winds that blew mostly from the south and the west, the flames spread throughout a six-block area causing fires on the roofs of factories, warehouses and garages.

At one point, flames began to smolder on the roof of historic St. Ann's Church at Seventh and Jefferson streets. The church was the site of a campaign visit by President Ronald Reagan last summer.

Fire crews quickly put out the blaze and removed all residents of the parish house, including 96-year-old Rev. Lucio Massola. Students at the St. Ann's Elementary School were told to leave.

The fire also threatened the Hudson County pistol range on

Madison Street, but was turned back by firefighters stationed on the building's roof. Crimmins said if the flames had ignited the building, it would have set off nearly 50 rounds of ammunition stored at the site.

In addition, the wind swept embers onto an unused water tank on the roof of Kleon Factory Outlet, 553 Eighth St. The embers caused a fire that destroyed the tank and caused moderate damage to the building roof.

The heat of the flames caused explosions in the gas tanks of about 40 cars parked in a lot across Monroe from the Levolor site. The cars owned by Levolor employees were destroyed.

Before crews finally brought the fire under control in the late afternoon, eleven buildings sustained either moderate or heavy damage, while the other four had less damage.

The most serious were the original fire site and the factory and warehouse at Ninth and Monroe. Both were leveled by the flames.

The heat of the fire was so intense that it knocked out a nearby electric transformer, cutting electricity to thousands of residents in the area. Public Service Electric and Gas crews were called on to restore power.

Both Crimmins and Houn

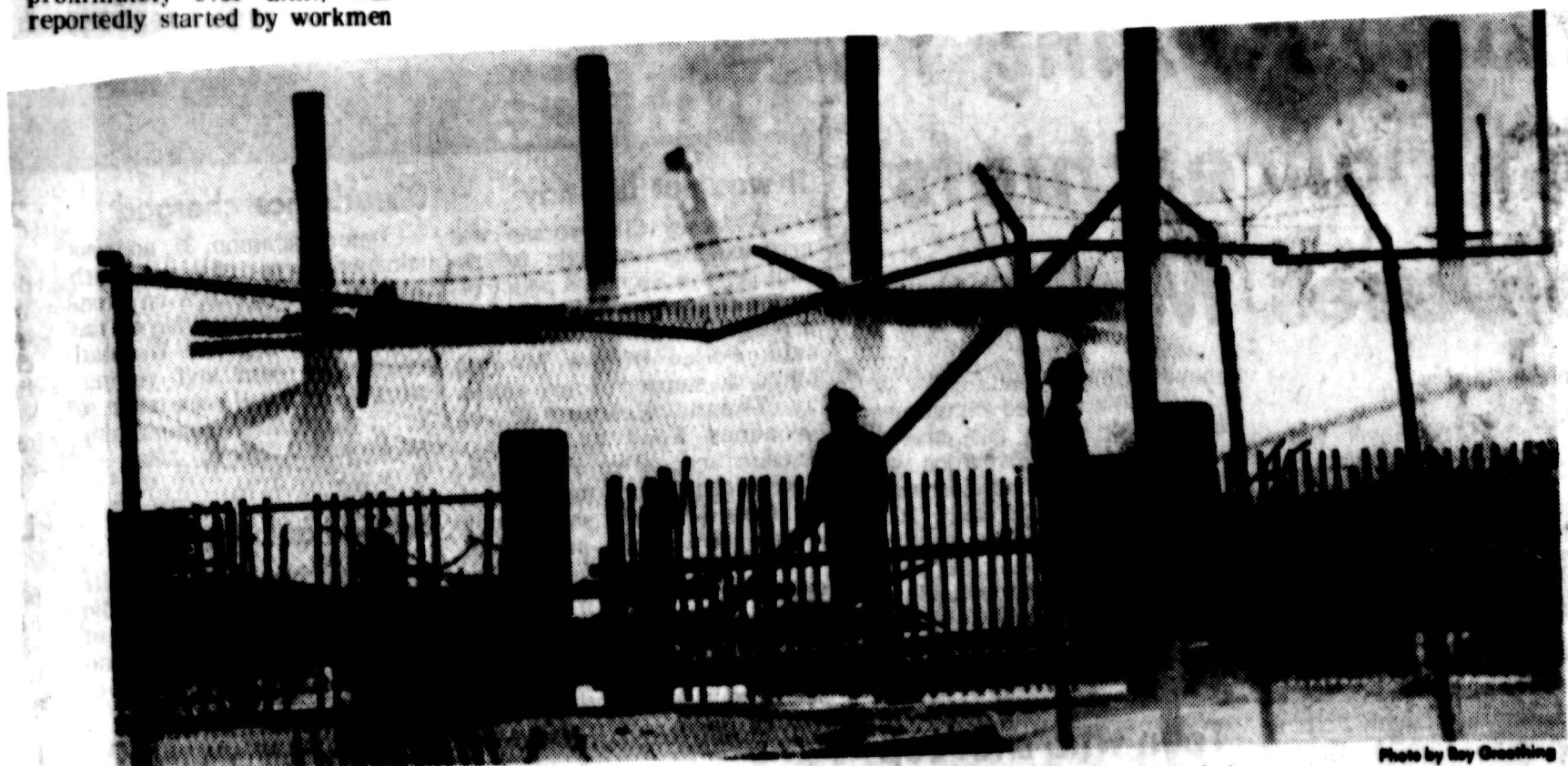
said the fact that the fire occurred during the daylight hours and was confined to an industrial area made it easier to fight. "If the fire had somehow spread to the residential areas of the city, it may have been impossible to hold," Houn said.

Besides six companies numbering 25 men from Hoboken, the fire also attracted units from 10 other communities combining for an additional 100 men. The units responding included Jersey City, West New York, Weehawken, Guttenberg, Union City, North Bergen, Secaucus, Ridgewood, Teaneck, and Garfield.

The Hoboken crews also were helped by 19 rookies attending a training school. They were called from class to support the firefighting efforts.

Deputy Fire Chief Edward McDonald said late last night the remains of a collapsed building at Ninth and Monroe streets were still burning, but were under control and a company was on fire watch. He said all other fires had been extinguished.

McDonald said that the entire block where the blaze started was extensively damaged and at least 10 persons, including three firemen and two police officers, suffered injuries ranging from smoke inhalation to cuts and were treated at St. Mary Hospital.



Firefighters inspect a smoking barge at Fourth Street on the Hudson River in Hoboken yesterday. The old barge, which may have been abandoned, caught fire around 11 a.m., and the blaze may have been caused by embers swept across the Mile Square City from a general-alarm fire at a warehouse industrial complex.

# 'On the Waterfront' barge burns

By Margaret Schmidt

An old barge moored on the Hoboken waterfront was destroyed yesterday in a blaze that may have been sparked by embers swept across the city from a raging industrial fire.

The barge, which appeared to have been abandoned and was reportedly seen in the film "On the Waterfront," caught fire around 11 a.m. and sent black smoke over the Hudson River.

It rekindled later in the day. The cause of the fire was listed as undetermined, but firefighters said they believed it was sparked by windblown embers from flames about a mile away.

Several fires were reported

while officials battled the general-alarm blaze begun in a vacant building on the Levolor-Lorentzen industrial complex at Eighth and Monroe streets.

Diamond Motor Trucks, 710 Madison St., a block from the main fire, was heavily damaged. Passersby grabbed hoses to fight the blaze and water down the house next door.

The fire in the two-story brick building erupted twice and the roof collapsed.

The roof of St. Ann's Church, Seventh and Jefferson streets, had to be hoisted down because of the embers, and the parish school was evacuated.

The church was visited by President Reagan last summer during the annual St. Ann's

festival.

A tree in Church Square

Park, Fifth Street and Willow

Avenue, also caught fire.

Hoboken Fire Lt. Jack

Howe, head of the arson squad,

said he believed the main fire

was accidental and discounted

the possibility that the second-

ary fires were set to divert

firefighters' attention.

"They're just from embers

blowing off this fire," he said.

The National Weather

Service said winds gusted up to 40

miles an hour during the morn-

ing fire.

The winds were also blamed

for the severity of the main fire,

said Hoboken Police Chief

George Crimmins. The gusts

swept flames from building to

building and affected about 15, destroying several.

Firefighters from Jersey City, Weehawken and West New York battled the barge fire more than an hour, officials said.

The fire was in a difficult-to-reach area behind fences which block public access to the piers. Pier C, which is owned by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, is adjacent to the barge site, but was undamaged by the blaze, said Tom Young, P.A. spokesman.

The barge was at the north end of the area slated for a multi-million dollar waterfront development.

The owner of the barge could not be discovered yesterday.

# Fire costs about 200 employees their jobs

By TOM DIPIAZZA

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The wind that swirled fire through the city's industrial section yesterday spared a plant employing 1,100 people but destroyed two other buildings that housed 11 companies.

Approximately 200 jobs have been lost as a result of the fire, according to city Business Administrator Edwin P. Chiusa. Most of the damage occurred when the wind-whipped fire spread to a five-story building at 824-830 Monroe

St., adjacent to the demolished warehouse in which the fire started. That building contained 10 companies, many in the textile business, which directly or indirectly employ 200 people, Chiusa said.

The warehouse was under demolition by its owners, Levolor-Lorentzen Inc. of Lyndhurst. Levolor has a plant across the street, which was threatened by the fire.

Bohdan Porytko, a spokesman

See JOBS, Page 7

Continued from Page 1

for the company, yesterday said most of the plant's 1,100 employees would return to work today. Levolor manufactures, paints and assembles window shades and blinds at the five-story brick plant.

Porytko said the plant suffered "extensive" water and smoke damage, but that 75 percent of its production facilities could be operating today.

"We expect to have most of the

production workers back at work tomorrow morning," he said. Other workers would return to help with the cleanup, he said.

Three other structures were damaged by the fire. Empire Moulding Co.'s building at 721 Monroe St. was damaged. A three-story brick building at 563 8th St. housing Kleon Furniture Corp., Crown Fair Inc. and Grace Coat Inc. was damaged, and the Spola Fibres International Inc. building at 729 Madison St. also was affected.

Chiusa estimates damages at "35 million and rising." A building at 713 Madison St. housing the Pope Auto Body Shop was destroyed.

The following companies were in the building at 824-830 Monroe St.: Almachanes Distributors, Chris Bur Kait Fabrics Inc., Clara Finishing Corp., Diplomats Fabrics Corp., Monmes, Inc., Pan Asia Fashions, Robill Industries, Telaction Ph Corp. Telsafe Products of Waiwai Securities Systems Inc. and Waiwai Securities Systems Inc.

# Industrial fire was Hoboken's 2nd in 3 months

By GAIL FRIEDMAN

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The wind-whipped blaze that broke out at the Levolor complex yesterday morning was the second major industrial fire here within three months.

On Nov. 27, a general-alarm fire, fueled by gas and flammable

liquids stored inside, gutted a downtown NJ Transit warehouse. The cause of that fire is still undetermined.

As that fire threatened to spread to neighboring structures, firefighters ordered the evacuation of 216 apartments and hosed down buildings across the street. But unlike yesterday, when wind-

scattered debris touched off numerous secondary fires, the flames were confined to one site.

No serious injuries were reported in either industrial blaze.

It has not been the best of seasons for the city Fire Department, but neither has it been the worst in a city whose recent history has been marked by

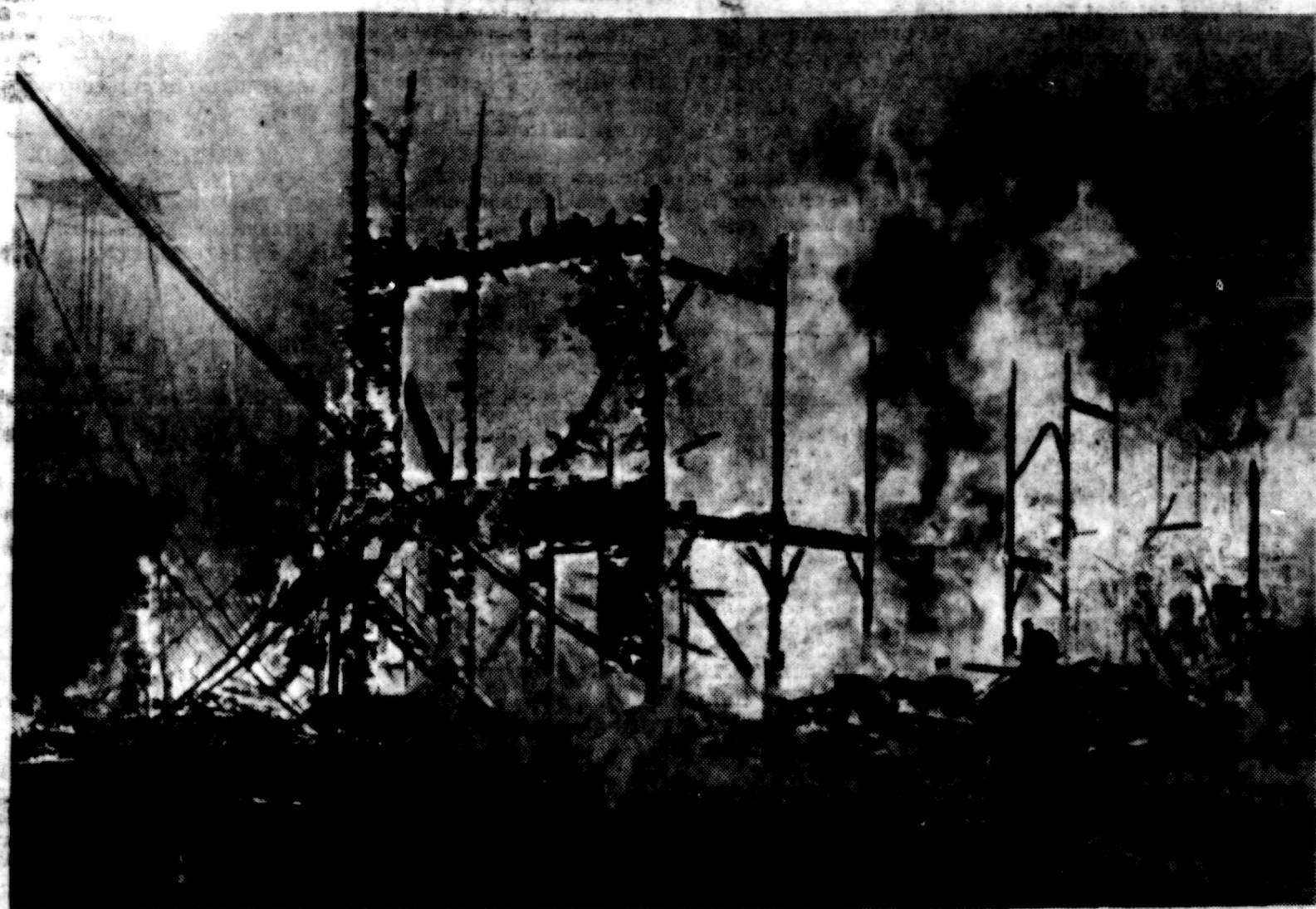
fatal and deliberately set tenement fires in run-down buildings.

The greatest loss of life was recorded in an April 1982 arson at Pinter's Hotel on 14th Street, which claimed 13 victims.

Eleven people died in an October 1982 fire at 1200 Washington St. That property was sold for \$50,000 five weeks after the fire.



# Great Hoboken fire of '85. 08/16/85



Within minutes yesterday, the old Ferguson Furniture factory in Hoboken was gutted by flames that swept from the wood-frame building to 14 others. Heavy smoke blocked sunlight from the area.

Photo by Joseph Pore

Some watched  
it in awe . . .



Photo by Kelly Hwang

Crowds look down the spectacular Hoboken fire yesterday from Congress Street and Paterson Street in Jersey City. Spectators gathered along roads in the Jersey City Heights and Union City and were spotted on several Hoboken roofs.



Photo by Kelly Hwang

The two main buildings in the Lovelace Industrial complex, Hoboken, were basically spared the general alarm blaze that began in an old wooden building Lovelace was having demolished. All of the 400 to 500 workers in the complex were reportedly unharmed.



Photo by Kelly Hwang

Spectators in the Jersey City Heights caught this view of the general alarm blaze in Hoboken yesterday in which several buildings were destroyed. The New York skyline was partially hidden by the dense smoke.



Smoke billows from an eight-block area as firefighters bring the general alarm blaze under control but not before many buildings were either destroyed or damaged. (UPI)

while others fought it

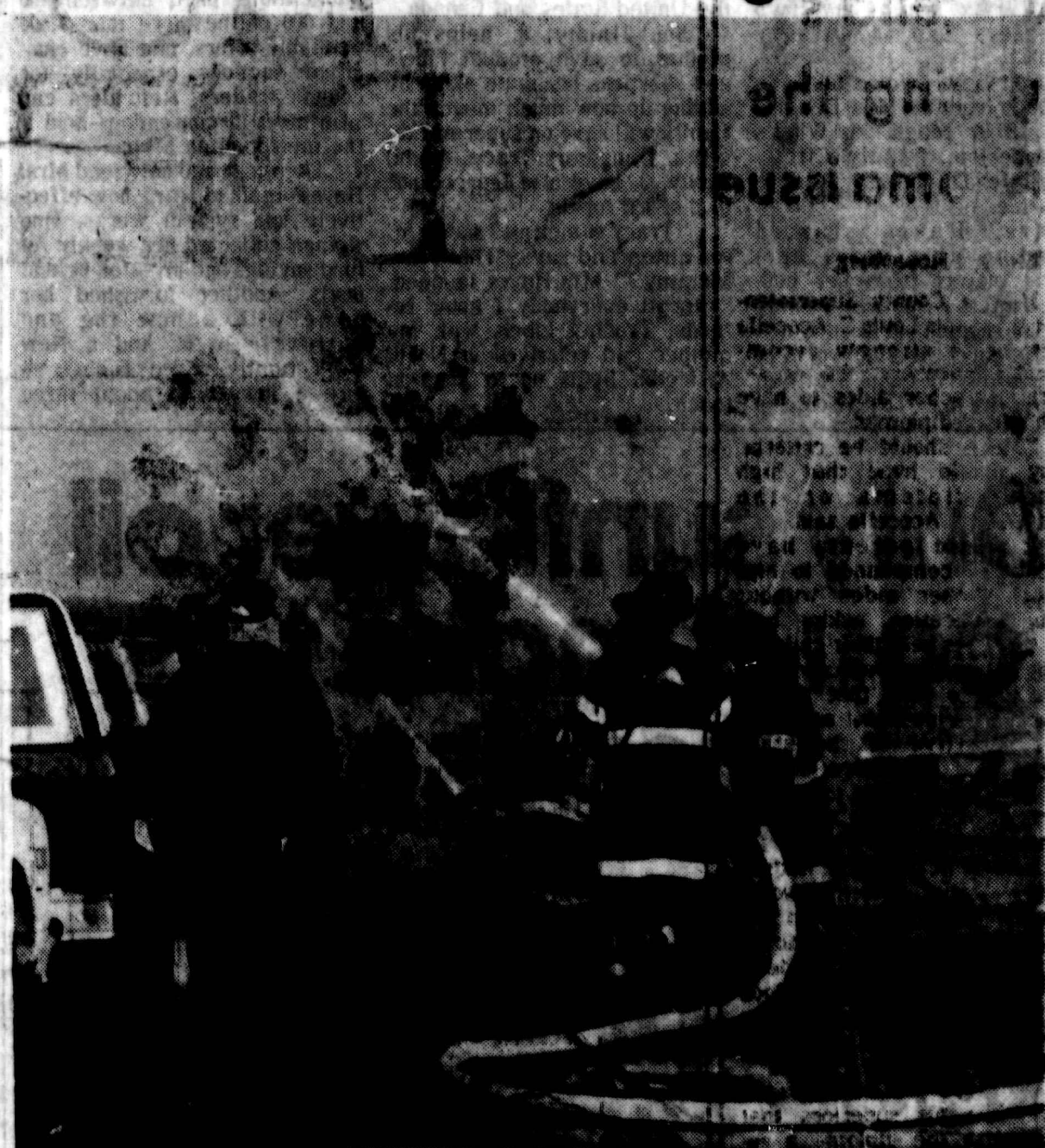


Photo by Kelly Hwang

Firefighters hose down buildings near the Lovelace Industrial complex in Hoboken yesterday to prevent wind-blown sparks from sparking new fires. The general alarm blaze affected 15 buildings, destroying several.

Fire threatened church

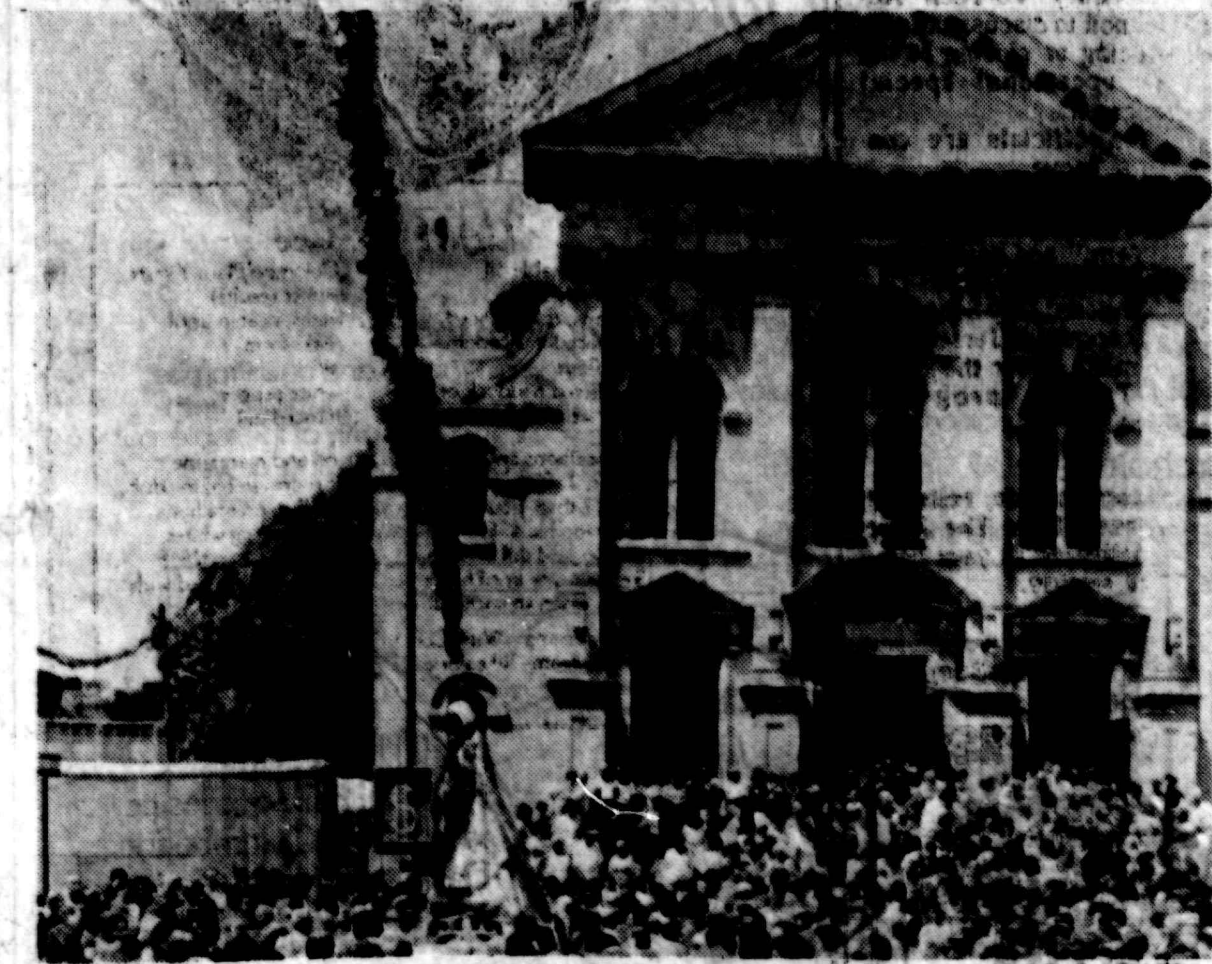


Photo by Ray Grotting

This picture taken last July shows hundreds gathered in front of St. Ann's Church before President Reagan's visit to the annual fair in honor of the patron saint of the parish. The Hoboken landmark, threatened by the fire, escaped serious damage.



# Massive fire hits Hoboken

H.D. 11/14/85



Photo by Mike Riccio, Pilot, Dennis Tierney

SMOKE BILLOWS from yesterday's general alarm fire in Hoboken in this aerial photo.

## Fire brings to Hoboken an eerie and early dusk

By BILL GYLES  
Staff Writer

Dusk seemed to settle fast and early over northwest Hoboken a little after noon yesterday as clouds of smoke, embers and mist whipped low across town, blocking out both the bright afternoon sun and the wall of fire that raced through the city's industrial section.

The dark clouds — whose warmth would have been a welcome relief from the day's bitter cold had they not evolved from such destruction — dropped chunks and splinters of wood in their path before blowing out over the Hudson River toward Manhattan.

The clouds shrouded the fire scene so completely at times that the crashing sounds rumbling out from under the

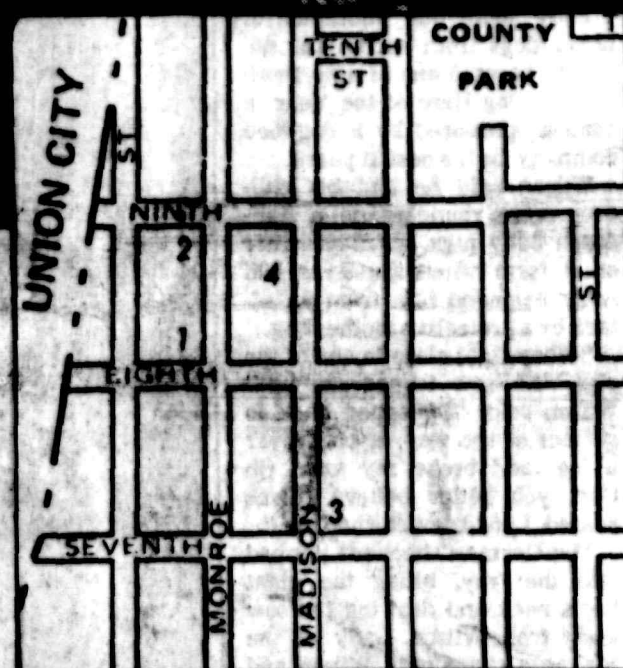
smoke were the only clue that portions of the five-story building at 824-830 Monroe St. had collapsed.

Then, suddenly, the wind would die or shift, and the raging fireball engulfing the structure would come into view. "There was a four-story wall of fire. You couldn't even see the cliffs," said Jim Gilbride, a New York City firefighter who spotted the blaze from his home at Sixth and Madison streets.

"It was a real firestorm. That's what it was. It was a solid wall of fire right across the street," said Gilbride.

The curious lined the Palisades in Jersey City, watching the frenetic fire scene below. The cautious were perched atop nearby homes, some with garden hoses, keeping watch for threatening

See EERIE, Page 6



### HOBOKEN FIRE SITES

- 1 800 Monroe St.: Wood-frame building under demolition where fire started
- 2 824-830 Monroe St.: Levolor factory building that caught fire and burned most of the afternoon
- 3 555 Seventh St.: St. Ann's Church friary, site of President Reagan's visit to Hoboken last year, sustained damage
- 4 812 Madison St.: Hudson County pistol range, which stores thousands of rounds of ammunition, escaped damage

## Roaring flames burn 20 buildings, 85 cars

By PETER WEHRWEIN  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The demolition of a wooden warehouse feared as a fire trap sparked a blaze yesterday that threatened the northwest quadrant of the city, igniting 20 buildings and destroying 85 cars.

Firefighters from a dozen fire departments scattered throughout the city at an urgent and chaotic pace as winds gusting to 50 miles per hour tossed embers from building to building and to the Hudson River, where a barge loaded with acetylene gas caught fire.

A 12-block industrial and residential area of the city was evacuated, according to fire officials. One official estimated that 600 to 700 people were evacuated, including pupils in St. Ann's School.

City officials tentatively put a value of \$5 million on the property damage caused by the fire. Among the few injured in the fire in the mainly industrial section were four area residents, four firefighters and two city police officers.

The overpowering heat was carried east by the wind, causing cars to burn in a parking lot across the

street from the main fire and melting the windshields of other cars parked nearby. Red-hot ash sprinkled a city park 10 blocks away, setting tree-tops ablaze like torches.

The smoke alternated between thick black and white, blotting sunlight from the northern half of the city and sending a tower into the sky that could be seen for 15 miles.

The fires were declared under control at 3:37 p.m. by Deputy Chief Edward McDonald. Late last night the fires still burned in the shell of a five-story structure and in half a dozen spots amid the rubble of the warehouse where the conflagration began. Firefighters continued to pour water on the blaze while police kept onlookers away from the icy streets.

The fire started at an empty, sprawling, four-story, wood-frame building at 800 Monroe St., owned by the Levolor blind company. A demolition crew was working there, and Hoboken police officials said yesterday the workers may have started the fire accidentally with either a cutting torch or a

See FIRE, Page 6

space heater.

Fire officials considered the down or so fires started in a seeming chain reaction by the original fire under control at 11 a.m. But two hours later, an five-story brick factory building adjacent to the Levolor building burst into uncontrollable flames, starting a second, spectacular phase of the the day-long inferno.

When the city's firefighters responded to the first alarm at 9:51 a.m., the high, "straight-line" winds were pushing parallel to the ground.

"The wind was so strong the flames were coming out straight. All we could do was spray it from the side," Hoboken Fire Chief James Houn said.

The second, third and general alarms were sounded in rapid succession, according to fire department officials. In nine minutes, the city fire department called for mutual aid from all of Hudson County's fire departments and some in southeast Bergen County. Eventually, 230 firefighters stormed into the city to douse the flames, Hoboken fire officials estimated.

Because of the hard-driving winds, the flames and heat bypassed many low-slung buildings in the area, including a pistol range a block away where ammunition was stored.

Taller buildings in the path of the southeast wind from the initial fire were more vulnerable. A small fire damaged the second floor of the friary of St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church, where President Reagan visited in the summer. The friary caught fire after the wooden watertower atop a nearby three-story factory building flamed up.

Wind saved the barge fire at Pier C from becoming a major catastrophe, city fire officials said. It rendered the flames harmless by blowing them over the water instead of back to the pier, they said.

The fire at the factory building at 824-830 Monroe St. that dominated the afternoon was in full use.

Continued from Page 1

sparks. Two young girls leaving Hoboken High School began walking excitedly toward the eight-block area of the city affected by the fire in an almost-boisterous manner. In a flash, the two girls could be seen comforting a friend who tearfully collapsed in their arms, sobbing with fear that he mother was trapped in a factory in the area.

Amid the confusion, life continued in and around the immediate fire area. Construction crews, after stopping for lunch, continued work on a row of condominiums going up on nearby Jefferson Street with a radio blaring a Bruce Springsteen tune.

In the background of the inferno, a freight train labored slowly along the Conrail tracks at the foot of the Palisades. As thick smoke would blanket the area for several minutes at a time before lifting briefly, the same train could be seen forming the background for the fire scene.

By 2:30, however, the choking black smoke had eased up and turned mostly white. One could begin to get a clear view of the buildings on the site — or what was left of them.

"There was a building there this morning. Now it's gone," observed one elderly man.

"There were two buildings there this morning," responded a young police officer who was dressed in football jacket and sweatpants.

"Now neither one of them are there. Now would you get behind the barrier?"

The scene during the fire was filled with a range of emotions. Some spectators sobbed quietly from behind police barricades. One woman could be seen two blocks from the fire holding her young child closely and eyeing her car as if wondering whether it would be best to drive away from the city for safety's sake.

A few hours later, a crowd of children and a few adults raced down Madison Street in pursuit of a television camera crew hoping to make the evening news program.

The firefighters began leaving the scene in large numbers at about 3.

The spray from the fire hoses, carried for blocks in the late afternoon by the day's gale-force winds, was a reminder that crews were still on the scene and probably would remain there through the night.

At 3:05, a frontloader — the first piece of heavy machinery called in for the long cleanup operation — made its way slowly along the city's narrow streets, which were clogged with emergency equipment. Ten minutes later, a saltspreader whipped salt onto the wet streets in the hope of keeping them free of ice for the long, cold overnight cleanup operation.

With the smoke clearing, little more than an hour remained before dusk would take hold of the cordoned-off fire area once again.

## Friend takes coffee to firefighters

H.D. 11/14/85

By BETH KUHLES  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Betty Rapoff was sorting through coupons for a day of shopping when she spotted the smoke from the Levolor Lorentzen Inc. factory. After phoning the Fire Department, she put on six pots of coffee and trudged through the thickening smoke with her metal shopping cart to deliver the warm, comforting beverage to the firefighters on the front line.

"I do it because I like the kids — they've always been good to me," said the elderly Ninth Street resident who had owned a lunchette in the city before it closed five years ago. She dips down into the cart, and pours a fresh one, but in moments the dark, steaming

See COFFEE, Page 7



Photo by Gary Higgins

HOBOKEN FIREFIGHTERS douse the Monroe Street area where yesterday's spectacular general alarm fire broke out.



Photo by Don Smith

A FIREFIGHTER can only watch as a car burns on Jackson Street in Hoboken yesterday.

Continued from Page 1  
coffee is dotted with ashes flying from the surrounding buildings.

The eight square blocks that encompassed yesterday's fire scene were teeming with people. As firefighters trained their hoses on the pockets of flames, dozens of other support personnel scurried around the scene doing specific jobs. They were to become an integral part of stopping the spread of the fire and protecting the health and safety of the emergency crews and residents in the area.

Ambulance corps members from around North Hudson, almost all of them volunteers, stood by in the choking smoke, acting as a refuge for the injured. Surprisingly, even with the extent and intensity of the fire, the injuries appeared minor.

Donald Enrico, the first lieutenant of the Hoboken Volunteer Ambulance Corps, reported early in the afternoon that three people had been treated at his outpost in the center of the action: an hysterical woman, a firefighter suffering smoke inhalation and a firefighter with a cut finger.

At another outpost — the one nearest to a raging fire in a five-story factory which enveloped the region in heavy smoke — a firefighter leaned against the side of a brick wall as the ambulance crew worked furiously to ease his symptoms of smoke inhalation. They squirted liquid from a bottle in his eyes and held wet compresses against his neck and an ice pack on his forehead.

PSE&G was there in force with 50 men manning 13 vehicles, turning off the power lines that threat-

ened the firefighters at work. Ed Anderson, a spokesman for PSE&G, said power was knocked out for 1,100 customers in Hoboken and Jersey City for about two hours yesterday morning after distribution wires were melted by the raging fire. New Jersey Bell was also on the scene.

Police officers, both on and off duty, strategically scattered themselves throughout the scene, to prevent the throngs of area residents from getting too close to the action and to direct the incoming firefighting and other equipment.

Meanwhile, fire apparatus from all over Hudson County and and part of Bergen roared to the scene, sending what appeared to be an endless stream of sirens echoing through city streets. They came from Bayonne, Cliffside Park, Edgewater, Fairview, Fort Lee, Guttenberg, Harrison, Jersey City, Kearny, Palisades Park, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Ridgewood, Ridgefield Park, Secaucus, Teaneck, Union City, West New York and Weehawken to join the more than 200 firefighters already on the scene. About 80 Hoboken firefighters fought the flames.

Back in the radio room, two teenaged men sat in the cramped room of the Hoboken fire dispatcher. The phone kept on ringing, even though it was seven hours after the onset of the conflagration, and the stack of papers which later would turn into reports kept piling up.

"After this, I'm going to need a drink," said one man jokingly.

Raymond Lax, the director of the North Hudson Regional Communication Authority, whose jurisdiction extends from the Bergen County line to Jersey City, said he received about 100 phone calls yesterday, 50 percent above normal.

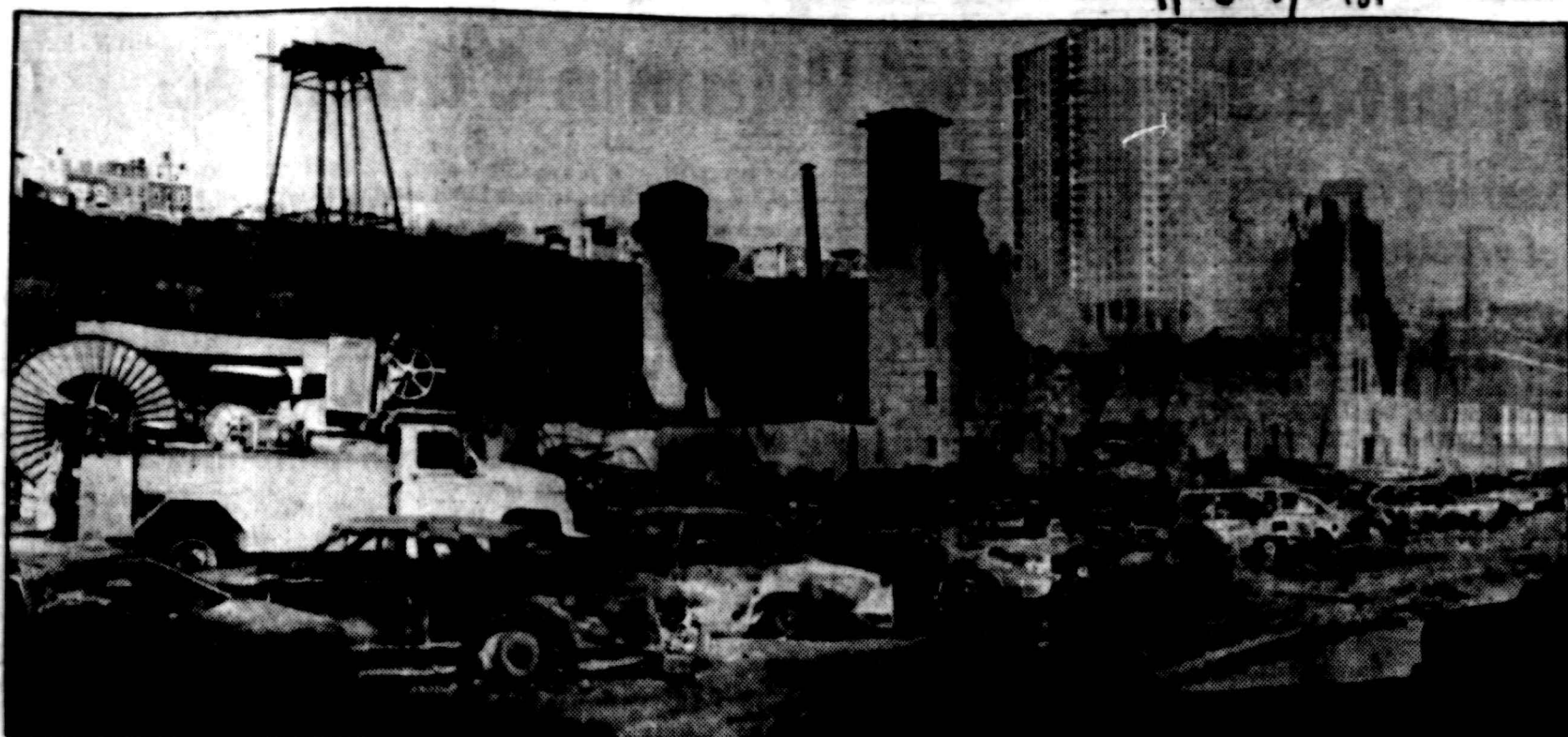
He dispatched North Hudson fire companies around the city to put out fires started by burning embers. The Gong Club, as per its tradition, was busy on the scene distributing coffee.

Secaucus had just settled into their temporary home away from home after hours of fighting the blaze, waiting in a Clinton Street firehouse for a summons to another fire. The men stripped off their protective gear, and real people with real fears emerged from under the fire helmets.

"Everything on you turns to ice," said Firefighter Michael Macari of Engine Co. 3, describing what it was like to fight the fire. Asked if he was scared, Macari replied, "I don't think (fear) ever leaves you, no matter how many fires you've been to. It's always at the back of your mind."



# Workers blamed for 'accidental' fire



FIRE-RAVAGED building skeletons and gutted automobiles yesterday sit as solemn victims of the massive

general-alarm fire that struck Hoboken's industrial area Tuesday.

Photo by Gary Higgins

By ROBIN WATKINS  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—City officials yesterday blamed a careless demolition crew for Tuesday's gigantic blaze and said they plan to sue the contracting firm for the \$5 million in industrial damage caused by the fire.

Mayor Steve Cappiello yesterday said a barrel fire workers set to keep warm had touched off the fire that spread across six city blocks from the warehouse they were demolishing.

City Police Chief George Crimmins said in a press conference yesterday at City Hall. "My final report to the Hudson County prosecutor will state the fire was accidental."

Firefighters yesterday continued to hose down the site, which was smoldering in scattered spots. Ice encased charred pipes, beams and debris and covered adjacent streets, which remained closed to traffic yesterday.

Crumbling brick walls, carved in half by fire, rose from the tangled

configuration of debris, rendering the once-bustling area into a Gothic picture of devastation.

Across the street, a parking lot served as a watery morgue yesterday for 85 cars as workers returned to the Levolor factory, which operated at one-third strength, according to president Maurice Schaller. The company, which employs 1,100 workers, hopes to resume full operations by next week.

State environmental officials worked in the area yesterday, but said they found no sign of any health hazard from the factory blaze. PSE&G and telephone company crews continued repairing damaged lines yesterday.

Cappiello said arson investigators decided the barrel fire sparked the blaze after interviewing the 10 workers for Arko Wrecking Co. of Bayonne. Crimmins said the interviews revealed that there were barrel fires in "several locations."

But the head of the arson unit, Lt. John Howe, said he still considered acetylene torches used by the work-

See FIRE, Page 18



EMERGENCY WORKERS yesterday continue cleanup operations in Hoboken's Monroe Street area.

Photo by Gary Higgins



Photo by Gary Higgins

A SMOKY HAZE hangs over the skeletal remains of a building destroyed by Tuesday's fire in Hoboken.

seek criminal charges against the workers.

"It was obviously very careless, but I don't think it was done purposely," he said.

Schaller said Levolor would seek damages "if an investigation shows" it was the workers' fault.

The sort of barrel fire in question has become a common feature at many of the city's construction sites since the weather turned bitter cold.

The northwest quadrant of the city is the last refuge of the sort of blue-collar manufacturing jobs that once dominated the local economy.

Some residents have feared that the firms that did not leave in the bust of the 1970s may make way for condominiums in the more recent boom.

Several of the larger vacant lots in the area have changed hands in the past year, including several purchased by developers with housing plans.

Cappiello said condominium development would not be permitted in the devastated area.

"This is the city's industrial area, and that's the way it will be kept," he said.



HOBOKEN MAYOR Steve Cappiello, right, and city Police Chief George Crimmins announce Tuesday's \$5 million blaze was accidental.

Photo by Gary Higgins

## FIRE

Continued from Page 1

for comment.

Cappiello said planning was under way to obtain state and federal funds as well as local loans to resettle the 11 companies displaced by the fire.

Officials have estimated that 200 people were put out of work by the fire, and Business Administrator Edwin Chius said Tuesday that 100 of those jobs will be difficult if not impossible to save.

City Fire Chief James Houn said it was illegal for the workers to have the fires in the barrels, even if they did not touch off the inferno.

"You can't have an open fire like that," Houn said. "It's actually illegal if you have it on a street corner. You certainly can't have it in a building."

Cappiello said the city would not

seek criminal charges against the workers.

"It was obviously very careless, but I don't think it was done purposely," he said.

Schaller said Levolor would seek damages "if an investigation shows" it was the workers' fault.

The sort of barrel fire in question has become a common feature at many of the city's construction sites since the weather turned bitter cold.

The northwest quadrant of the city is the last refuge of the sort of blue-collar manufacturing jobs that once dominated the local economy.

## Factory building's sprinkler system down for repairs

By James Kopchals

An unfortunate breakdown in the sprinkler system of a five-story brick factory building may have led the way to the building's destruction in Tuesday's spectacular fire in Hoboken.

Hoboken Fire Chief James Houn confirmed yesterday that the sprinkler system at 830 Monroe St. was down for repairs only one day before the blaze, which destroyed the building and the seven small industries housed inside.

"I'm not saying whether we could have saved the building with or without the sprinklers on," Houn said. "But I can say that it certainly would have helped."

The building, which is owned by corporate partners Daniel Binetti and Ronald Acquaviva, is adjacent to the north side of the former Ferguson Furniture Co. factory where the fire started. With a gusting wind rushing from the south, flames from the

Ferguson structure leaped to the building and started an all-day fire.

With the sprinklers on, the water may have held the fire in check long enough to permit firefighters to confine it to one section of the building. However, the flames spread over several areas of the building and frustrated the fire crews' aggressive efforts to contain it.

By about 12:30 p.m., the firefighters abandoned efforts to save the building and took defensive positions outside.

In contrast, the main plant of Levolor Lorentzen Inc. was saved by the building and took defensive positions outside.

Houn said the favorable wind plus the sprinklers helped firemen to save that building with only moderate damage. Levolor president Maurice Schaller said yesterday full production at the plant could begin as early as next week.

## Red Cross was ready for worst

By Margaret Schmidt

The "preachers of preparedness" had a major drill this week and feel they passed.

The Jersey City chapter of the American Red Cross stationed itself at St. Francis School in Hoboken Tuesday and prepared to handle as many as 2,500 victims of the general-alarm fire that leveled two industrial buildings and damaged 13 others, said Joseph Lecowitch, executive director.

Calling the organization "preachers of preparedness," Lecowitch said the chapter put into effect a pre-planned disaster scheme and "everything worked pretty well."

If necessary, the chapter—with aid from the New York City chapter—was ready to put to

2,500 persons in Hoboken schools for three days, he said.

The longtime plan for large-scale evacuations had been coordinated through the mayor's office and the school system.

Although a six-block district of the city was evacuated and more than 1,000 Public Service Electric & Gas customers were without electricity during the daylong fire, all residents were in their homes Tuesday night, Lecowitch said.

Hundreds of persons, including children attending St. Ann's Elementary School, were relocated to St. Francis School, but most area residents preferred to stay near their homes.

"It was good practice," Lecowitch said. "We're glad we didn't need it."

## They'll fire salute to firemen

It's a special way to say "thank you."

The owners of the Hoboken County Pistol Range are planning to give a "Thank You" dinner to all Hoboken firemen who participated in fighting Tuesday's spectacular fire.

The range, which is located only one block from the fire site and remained in danger throughout the day, was saved largely by the quick work of the city's firemen, according to Police Sgt. Carl Fause, a part-owner of the range.

"If it wasn't for that quick response, we could have easily lost this building," Fause said. "The building also contained a supply of about 50 rounds of ammunition, which could have added a deadly element to the blaze if it had gone on fire," he said.

Fause had wanted originally to hold separate parties at the three firehouses in the city, but was dissuaded by Fire Chief James Houn. Instead, he said he would reserve the Hoboken Manor for a mutually acceptable date.

## Blaze baptizes Hoboken fire rookies

By BRAD KELLY

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Danny Mendoza was sworn in as a city firefighter on Nov. 28.

Less than two months later, he and about 230 other firefighters from this city and several other municipalities fought one of the largest fires in the city's history.

Yesterday, Mendoza was called away from his Adams Street home to help battle a general-alarm fire that raged through five businesses and adjoining apartments on First and Garden streets.

"If an alarm goes off, I don't want to be near Hoboken," the 34-year-old Mendoza joked late yesterday afternoon as he left for his part-time bus driver's job in New York City.

Mendoza and nine other rookie firefighters have seen more action in seven weeks than many firefighters see in seven months.

Willie Pittman, 36, said he spent the first few weeks of duty preparing mentally for that first fire.

"You sit around very apprehensively, thinking about what it will be like. Well, it was more...

it was completely... I never expected anything like this," he said, referring to last week's industrial fire.

"The old-timers were saying they haven't seen anything like it in 50 years. I thought hell had broken loose. Even in Vietnam, I had seen bombing, but nothing like that," the former U.S. Air Force flight engineer said.

But according to Firefighter Richard Ladage, a nine-year veteran, the "old-timers" were looking out for the new kids on the block.

"You just try and teach the new

guys to remain calm, keep your wits about you and do the best you can. You can't find one rookie that hasn't fought his first fire and said, 'What the hell am I doing here?'" Ladage said.

Pittman, a city police officer for 8½ years before he became a firefighter, remembers an October day in 1979 when he ran into a burning building on Clinton Street and rescued several residents. According to Pittman, 21 people died in that fire.

"I don't want to see any more of that kind of thing either," he said.





FIREMEN EXAMINE damage caused by general-alarm fire in Hoboken yesterday. Some 60 residents were

evacuated from their apartments as the fire raged through five businesses at First and Garden streets yesterday.

Photo by Paul Simkin

## Early-morning fire forces 60 to flee

By MARITES CHICHOCO and BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writers

HOBOKEN—As many as 60 residents were evacuated from their apartments early yesterday morning as a general-alarm fire raged through five businesses and adjoining apartments along First and Garden streets.

Eighty firefighters from six Hoboken fire companies and seven Jersey City fire companies battled

For rookie firefighters, it's been a hard month. Page 15.

the blaze, which began at a little past 4 a.m. in the back of Louis Laundry and Dry Cleaning, at 161 First St., according to Deputy Fire Chief Edward McDonald.

Yesterday's blaze was the second major fire to hit Hoboken in eight days. Firefighters from a dozen fire departments Jan. 15 battled an inferno in the city's industrial section that claimed eight businesses and damaged seven more.

Continued from Page 1

Mrs. Louie and her 8-year-old daughter, Lany, were taken to St. Mary Hospital, where they were treated for smoke inhalation and later released. The Louie family, which operated the laundry for their grandfather for 17 years, were expected to stay with relatives in Newark, according to 18-year-old Osha, one of the Louies' daughters.

Mrs. Louie and a Hoboken patrolman stood on the icy First Street sidewalk yesterday afternoon and tried to kick open a cash register that had been salvaged from the laundry.

"I think there's \$30 in here," she muttered.

McDonald said by 4:30 a.m. the fire spread east on First Street toward Bloomfield Street and consumed Raul's Cafe and an apartment above. The Scorpion Lounge and two apartments located above were also damaged. He said it spread west to Take One Video, located at the corner of First and Garden streets, and to the Pueblo Supermarket located at 95 Garden St.

## Hoboken's 2nd big blaze in 8 days

McDonald said the flames blew out the thick, plate glass front windows of the laundry and quickly spread upward to the two-story apartment above.

Yuk Louie and her three children fled the smoking apartment. The father, Nunsim Louie, checked to make sure his family made it to safety before he climbed out of a first-floor window and onto a gate used to secure the outside of the laundry. He was helped down from the gate by Police Capt. John Ferrante and Patrolman Brian Murphy, according to police officials.

See FIRE, Back Page

Late yesterday afternoon, ice-caked firefighters were still hosing down the gutted supermarket.

The video store and the three-story apartments above it were completely destroyed. The three families living there were safely evacuated, McDonald said.

McDonald said the fire was under control by 6:30 a.m. He said only seven families will have to be relocated. Other residents living along First and Garden streets who were evacuated early in the morning began returning to their apartments later in the afternoon, he said.

Observers at the fire said they thought it started after the morning began returning to their apartments later in the afternoon, he said.

Deputy Fire Chief Richard Tremblay, who was in charge of firefighting procedures in the early stages of the fire, said yesterday he doubted the fire was suspicious.

"The man and his family barely got out of that building," he said, referring to the Louie family.

Hoboken firefighter John Shortell suffered minor neck injuries when



Photo by Gary Higgins

DESTRUCTION ON First Street in Hoboken after the second major fire in eight days hit the city.

he fell down an icy flight of stairs. He was taken to St. Mary Hospital, where he was treated and released, fire officials said.

McDonald did not put a value on the property damage caused by the fire. He said it would be days before business owners would complete an inventory of what was lost in the fire.

Fire officials were still trying to determine yesterday whether any smoke detectors were installed in the buildings.

Last week's fire has claimed as much as \$7 million worth of property damage, according to city officials.

Thomas Ahern, director of economic development for the city's Community Development Agency, said earlier this week the city will apply for federal economic disaster aid on behalf of the 15 businesses damaged in last week's fire. It was not clear yesterday whether the businesses damaged in yesterday's fire would be included in that application.

## 20 seek jobless pay after Hoboken fire

By TOM DIPIAZZA  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—About 20 people have filed for unemployment benefits due to the spectacular fire in the city's industrial section, which officials had thought might cost the city 200 jobs.

Fredrick Jaworski, manager of the state Department of Labor and Industry unemployment office at 71 Adams St., yesterday said fewer than 15 people have been in his office as a result of last week's fire. He said a handful of others may have filed for unemployment benefits at offices in Union City or Jersey City.

Meanwhile, the city today expects to complete its application to have the area declared a federal economic disaster area, which would make low interest loans available to affected businesses.

Jaworski said his office had braced for a flood of applications by employees who lost jobs as a result of the fire. Provisions were made to cope with the flood which never came, he said.

"We were all set for a big load here, but it really didn't materialize," he said. Applicants are continuing to filter in, he said, chiefly from companies located at 824-30 Monroe St. That five-story building was destroyed by the fire.

Jaworski said about 10 of the unemployment applications have come from workers at Robill Industries, an occupant of the building destroyed by the fire.

City Business Administrator Edwin Chius yesterday repeated the city's estimate that 200 jobs have

City expects to finish application for economic disaster area aid

been lost as a result of the fire, 100 hundred of them permanently. Chius said some employers have found jobs for workers at other sites or with other companies.

"That figure is very good," Chius said of the number who have filed for unemployment. "Let's hope it stays that way."

Thomas D. Ahern, director of the city's Community Development Agency, said the city wants the U.S. Small Business Administration to make low-interest loans available to business affected by the fire.

Ahern said the long-term financing supplied by the SBA will allow the city to appeal to local banks to make interim financing available. He estimated that \$2 million is needed now so companies can purchase equipment and secure new sites.

If the SBA loans are not available, Ahern said state or city money could be used to provide the long-term financing needed to create the short-term loan pool.

The development office has been successful in locating buildings in the city where companies could relocate, Ahern said. He estimates that between 15 and 20 companies were affected by the fire.

"The end result, with any luck," he said, "will be no jobs lost."

## Hoboken to sue Bayonne firm for negligence in \$5M blaze

BB 1/17/95

## Hoboken to sue Bayonne firm for negligence in \$5M blaze

BB 1/17/95

Hoboken will sue a Bayonne demolition firm to regain its costs in Tuesday's spectacular fire at the Levolor Lorentzen plant.

Mayor Steve Cappelletto said the city would sue the Artko Wrecking Co., charging its workers were negligent in leaving barrels of fires burning unattended during their demolition of a vacant building at the Levolor site.

Flames from the unattended barrels are being blamed for the blaze, which destroyed two factories and caused over \$5 million in damage over a six-block area.

This explanation has not yet been recorded as official. However, Police Chief George Crimmins and Lt. Jack Howe of the city's Arson Squad said they were "leaning" toward this explanation.

Howe said discussions with some of the 10 workmen pinpointed the site of the fire's origin on the second floor of the former Ferguson Furniture Co. at 800-816 Monroe St.

Howe said the workmen were removing fixtures on the third floor of the building when the high winds that gusty that morning either pushed sparks out of the barrels left by the men or pushed one or more of these barrels over, spilling its burning contents onto the building's wooden floor.

The barrels are known popularly as "malmenders" and are used by workmen during the winter months as a source of heat. However, Fire Chief James Hoon said yesterday at a City Hall press conference that lighting such a fire inside the wood-frame building constituted a violation of the city's fire regulations.

Cappelletto said he expected this violation will serve as a basis for the city's suit.

No accurate estimate has yet been made concerning the costs borne by the city in fighting the fire, which taxed the efforts of 265 men from 10 communities over a 12-hour period.

Damage to the businesses and properties in the area is being estimated at more than \$5 million, which is composed of an estimated \$2 million value for businesses and the five-story brick factory building at Ninth and Monroe streets and the seven businesses that were consumed by the fire; \$3 million for varying damages to other industries scattered throughout the area; and an unknown amount for 71 automobiles burned by the fire.

Public Safety Director James Giordano said he would not know the exact cost to the city until the end of the week

See HOBOKEN—Page 25.

Continued from Page 1

when overtime figures are reported by the police and fire superiors. Additional costs will be figured when the city's public works department has completed its cleanup of bricks and ashes littering the streets and the amount of water used in fighting the fire is tallied.

Maurice Schaller, president of Levolor, said he would wait until he learns the results of further investigation before deciding on any legal action.

In all, between 150 and 200 employees lost their jobs due to the fire. Eight industries were wiped out, according to city Business Administrator Edwin Chius, while an undetermined number suffered water, smoke, and fire damage to varying degrees.

The brick building at 830 Monroe housed seven small industries which were all destroyed in the blaze. These companies and the number of permanent workers employed at the site by them include: Monette, 25 workers; Pan Asia Fashions, 10; Chris Bur, 6; Robill Industries, 25; Sweet Torte, 30; Manhattan Stripping Co., 10; and Walltell Security Systems, 2. A small automobile garage and mechanic shop was also destroyed at 712 Madison Street.

Chius said these number only represented workers who actually worked at the building. Several of the firms frequently hired temporary employees to fulfill contracted work.

At the press conference, Cappelletto outlined city efforts to help the owners of firms damaged by the fire and those employees left jobless.

Using the city's Office of Economic Development Agency and its director, Thomas Ahern, as a focus, the city will attempt to coordinate federal, state, and local loans and grants to help

firms remain in Hoboken.

Some of these aids will include federal UDAG grants, small business loans from the state's Economic Development Authority, and low-interest loans offered by the city in its Hoboken Industrial and Commercial Loan Program. Ahern said yesterday that the city low-interest loan program does include banks in the city and may represent the fastest way for the industries to resettle and rebuild.

Both Chius and Ahern said they have been busy trying to locate new commercial space in the city to resettle the firms. In all, the firms will need to find between 200,000 and 300,000 square feet of space to resettle them.

Meanwhile, the city has received promises of help from the office of Rep. Frank Guarini and the Jobs Resource Center of St. Mary Hospital's Mental Health Center.

Conrad Vuocolo, a spokesman for Guarini, said the congressman has spoken with Cappelletto and assigned his staff to speak with officials of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to determine if any help could be arranged.

Molly McNees, coordinator of the jobs center, said the agency would volunteer its services for job training and counseling to any employees left unemployed by the blaze. Cappelletto said this would be combined with services provided by the state Employment Services Office which will be interviewing all jobless at its offices at 71 Adams St.

Ahern said owners of firms suffering damage should contact his office at 620-2216 to arrange for an appointment to discuss various options available through the city.

## Hoboken assessor gave 2 final breaks

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The city's tax assessor granted two controversial exemptions just days before the City Council stripped him of his authority to do so.

The council Wednesday night voted 7-2 to amend an ordinance allowing for commercial and industrial tax exemptions. Under the old ordinance, Tax Assessor Woodrow Monte had the sole authority to grant commercial tax exemptions. Now that authority rests with the council.

But Monte's last two exemptions,

which came to light during Wednesday night's council caucus, have fallen under heavy criticism by both public officials and private citizens.

Monte late last week granted a tax exemption to commercial developer Anthony Dell'Aquila even though he owes the city \$330,000 in delinquent property taxes and has received a \$1.7 million federal Urban Development Action Grant to renovate the former Franklin Baker building.

Under terms of the exemption, Dell'Aquila's 19-story commercial building, located at 1801 Bloomfield St., will not be assessed for im-

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provements for five years.

Several residents who supported the construction of a Pathmark supermarket on nine acres that Dell'Aquila purchased last year were upset when they found out the developer had been granted the exemption.

Pathmark officials said they were willing to purchase the land for \$1.3 million and pay their taxes in advance. Dell'Aquila still has not paid those taxes.

Councilman Thomas Vezzetti and Patrick Pasculli Wednesday night voted against taking away Monte's exemption power because they say the ordinance allowing for exemptions should be eliminated.

"We don't need them," Vezzetti said yesterday.

Monte defended his decision yesterday by pointing out that Dell'Aquila had done the necessary building improvements to qualify

for the exemption. Those requirements include increasing the building's capacity and creating new jobs.

"That end of town used to look like a war zone," Monte said, referring to the Weehawken-Hoboken boundary where Dell'Aquila owns several buildings. "He did a good job on it (the building), so I helped him with an exemption," he said.

Monte also gave a five-year exemption on improvements made to the old American Hotel, which was gutted in a 1981 fire that killed two people. The building, located at 78 River St., is being turned into commercial office space by developer Ray Lemme.

Councilman E. Norman Wilson, who pushed to strip Monte of his exemption power, said yesterday the two exemptions probably would not have been approved by the council. He noted that the council earlier this year turned down Lemme's

application for a five-year tax abatement for the building.

Vezzetti said Lemme's building, located across the street from the PATH station, is the "number one spot in Hoboken."

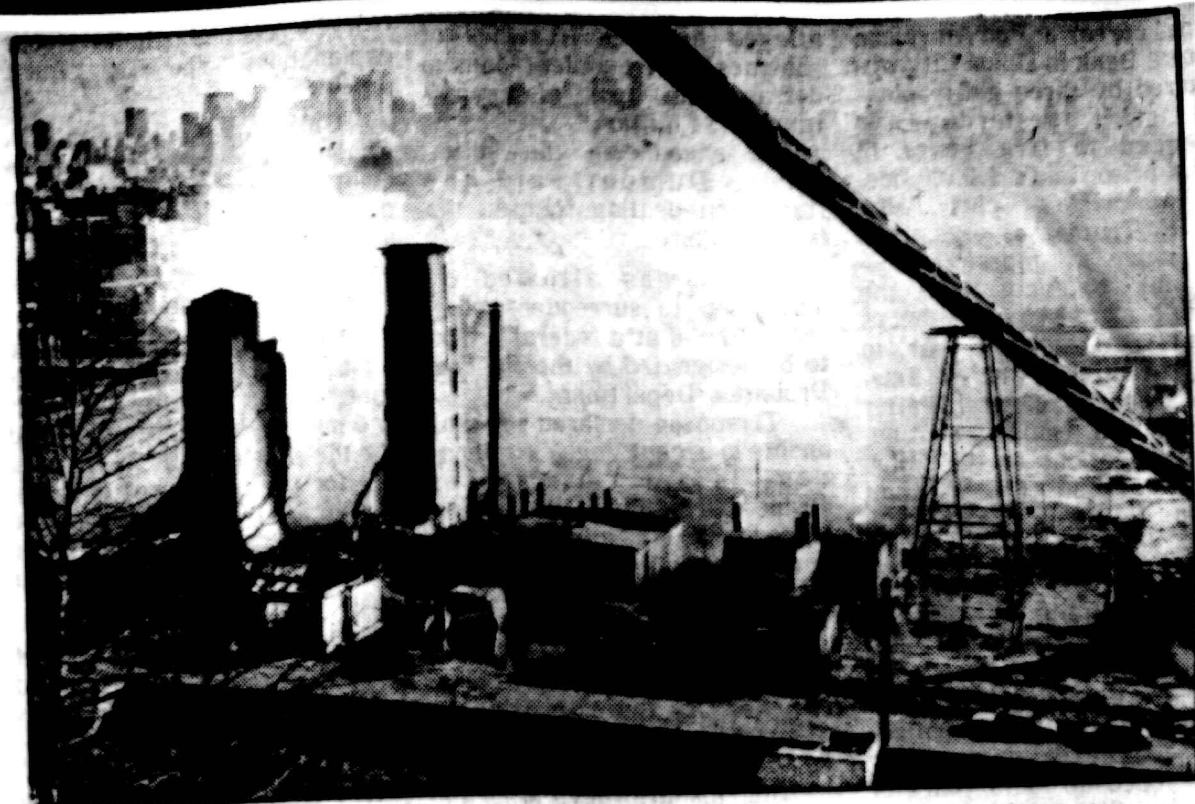
"We absolutely don't need an exemption for it," he asserted.

But Monte argued Lemme has turned what was once a "flophouse" into a modern commercial building that will bring jobs into the city.

Monte said yesterday he did not have the figures available to discuss the value of the improvements made to both buildings.

The council years ago gave the assessor the authority to grant tax exemptions. But with 10 percent of city properties receiving tax abatements and another 50 percent of city properties tax exempt, tax breaks have become a politically sensitive issue, and the council has decided to take over exemption power.





Against the backdrop of Manhattan, all that remained of three Hoboken factories are a few precarious walls and rubble. At the fringes are the burned remains of more than 50 cars.

88-1/17/95  
Photos by Ray Greening



This used to be 830 Monroe St., Hoboken. Now it is unrecognizable except perhaps to its former employees and owner. More pictures and stories on Pages 23 and 36.



Spraying water and icicles form on car's silhouette against the burned-out remains of what was once a thriving factory on Hoboken's Monroe Street.

## Rising from the ashes

Continued from Page 1  
water-damaged wall panels in one of the plant's buildings are salvagable.

"The fire managed to avoid some of our most critical equipment," Porytko said. "It's a mess. It's a lot of work. But nothing that we can't overcome."

Approximately 1,100 people work at the Hoboken plant, the company's largest on the East Coast.

Porytko said he believed all operations will resume but added he couldn't commit himself to saying all jobs would be maintained. Some "very small" operations might be lost, he indicated.

The two main buildings at Levelor escaped major fire damage in Tuesday's blaze although one building was damaged by water from firefighters' hoses and company sprinklers and by heat. The wall facing the vacant building that

erupted in flames next door was damaged.

Most of the orders scheduled to be processed in the Hoboken facility were being processed yesterday through Levelor's 16 other plants nationwide.

Nationally, Porytko said, the effects of the fire on production will be "almost not noticeable."

"By and large," he said, "it looks good."

Many employees showed up for work yesterday and were put on cleanup operations, Porytko added.

About 500 employees were in the plant when the fire broke out and all escaped without injury. One woman required treatment for anxiety.

The Levelor building which was destroyed by the fire was a vacant 85-year-old wood-frame structure that once housed the Ferguson Furniture Co. Demolition workers accidentally sparked the fire, Hoboken

authorities said.

Levelor has decided against suing Artko Wrecking Co. of Bayonne, Schaller said, but Hoboken officials plan to sue, claiming negligence, to recoup overtime that will be paid to firefighters and police and to pay extra water bills.

As insurance adjusters surveyed Levelor, other adjusters were at Kleon Furniture, 553 Eighth St.

The warehouse-showroom, which sustained heavy water damage, may open Friday or Saturday, according to a spokeswoman.

Eight companies had their offices gutted, officials said.

The Diamond Motor Trucking Co., a garage at 710 Madison Ave., and seven companies in 830 Monroe St. lost their offices.

At least one of the companies at 830 Monroe St., Monmec Inc., a mechanical contracting firm, had set up tem-

## Hoboken burns again 'What can you do?'

By Frank Alkyer

Paul Kasley stood in the cold, shrugging his shoulders as he watched his business burn.

"What can you do?" he asked. "It took 10 years of hard work in New York to buy that store. For the past year-and-a-half, I've spent seven days a week in there, 12 hours a day."

In that year-and-a-half, Kasley had built Take One Video, 163 First St. in Hoboken, into the city's largest video rental club with 800 members and 1,500 films in stock.

Within a few hours early yesterday, the business and his films were gone.

St. Mary Hospital treated two people for minor smoke inhalation, fire officials said. There were no serious injuries reported.

Officials opened the municipal courtroom at City Hall to those forced from their homes. St. Mary Hospital donated blankets. The victims sat around drinking coffee and eating donuts.

"They (police) started ringing my buzzer at about 4:20 a.m.," said Rick Kennedy. "They advised us that there was a fire and we might have to leave. Fifteen minutes later, they said, 'Out.'"

"The flames from the dry cleaners were huge," said Beth Udy. "I was going around like a nervous squirrel with a duffel bag saying, 'What do I take, what do I take?'"

They were two of the luckier ones. They could return to their homes yesterday.

Tina Glavin stood by the phone wearing slippers, a nightgown and a coat. Earlier, she had hoped that her apartment above Take One Video would be slightly damaged, and that she could return. Now, she realized the building was gone.

"Oh, well," she said with a

Continued from Page 1

smile. "My sister (who is also her roommate) is skiing in Austria. I can imagine what will happen. She's going to come straight home from Newark

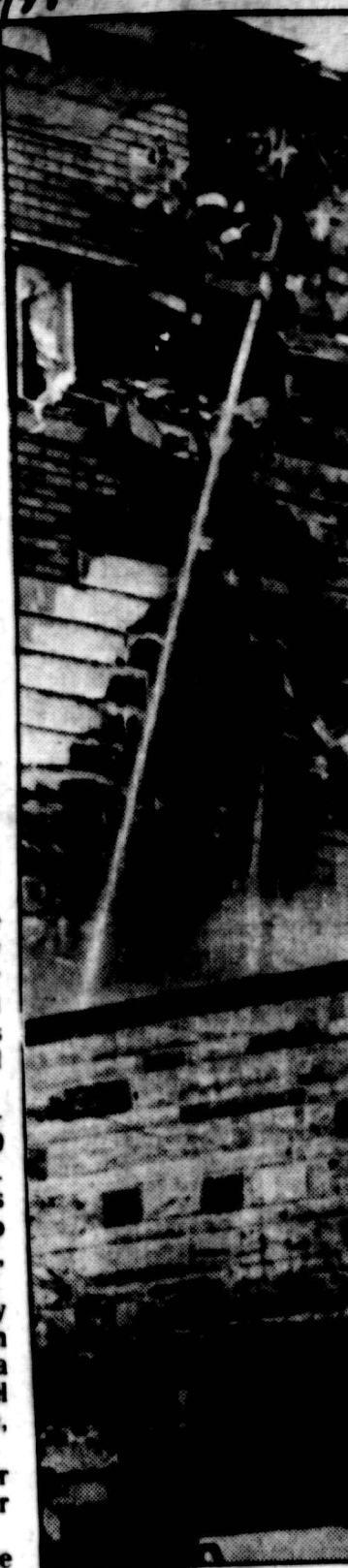


Photo by Ray Greening

A Hoboken firefighter extinguishes the smoldering remains of a general alarm fire which destroyed four buildings on First Street yesterday. (More pictures on

## Four firms burnt out

By James Kopchans

Four buildings gutted by yesterday's general alarm fire in Hoboken have been ordered demolished.

The buildings will be leveled after fire investigators have checked the buildings for the cause of yesterday's blaze, which left 13 persons homeless and destroyed four storefront industries. As of yesterday evening, investigators were still at the site.

The fire, reported at 4 a.m., engulfed buildings at 150, 161, and 163 First St. and 95 Garden St. before being brought under control at about 6:30 a.m. Fire officials said they believe it began in a dry cleaning store on the ground floor of 161 First St.

It was the second general alarm fire in Hoboken in eight days, following the giant fire at the Levolor Lorentzen Inc. plant on Jan. 15. Yesterday's blaze was described as "stubborn."

"The fire was mostly located in the rear of the buildings and they were difficult to reach at first," Public Safety Director James Giordano said. "In addition, there was a little wind that during the morning kicked it around a bit."

The blaze occurred in a wood-frame building, spread quickly and jumped to the adjacent wood-frame buildings on either side. Firefighters were able to reach the back of the buildings through a small alley on Newark Street, but arrived too late to save the buildings.

Eventually, the fire crews were able to stop the blaze at a brick building at 157 First St., which contained the San Lazaro Furniture store which suffered moderate damage, mostly due to water and smoke.

About 80 firemen from Jersey City and Hoboken responded under the direction of first, Hoboken Deputy Chief

## 'What can you do?'

(Airport) and see a note on the charred door.

Billy Yankoglu and his cat were left homeless by the fire also, but he managed to keep a sense of humor about it.

"What are you gonna do?"

You've got to joke about it," he said. "Nobody had to wake me. I heard a lot of noise, then saw smoke outside my window and said 'it's time to go.' I grabbed my cat and told my roommate to stay. No, not really."

## Levelor plant back to normal operation

Two weeks after the spectacular fire at the Levelor-Lorentzen plant in Hoboken, operations have returned virtually to normal.

According to a spokesman, operations are running at between 90 and 95 percent efficiency with further improvements scheduled for later this week. The company had slid to only 75 percent efficiency following the fire, which destroyed an unused Levelor building and an adjacent factory.

Workers have been at the site for past week, removing the last remaining structures and

automobiles destroyed in the blaze. Total damage in the blaze, which was swept by the wind onto 13 other buildings, is estimated at about \$5 million.

The Assembly last night meanwhile but off until Monday a vote on the \$1 million emergency fire protection appropriation act by Assemblyman Robert A. Ranieri, Hoboken Democrat, to aid victims in the six-block fire.

Sen. Christopher J. Jackman of West New York introduced an identical version yesterday in the Senate, which could vote on it Thursday.



# Hoboken fire scene a week later

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Patrolman Donald Olsen sat inside his squad car parked on Monroe Street yesterday and casually watched a lone fire detective snap pictures of the frozen rubble of eight businesses that disappeared here last week.

"Saturday there were a couple hundred people taking pictures. Mostly out-of-towners," said Olsen, shaking his head. "People were posing in front of those burnt-out cars," he said, pointing to a row of rusted cars parked across the street. "Like Hollywood," he added.

For the past several days, Olsen has been assigned to keep trespassers out of the area and away from the remains of the 78 cars that were destroyed during the fire.

But yesterday, a week after a spectacular fire destroyed eight businesses and caused smoke and water damage to seven more, things have quieted down.

"I've only seen a few here and

there," Olsen said, referring to curiosity seekers who braved the cold weather yesterday to get a look at the charred beams that used to be a four-story wood-frame building at 800 Monroe St. Adjacent to that building stand what remains of the walls of a building that housed seven local businesses.

"It's unbelievable it could be like this," said one-time Hoboken resident Charles Kasch. Kasch and his wife, Claire, drove from Palisades Park yesterday to take a look.

A final report on the fire is expected to be released early next week. City officials, however, believe it was started by a barrel fire that workers had set to keep themselves warm early Tuesday morning. The building, which was owned by Levolor-Lorentzen Inc., was being demolished by the Arto Wrecking Co. of Bayonne.

Thomas D. Ahern, director of the city's Community Development Agency, said yesterday that half of the businesses damaged in the fire

have reported a total of some \$7 million in losses.

City Business Administrator Edwin Chius said yesterday overtime pay for the Fire Department alone will exceed \$8,000. Chius said he still has not received overtime figures for the city's Police and Water departments.

City officials have said they plan to sue the contracting firm for at least the cost of overtime and the damage to several water pipes as a result of the fire.

Ahern, who said he had hoped to complete by yesterday an application declaring Hoboken a federal economic disaster area, said it will be several more days before that application can be sent to the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The designation would allow the SBA to make low-interest loans available to businesses that were under-insured for the amount of damage they received. Ahern said he believes all 15 businesses

ravaged by the fire were under-insured.

Leon Klein, owner of Kleon Furniture Corp., opened his business this week after having been closed for several days. He said his business, across the street from the Levolor-Lorentzen building that burned down, suffered major water and smoke damage.

"We've lost a tremendous amount of business because people have been assuming we're out of business," Klein said. "We're open to the public now," he added. His business is at 553 Eighth St.

Klein said he was at his store the morning of the fire. "It looked as if the whole town was going to catch on fire. It sounded like a war was going on when the cars caught fire and the gas tanks exploded," he said.

High winds scattered burning embers to the rooftops of businesses several blocks away, and other embers are believed to have ignited a barge docked on the Hudson River.



Dispatch staff photo

H.D. 1-23-85

Some of the cars burned by the Jan. 15 Hoboken fire.

## PA reveals Hoboken development plans

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Port Authority officials last night presented further details on their plans to turn the city's waterfront into a \$500-million, mixed-used development.

According to Port Authority of New York and New Jersey officials, the development would generate only \$850,000 gallons of sewage flow through existing city sewage facilities per day.

A roadway from Henderson Street in Jersey City will connect with the southern end of the NJ Transit terminal and the 2,100-vehicle parking facility, the officials said. A total of 3,750 parking spaces may be required for the project.

Approximately 5,000 permanent and 10,000 construction jobs will be created by the project, the officials predicted.

A model of the authority's project was unveiled before the public last month. The development includes six residential towers with a total of 1,500 apartment units, a 400-room motel, three high-rise office buildings, a marina and a breakwater extending from Castle Point south to Fifth Street.

Last night's presentation held at

the Demarest School was the second and final public hearing of Mayor Steve Cappelletto's Waterfront Advisory Committee, a coalition of residents, business people and city officials.

Many of the approximately 125 residents at last night's meeting were unhappy with what they considered a lack of further specifics and a presentation of impact studies on traffic flow, air pollution and job training.

Sharon DeRosier, a member of the Hoboken Environment Committee, said her group would like to see the authority provide a "flow chart" of the project, including what steps will be followed, what permits would be obtained and in what order.

"We can't give you an answer if we can't give you an answer," said Paul Rotundi, chairman of the advisory committee. "We have held and will be holding further meetings, but we don't have all the answers right now."

Residents would like to see preferential employment for Hoboken residents and a certain percentage of revenues generated from the development used to create middle-income housing and rent subsidies.

## Hoboken cops fight angel dust

H.D. 1-24-85  
By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—For the past six months, bags of ground-up mint leaves laced with Phen-cyclidine Hydrochloride, commonly known as angel dust or PCP, have been coming across the river from New York and turning up on streets here, according to police.

Capt. Pat Totaro, of the Hoboken Narcotics Squad, estimated that at least 50 people have been arrested for buying and selling the drug over that period of time. He said there have been seven PCP-related arrests so far this month.

Totaro said his bureau knows where the small packets with brand names like "Wards Island" and "Parkside Madness" are coming from.

"They're all going over to 145th Street (in New York) and picking up their PCP," he said, referring to the pushers who have been arrested in Hoboken. "We even know the woman who is supplying it. We have her phone number. We can call up and order it," he added.

Totaro complained yesterday that the New York City Narcotics Bureau is doing nothing to stop the alleged supplier of the PCP turning up in Hoboken.

"It's frustrating. They're not doing a thing," he said.

A police official reached last night at the New York City Narcotics Bureau telephone number told The Dispatch to call back today between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. for comment on the matter.

"All drugs run a cycle. Seven years ago, everybody and their uncle was taking heroin. Then it was LSD. A while ago there was a coke bonanza," Totaro said.

"Now we're concentrating on PCP. It's what's available ... and what they're pushing," he added.

According to a chart distributed by the U.S. Department of Justice, Phen-cyclidine Hydrochloride is commonly used as a veterinary anesthetic. When taken by humans it can cause hallucinations and illusions. An overdose of PCP can result in psychosis and possible death, according to the chart.

Totaro said PCP is commonly sprinkled on top of marijuana, but some pushers have found it cheaper to sell the drug mixed with mint leaves, which can be rolled into a cigarette.

"It's bad enough we have all that other stuff out there," Totaro said. "PCP is dangerous to the public and the people who take it. They tend to become supermen. After awhile, they get suicidal."

Totaro recalled a recent incident, when it took four patrolmen almost 10 minutes to put a pair of handcuffs on someone who became violent after smoking PCP.

## Homeless mother gets 30 days in jail for trespassing

H.D. 1/25/85

### Says she was renting in basement

By JOE MALINCONICO  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The basement storage area where Sylvia Mendez said she slept for the last month still contained some of her belongings. Dusty travel bags, an old vinyl coat, some magazines, a broken lamp and a stuffed animal were piled in a corner.

Meanwhile, at Municipal Court yesterday, Mendez, 25, was sentenced by Judge Peter J. Giordano to 30 days in the Hudson County Jail in Jersey City for trespassing.

The jail is the latest stop in a journey that has taken the homeless woman from the streets of Hoboken to the local homeless shelter to the basement of the apartment building at 1033 Washington St.

"It was done more or less so she'd have some place to go," said Municipal Court Clerk Pat Della Fave. But Mendez was upset yesterday after the sentencing.

She said she moved into the basement area last month under an agreement with an acquaintance, a resident in the building, that Mendez could live in the storage area.

She said the woman, Anna Nieves, said Mendez would owe her rent once she finished paneling the walls. About a dozen varnished boards covered several feet of one of the walls yesterday. Mendez apparently already had started the "paneling."

Mendez said no rent figure was decided upon. Nieves could not be reached for comment. Mendez said she has two young children. She started to cry when talking about them, and it is not clear whether they lived with her in the bin. They apparently are being taken care of by the Division of Social Services in Jersey City.

Ben Goodman, the owner of the apartment and a member of the Planning Board, said he thought Mendez was only there for a night

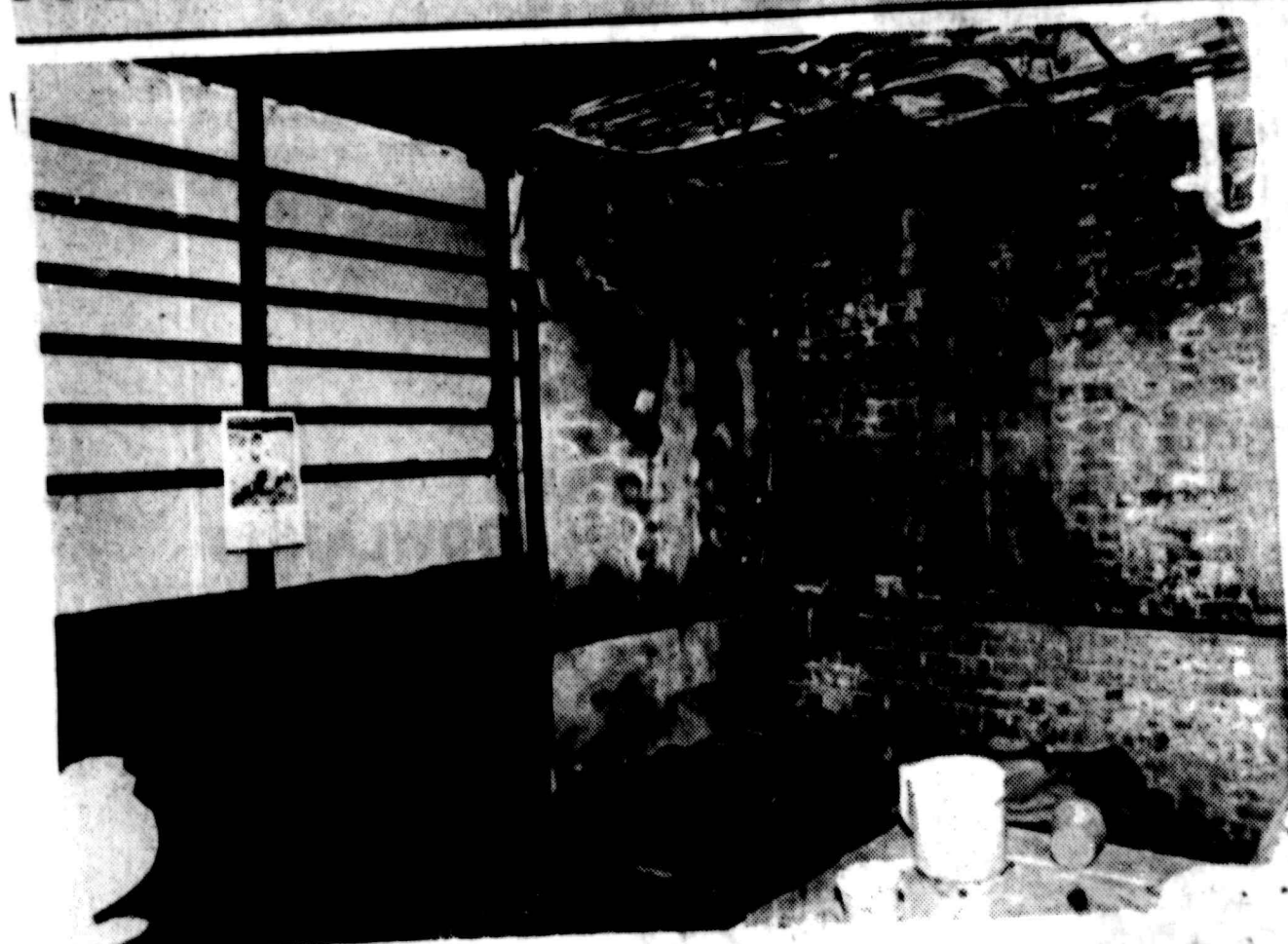
or two. He said he did not know anything about the other tenant intending to charge her rent.

On Friday morning, Hoboken police received a call about a disturbance in the basement of the building. Nieves filed a complaint against Mendez for trespassing, and Mendez was arrested.

She could not post the \$50 bail, so she spent the weekend in the jail until yesterday's trial, at which she pleaded guilty, according to Della Fave.

Shortly after Mendez was arrested, the building inspector, Al Rizzo, examined the basement and told Goodman to have the area vacated and the storage bin removed.

The building's superintendent was there a few hours later and the walls of the bin soon became a pile of broken boards. The wood was still in the basement yesterday afternoon, just a few feet away from the scraps of life Mendez left behind.



BASEMENT STORAGE AREA of 1033 Washington St. in Hoboken, where Sylvia Mendez says she slept for the past month, still contains some of her belongings.

## Hispanic tenants dispute Cappelletto's TV interview

By James Kopchansky

About 25 Hispanic tenants in Hoboken appeared at City Hall yesterday, challenging comments made by Mayor Steve Cappelletto about Hispanics at a television interview.

Cappelletto, in comments made earlier this week to reporters from television station WXTV-41, said he and his administration have been very active in working with Hispanics in the city, aiding those in danger of displacement by landlords.

However, Aaron Miranda-Forman, who led yesterday's demonstration, said he and the others in the group were "insulted" by the comments, which he said misrepresented the situation.

"The fact is, the mayor and this administration has given little to help Hispanics except words."

"What the mayor has done, in reality, is preside over the greatest turnover in apartments in the entire history of the city while doing little to stop it. As a

result, the city lost many of its Hispanic tenants who could have stayed had some action been taken."

In answering the charges, Cappelletto said he stood by his remarks, pointing to the recently adopted city rent-control ordinance as proof of the city administration's commitment to all tenants.

"This law is the best law of any community in Hudson County in protecting the tenant from abuses caused by unscrupulous landlords," he said.

He also pointed to subsidized housing projects that have sprung up in different areas of the city during his administration. "We now have over 20 percent of our housing stock designated as subsidized, which I believe is the highest percentage of any comparable city in the entire nation."

Following the demonstration, Cappelletto agreed to an interview with camera crews from the WXTV-41 with a representative of the Hispanic demonstrators.

## Cappelletto wants panel to monitor rent control

Continued from Page 1

of its most publicized feature, abolishing "substantial rehabilitation" rent increases for landlords.

Officers of the Campaign for Housing Justice have objected mainly to what they perceive as vague wording and sections governing the renovations of buildings, vacant and occupied, because they said it places a disproportionate emphasis on landlords to renovate vacant buildings.

The emphasis on vacating

buildings gives landlords the incentive to use any means to remove tenants, they said.

Cappelletto and Robert Ranieri said yesterday that the main reason for changing the rent law was to prevent tenant displacement.

Ranieri said he understood the objections of the tenant groups, but said the council should give the law at least six to nine months to assess its impact before attempts are made on amendments.

## Cappelletto wants panel to monitor new rent law

By James Kopchansky

Its new rent control ordinance signed and in effect, Hoboken may soon have to create an independent panel to monitor the new law and assess its impact on the city's housing.

Mayor Steve Cappelletto said yesterday that he could see the need for a panel to provide accurate information about how the law is affecting both landlord and tenant as well as its effect on real estate investing in the city.

"We should now see the im-

pact the ordinance will have on the city and be prepared to make judgments," Cappelletto said yesterday during the official signing of the ordinance in his office. "There may well be the need for an independent commission to be formed to study these effects sometime down the line."

Despite the unanimous vote of the City Council on Jan. 16, tenant organizers have questioned portions of the new law, although they have been in favor

See CAPPIELLO — Page 1.



## Hoboken council to hear plan to solve sewage ills

Representatives of a Baltimore disposal firm will offer a presentation of its sludge removal process to members of the Hoboken City Council and other city officials today.

The firm, James A. Federline Inc., is installing the equipment at its own cost to demonstrate the efficiency of the unit, according to Councilman Robert Ranieri. The city is one of six Hudson County sewage facilities cited by the federal Environmental Protection Agency for not meeting standards set in the federal Clean Water Act.

The presentation is set for 10 a.m. at the city's main sewerage treatment plant at 16th and Adams streets.

On Dec. 28, the EPA issued show-cause orders against waste

water disposal plants in Bayonne, Hoboken, North Bergen, West New York, and two Jersey City facilities for failure to remove 85 percent of the pollutants from their communities' sewage.

At the presentation, the firm also is expected to present other plans for providing secondary sewage treatment for the city's system. If accepted, the plans would fulfill the federal order.

## No ethics code for Hoboken pols

In keeping with its policy of presenting all sides of public questions, The Jersey Journal from time to time prints visiting editorials written by qualified persons on specific subjects. Today's editorial is by Jean Forest, co-chairman of the Hoboken Neighborhood Alliance. The opinions of the writer are not necessarily the opinions of this newspaper.

It was another appalling evening at the Hoboken City Council meeting of January 2, 1985, as a majority of our Council members audaciously voted down the Code of Ethics Ordinance for elected and appointed public officials.

Councilman Pasculli was the sponsor of this ordinance and exercised a necessary rigorous perseverance in seeing it through to a vote. The Council reacted with its usual arsenal of tactical avoidance when threatened with serious demands for accountability. Councilman Ranieri, who led the opposition to the Ethics Code, is the taskmaster of this withering art form.

In addition to the many existing Federal, State and Municipal precedents for an Ethics Code which were cited by both the Hoboken Law Department and Councilman Pasculli, the fact that private industry has a long history of requiring Conflict of Interest and Ethics Ordinances to be signed annually by employees, further underscores the legitimacy of this safeguard of the public trust. If Conflict-of-Interest violations are discovered in private industry, the particular violations must be corrected or the employee's resignation is requested. With an entire city's welfare at stake, how much more important such safety measures become in the public sector.

With Hoboken undergoing a Waterfront Development which will bring billions of dollars in

investments into the city (and, hopefully, some much needed tax relief to homeowners and tenants) the community, at the very least, is entitled to protection from the possibilities of conflict of interest and financial malfeasance from its elected and appointed officials.

The Hoboken Neighborhood Alliance, the Environmental Committee, and a broad spectrum of the Hoboken community including clergy, tenant and homeowner Representatives strongly supported the Ethics Code as the first step in a breakthrough of "politics as usual" in Hudson County.

The intriguing opposition argument against the Ethics Code presented by Councilman Ranieri focused on the fact that such a requirement would discourage a majority of Hoboken residents from seeking or accepting appointments to public office. In other words, we would be hard put to find people willing to subscribe to an ethics code. If that is the case, the state of affairs in this city is not only pathetic but tragic. Despite Councilman Ranieri's pessimistic supposition, I believe there are more than enough qualified members of the community who would be willing to serve in elected and appointed public positions in Hoboken.

Councilman Vezzetti, who supported the Ordinance, stated that such an Ethics Code was an opportunity for Hoboken to set the example for a turnaround in Hudson County politics. Hudson County could begin the effort of emerging from its deserved dark ages image of patrimony and pay-off politics.

Another opportunity for creative decency in public office missed.

The groups and individuals that supported the Ethics Code Ordinance are not giving up. We will take the issue to the electorate. This fight has only begun!

## Aftermath of banquet: 2nd food poisoning suit

A suit alleging that three Hoboken High School students got food poisoning at a sports awards banquet last June have been filed against the caterer, Service Dynamics, the Hoboken Board of Education, Heneker-Sunnybrook Farms, J. Rosenblum & Sons and Atlantic Tropical Markets, food suppliers.

The Superior Court suit, charging negligence and seeking

damages, was filed by Anthony and Donna Keys.

The minors' mothers, Janie F. Anderson and Donna Keys, sued as their legal guardians.

The plaintiffs allege they were severely injured as a result of eating the food, lost time from school and required medical treatment. Another similar suit was filed earlier by seven other students.

## Hoboken nun sending homeless to New York

Continued from Page 1

that's one of the reasons why I feel sure if I send them over they won't be turned away." Sister Norberta said Friday.

When New York City Mayor Edward I. Koch learned of the situation earlier this week, he noted that New Jersey officials were resentful when New York shipped some of its homeless to northern New Jersey hotels last year.

Sister Norberta said the may, or "has a right to be angry" because, "New Jersey made such a fuss about him sending people over to Jersey."

But she said she has no plans to end her practice of giving homeless people 75 cents for the PATH train to New York where they are eligible for free coffee, food and a place to sleep. The city accommodates anyone who applies for assistance.

"I think the number of people we send over is negligible," said Sister Norberta. "We are just going to continue unless I'm directed otherwise."

She said she has sent about 45 people to New York since December.

The nun said she is willing, but unable to return the favor

because New Jersey lacks the resources. She has 20 beds in her shelter at St. John's Lutheran Church, she said.

Hoboken Mayor Steve Cappiello, however, said that he doesn't want homeless people sent to New York.

"I've already contacted the county agencies and they are going to have a meeting and direct sister where they should send people in the future," he said, adding that New Jersey municipalities should "accept the burden" of helping the state's homeless.

"Any elected official has a moral responsibility to help poor people," Cappiello said. "She just didn't know what to do with a couple of souls, gave them 75 cents and they went over to New York and got a bed. I'm sure she will stop."

Cappiello said the Hudson County Welfare Office gave him a list of places where Hoboken's homeless could seek shelter. He said it includes three Salvation Army locations in Jersey City.

"I think in the best interest of all people involved she should follow the directions of the Welfare Department," Cappiello said.

## Hoboken merger of departments not in operation yet

By James Kopchans

Paris may have its Phantom of the Opera, but Hoboken has its Phantom of City Hall, only in Hoboken's case, this phantom is not one person, but a whole department.

The phantom department was created last month when the City Council approved ordinances repealing the departments of Health and Welfare and of Public Works and created a new merged Department of Environmental Services and Facilities.

With its passage the new department is in effect, but as of yet the department has no director, no office, and not even a mail slot.

"This is ridiculous. We have merged departments designed to save money, yet nothing has happened. The same departments are doing the same work.

These departments are not even supposed to exist anymore," Councilman Thomas Vezzetti said.

However, Mayor Steve Cappiello said he has held off seeking a director or setting up an office because the council never set down guidelines for the department or director.

"They have to at least tell me what sort of salary am I supposed to offer for the director's position. Until they do that there is nothing I can do except to keep things as they were."

Currently, services that will be provided under the new department are being provided by their former departments. Both Health and Welfare and Public Works are being headed by temporary directors serving without salary.

Vezzetti said he would bring the department up at the next council meeting on Feb. 6.

## Ranieri seeks state aid for Hoboken fire victims

TRENTON — The Assembly today is expected to adopt a bill appropriating \$1 million in emergency insurance assistance for victims in the Jan. 15 fire that ruined a six-block area in western Hoboken.

The sponsor, Assemblyman Robert A. Ranieri of Hoboken, persuaded Assembly Speaker

Alan J. Karcher, D-Middlesex, Thursday to post the measure for a floor vote today without committee reference.

Its approval today would send it to the Senate, where Sen. Christopher J. Jackman of West New York, is expected to push for adoption as soon as possible. That could be tonight or next

Thursday.

The Ranieri bill would provide insurance protection for those without no coverage or limited coverage in the \$10 million fire that destroyed 14 homes, 30 businesses, eight industrial firms at a loss of 2,000 jobs.

## Hoboken, police reach agreement

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN — The city and the PBA yesterday agreed to a four-year contract that raises a patrolman's starting salary from \$13,000 to \$14,056 starting next year, according to PBA President Thomas Meehan.

Under terms of the contract, all police officers are scheduled to receive a retroactive 6 percent salary increase for 1984, a 4 percent increase in 1985, another 4 percent increase in 1986 and a 6 percent increase in 1987.

"I'm very happy. I felt we got

what we deserved," Meehan said yesterday.

Terms of the contract were worked out between Meehan and City Business Administrator Edwin Chius with an arbitrator.

Both sides agreed to binding arbitration in December after the city refused to give in to Meehan's demands that his 65 members receive salary increases for 1983.

The union last year voted to extend its 1983 contract by one year with no salary increase with the understanding the city would not lay off police officers. Meehan later broke that agreement after an independent audit of the 1983 and 1984

municipal budgets showed areas where extra money could have been spent.

Meehan yesterday agreed to drop his demands for a 1983 salary increase in return for an increase in the amount of money an officer can receive for court time.

Police officers now receive \$20 a day for appearing in Municipal Court and \$30 a day for appearing in court at the Hudson County Administration Building in Jersey City.

The salary for a police officer at the top of the pay scale will jump to \$27,928 at the end of the four-year contract.

## Hoboken, EPA meet on sewage

Hoboken officials met with representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency yesterday in the first of five scheduled meetings between the federal agency and five Hudson County municipalities.

The meetings come in response to the EPA's issuance of show cause orders to Jersey City, Hoboken, West New York, North Bergen and Bayonne for failure to achieve "secondary treatment" in their waste water disposal. Secondary treatment requires the removal of 85 percent of the pollutants from the water before it is released.

None of the five communities meets the standards set in the Clean Water Act.

Meanwhile, West New York Mayor Anthony DeFino expects to take action within a week on the matter. DeFino, who expects to be released tomorrow from Riverside General Hospital, described the suit as his first priority.

Rich Cahill, an EPA spokesman, said yesterday's meeting with Hoboken officials involved permit violations and past instances of non-compliance. He would not say, however, what the outcome of the meeting was.

"It's an enforcement case," he said, "which we don't discuss."

Roy Haack, Hoboken sewage plant supervisor, who with a city attorney represented the city, was unavailable for comment.

George Crimmons of the Hudson County Utilities Authority said that agency was not involved in any of the show cause orders because the UCUA doesn't own any of the plants.

He did say, however, that HCUA representatives had met with several of the municipalities involved and drafted a letter at their request which clarifies some of the issues.

The six plants in question dump waste water, a combination of industrial and domestic components, into local waterways. The Hoboken, Jersey City east, North Bergen and West New York plants all dump into the Hudson River. Bayonne sends its water into the Kill Van Kull and the Jersey City west plant disposes of its water in the Newark Bay.

The EPA has suggested that the West New York and North Bergen plants combine with the Hoboken facility and the Jersey City west plant merge with the Jersey City east facility.

## Van Wie named as director of Hoboken 'phantom' unit

The "phantom" department, which only exists on paper at Hoboken City Hall, has finally received a director, although he only signs papers.

Mayor Steve Cappiello said yesterday he has named William Van Wie acting public works director as acting director of the Department of Environmental Services and Facilities.

However, Van Wie will only sign papers and documents addressed to the department; the

creation of a permanent director and office staff will still be up to the council, the mayor said.

The new department, which was created in December from the merger by the council to replace the Health and Welfare and Public Works departments, has been stuck in limbo since its creation.

Cappiello said he has been prevented from staffing the department because the council

has not yet created guidelines towards staffing nor has given him any idea of what the department's responsibilities will be. "I cannot even appoint a director, because I wouldn't know what to pay him," Cappiello said.

Cappiello said Van Wie, who is serving without a salary as Public Works director, will also serve without salary in the new position.



## Hoboken rent control bill tabled

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

**HOBOKEN**—The City Council last night took the advice of both landlords and tenants and tabled a rent control ordinance that would have done away with the city's controversial substantial rehabilitation clause.

It has been tabled as a tenants' ordinance, but they, as well as landlords, developers and real estate brokers criticized the measure last night and urged the council to make further changes.

The council voted 6-3 to table the ordinance, which has undergone revisions for the past two years. Those voting to table argued that they needed more time to review the ordinance.

But the bill's main sponsor, Councilman Robert A. Ranieri, told his colleagues they have had enough time. Ranieri and council members Salvatore Cemelli and Mary Francione voted against tabling.

"I put up the challenge to pass the ordinance tonight so the public will be protected. Don't come around the 11th hour and do nothing," Ranieri scolded his colleagues. The current rent control ordinance expires Feb. 1.

Ranieri said the "main thrust" of the ordinance is to stop the forced relocation of city residents by doing away with the substantial rehabilitation clause.

Under the current rent ordinance, a landlord becomes free of rent control after making improvements to a building that equal that building's assessment. Many properties in Hoboken are assessed at 32 percent below true market value.

Under the proposed ordinance:

- Substantial rehabilitation would be eliminated.
- A landlord can raise the rent on See RENT, Back Page

Continued from Page 1  
a "voluntary" vacated apartment by 25 percent. This vacancy decurt may be used only once every three years.

• Capital improvements made on a building can be passed on to the tenant as a temporary rent increase until the cost of the improvements has been met by the landlord. A landlord cannot pass on interest on loans taken out for improvements. The city's Rent Leveling Board would decide what constitutes a capital improvement.

Residential developer Patricia Tuohy told the council the proposed ordinance is punitive to both landlords and tenants because it will stop rehabilitation of the city's housing stock.

"Some of our housing stock is over 100 years old and in drastic need of repair. This ordinance stops capital investments," she said.

The Rev. Paul Hagedorn said the ordinance did not go far enough in protecting tenants, and he proposed the council include wording that would require the rent board to keep a history of a building's rent structure and past capital improvements.

Real estate broker Eileen Capock argued that landlords should be given an incentive to upgrade the city's housing stock. She said the one-time, 25 percent vacancy decurt should apply only to landlords charging monthly rents of \$350 or more. Landlords charging less than \$350 per month should be able to decurt vacant apartments as often as each year.

Several other tenants argued that too much of the ordinance is left up to the discretion of the rent board, including deciding what is meant by "unlawful means" of vacancy, what constitutes a capital improvement and what constitutes "prudent management" of a building.

The council is scheduled to take another vote on the ordinance Jan. 18.

"There are just too many questions," Councilman Anthony Romano said.

## Hoboken's planners may mix development on north waterfront

The Hoboken Planning Board will now consider a proposal to amend the city's master plan to change the northern portion of the waterfront from a solely industrial use to mixed-use waterfront development.

A draft proposal for the changes was presented to the board last night by its consultant Ralph Seligman, but discussion was put off until the next meeting, possibly Feb. 27.

Under the proposal, all waterfront properties north of 11th Street and east of Willow Avenue would be changed from industrially zoned to waterfront zoning and would be joined with the waterfront properties along its southern portion.

If accepted, the change would shrink the city's industrial section and open a number of sites to developers who are seeking to build commercial and residential units in the section.

At present, the industrial sections cover property located within a U-shaped area capping the northern boundary of the city. This area covers all property at the northern end of the waterfront as well as sites north of 14th Street between Hudson and Grand streets; north of 10th Street between Grand and Jefferson streets; and north of Eighth Street between Jefferson Street and the western boundary of the city.

Both the planning board and the zoning boards have been inundated by applications from developers seeking to use the areas for housing, rather than for industrial development. It was because of these applications that the board decided to create a study of the 1978 master zoning plan.

Once a final proposal is developed and approved by the planning board, the suggestions

## Hoboken's waterfront

Continued from Page 1  
will be sent to the city council for consideration and vote on amendments to the zoning ordinances.

In other action at the meeting, the board gave final approval for a variance for side and off-street parking at 107-111 Clinton St.; final approval for a variance to build townhouses at 222-224 Monroe St. and final approval for a major subdivision of the land at Ninth and Monroe streets and for parking.

Chairman Michael Ocello said.

## Psychologist to evaluate man arrested in arson try

Juan Gonzalez, arrested Tuesday for allegedly trying to set fire to his Hoboken apartment building, was sent yesterday for a psychological examination.

Appearing before Judge Edward Zampella for arraignment, Gonzalez muttered incoherently. When asked why he refused to be interviewed by a court investigator, he said, "I'm an investigator myself."

Gonzalez, who was caught allegedly pouring gas down the hallway of an eight-family

building in Hoboken where he lives with his sister, will be examined by Dr. James McCoy, the Hudson County Jail psychologist.

"I don't need no psychologist, Judge," he said as he was being led away. "Forget about me, Judge. I don't need no medical. So forget about me."

"You want me to forget about everything," Judge Zampella replied.

Gonzalez will reappear before the judge on Friday.

## Refuse Hoboken fire aid

**TRENTON**—The Senate last night failed to enact a bill providing \$1 million in emergency insurance coverage for victims in the Jan. 15 fire in Hoboken.

The act by Sen. Christopher J. Jackman, West New York Democrat, received only 18 of the 21 votes required to send it to the Assembly.

The Assembly is prepared to act Monday on an identical version introduced by Assemblyman Robert A. Ranieri of Hoboken to those in the six-block area in western Hoboken.

It would assist residents of 14 homes, 30 businesses, eight industrial firms and owners of 78 autos demolished in the \$10 million fire.

## Assembly OKs Hoboken aid

**TRENTON (UPI)**—A \$1 million emergency loan and grant program to help Hoboken firms destroyed in a Jan. 15 fire was approved yesterday by the Assembly.

Sponsored by Assemblyman Robert A. Ranieri, D-Hoboken, the bill would appropriate \$1 million for emergency loans and grants to help rebuild the several industrial firms damaged by the fire. Total damage estimates are up to \$10 million, and about 150 people are out of work as a result of the fire.

"This measure is a vital emergency response to a catastrophe," said Ranieri. "Getting these factories back to work at full capacity will take millions of dollars and many months. We need to move quickly."

The money would be administered by the state Department of Community Affairs.

## Hoboken tenants gain first victory

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

**HOBOKEN**—A Municipal Court judge yesterday made a routine decision in a tenant-landlord case that probably would not have made it to court three weeks ago.

City officials said Judge Peter Giordano's order that services be provided to the tenants of 401 Monroe St. was the first victory for tenants since the city's new rent control ordinance went into effect last month.

That ordinance prevents landlords from renovating occupied buildings and becoming free of rent control. Under the old ordinance, a landlord became free of rent control once he made repairs on a building equal to its assessment.

In March, developers Frank Raia and Sam Shafraan purchased 401 Monroe St. from the city with the intention of rehabilitating it. That same month, they wrote the tenants, telling them they would soon have to leave, according to Joseph Perillo, an attorney representing the tenants.

Shafraan said yesterday he and Raia planned to gut and rehabilitate the building in order to decontrol the rents there. He said they also planned to move the displaced tenants next door to 403 Monroe St., an eight-family building they had purchased along with the 401 Monroe St. building.

But in August, the City Council replaced a moratorium on the city's rehabilitation of the city's housing controversial substantial rehabilitation clause before Raia and Shafraan had the opportunity to use it.

That same month, they offered each family \$3,000 to relocate. Perillo said four families accepted the money and three other families decided to stay.

Recently, those families told the developers they would withhold their rent payments beginning this month unless a number of building violations were corrected. On Jan. 22, the building's water pipes broke, leaving the families without running water.

Giordano yesterday ordered the pipes to be repaired, despite arguments from the developers that it will cost too much money.

Assistant City Attorney Bernard Kenny said yesterday the judge's decision was an important one because it holds that the city "can't permit (tenants) to be displaced just because a landlord doesn't want to correct safety violations."

Equally important, according to Kenny, is the fact that landlords now have to negotiate with tenants while at the same providing basic services.

"A year ago, we wouldn't even have heard from these people," he said to the families who appeared in court yesterday.

Shafraan said yesterday that the discontinuation of the city's substantial rehabilitation will stop a landlord from buying occupied buildings and slowing down the city's housing stock.

## Hoboken may end industry tax break

By James Kopchalski

The Hoboken City Council will consider abolishing commercial and industrial tax abatements for developers.

The amendment would be added to a recent ordinance directing all tax abatements to the council. The amendment, sponsored by Councilmen Pat Pasculli and Thomas Vezzetti, would ban all exemptions except those creating housing.

The measure will be considered at tomorrow's meeting

of the council, scheduled for 7 p.m. at Hoboken City Hall.

According to Vezzetti, the ordinance was introduced because he and Pasculli did not believe the city needed to hand out any abatements for commercial developers.

"There should be no need for these abatements, whether they are approved by the council or not," Vezzetti said. He said they will see how this amendment fares before deciding whether to push for the end of abatements to residential developers.

## Hoboken man accused of attempt to burn building

Police have arrested a Hoboken man and charged him with attempted arson of an eight-family building on 14th Street.

Lt. John Howe, of the Arson Squad, said Juan Gonzalez, 37, was arrested by Ptl. Robert Burns in the downstairs hallways of 163 14th Street at

12:10 p.m. reportedly pouring paint thinner on the floor. Gonzalez was charged with attempted arson and transferred to the Hudson County Jail for arraignment today.

The building is near the former Pinter Hotel, where arson on April 30, 1982 killed 13 persons.

## Hoboken council votes to maintain tax abatements

The Hoboken City Council last night rejected an ordinance that would have abolished property tax abatements and exemptions on commercial and industrial structures.

In other business, the council once again defeated waiving the 30-day waiting period on introducing an ordinance establishing a municipal code of ethics.

The council voted 5-3 against the tax abatement ordinance, with Councilmen Pat Pasculli, Thomas Vezzetti and E. Norman Wilson supporting the measure.

The amendment would have been added to a recent ordinance directing all tax abatements to the council. It would have banned all exemptions except for those creating housing.

The present ordinance was designed to provide "incentive

to improve property during less prosperous times," Pasculli said. "Now, we don't have to give incentives to improve their property. They (commercial and industrial owners) are probably the most able to pay these taxes."

Two attempts by Pasculli late last year to pass a similar ordinance were also defeated.

Pasculli said because of the council's denial of the ordinance last December, the tax assessor granted two "very large" abatements to companies, including one which owed \$400,000 in taxes.

"If we pass this," said Councilman Thomas Kennedy, "we give them no incentives to relocate in the City of Hoboken." Kennedy did admit the ordinance "does have some

good points."

Meanwhile, the council voted 4-4 not to waive the 30-day waiting period on establishing a municipal code of ethics.

The council defeated a similar ordinance six weeks ago. Under Pasculli's proposal, the mayor and council members and their spouses would have been required to make full financial disclosure statements to the city clerk. Also, all municipal employees would be required to operate under the code, but not submit a financial disclosure.

"We can take a pioneer step," Pasculli said.

Councilman Robert Ranieri said that such "a document of heavy consequence" should be held for further study.

During the public portion of the meeting, Ranieri questioned

Vezzetti's use of city stationery to solicit attendance at his March 2 campaign fundraiser. Vezzetti is running against Mayor Steve Cappelletto in the May 14 election.

Ranieri called the issue "a matter of grave importance" and expressed his concern about "the possible misuse of office" by Vezzetti.

"One does not campaign for office on official Hoboken stationery," Ranieri said. "It's purely disgraceful."

"Cappelletto has used, abused and manipulated his power for 20 years," responded Pasculli.

At that point, a shouting match between council members broke out and Council President Helen Macri quickly adjourned the meeting without public comments.

## Hoboken lawyers join lawsuit over Grogan Plaza rent increases

The Hoboken Law Department has filed a brief with the Appellate Division of the state Superior Court to enter into a lawsuit between the state Housing Finance Agency and tenants over Grogan-Marineview Plaza rent increases.

The brief was to enter as "a friend of the court," according to attorney Bernard Kenny Jr. If approved, the city would file statements showing its support for the continuation of middle-income housing in the city as an aid to the justices reviewing the case, Kenny said.

Kenny said he mailed the brief yesterday and expects an answer in about two weeks. He said Steven Zamrin, attorney for the tenants, has already indicated a willingness to have the city enter in, but that the state Attorney General's office, which represents the HFA, has so far offered no indication.

Tenants have taken the

HFA, which controls the building, to court to protest rent increases that have caused over 13 percent increases in the past year. Mayor Steve Cappelletto has already written several letters in support of the tenants.

Kenny said the city would also attach a copy of its new rent control ordinance. As state-controlled property, Grogan-

Marineview is not subject to local rent control laws, but Kenny said the attaching of the law would help show the justices of the city's commitment to moderate-income housing.

Also, the brief will contain statements by the mayor and the council showing their personal commitment to middle-income housing.

## Hoboken hotel enlists in fight for homeless

By BRAD KELLY  
and BRENDAN NOONAN  
Staff Writers

**HOBOKEN**—There is one room for rent at the Edwards Hotel on Hudson Street for the homeless who find a no-vacancy sign on the door of the St. John's Lutheran shelter.

"This may solve the problem," city Welfare Director Robert E. Drasheff said yesterday, referring to the handful of homeless who are turned away from the church shelter each night and given 75 cents

for the trip into Manhattan on PATH.

"Not quite, but it helps," Sister Norberta Hunnink, a member of the Hoboken Clergy Coalition which operates the shelter, said yesterday.

For the past week, Hudson County welfare officials and local shelter operators have been grappling with ideas on how to shelter the county's homeless who are now being sent across the river.

See HOMELESS, Back Page

Continued from Page 1

On Tuesday, the group convinced Harold Caligore, owner of the Edwards Hotel, to put up two homeless people each night for the next two weeks. But local clergy and shelter operators say the county has a long way to go before the homeless problem is solved.

Sister Norberta said the Hoboken shelter — with a maximum occupancy of 20 people — has been turning away an average of five people each night.

It was a recent newspaper article quoting Sister Norberta as saying she gives PATH fare to homeless people that prompted the series of meetings between welfare officials and shelter operators.

The nun said yesterday she still uses the "resources at hand" in finding shelter for those who can't get it in Hoboken. "My policy hasn't changed," she said, referring to the one-way PATH fare to New York City.

Rev. Gerhardt Kugler, who operates the shelter at St. John's Lutheran Church in Union City, said yesterday he is still sheltering about 35 people each night, although his certificate of occupancy sanctions only 20.

Kugler said he "always makes room" for the extra boarders but refers as many as possible to shelters around the state the following day. He said people will at least get the PATH fare.

Kugler yesterday characterized private shelters as "Band-Aids" and said local, county and state governments should work together in creating a public homeless shelter system.

Drasheff said he is hopeful the room at the Edwards Hotel will at least solve Hoboken's problem.

According to Drasheff, the number of homeless people seeking shelter is related directly to the weather — the colder it gets, the more homeless the shelters get.

Drasheff said the weather may get a little warmer in the next two weeks, and the hotel room will be unnecessary. If not, he said, "maybe we'll rent it for two more weeks."

The room will cost the city \$155 a week, according to Gabriel Binetti, the hotel manager.

Joseph Lecowitch, executive director of the Jersey City American Red Cross chapter, said yesterday there have been "somewhat better communication" between the various county agencies that began meeting a week ago. He noted that four homeless persons were referred to shelters through the county's hotline for the homeless.

Sister Norberta, who complained last week that she could not get through to the hotline, said yesterday, "I tried it and it worked — at least for one night."

People such as Sister Norberta and Kugler are quick to blame local governments for the lack of shelter space. But local officials have criticized the shelters for taking in people from other areas and allowing the homeless to take up what seems like permanent residence.

"If all the agencies simply got together and faced the reality that we don't have enough places to house the homeless we would stop pointing fingers . . .," she said.



# Vezzetti wants P.A. role as mayoral race focus

By Peter Weiss

Port Authority's relationship with Hoboken, especially its plans for a multi-million waterfront development, will be the focus of Councilman Thomas Vezzetti's campaign for mayor.

"This election will decide who lives in Hoboken. It will decide if the people of Hoboken or the Port Authority determines our future," states a letter signed by 126 members of Citizens Campaign for Reform in '85, which supports Vezzetti.

In an accompanying letter, he states: "I want to live in our city. That is the primary reason I am running for mayor."

The city was flooded with the letters. Vezzetti said 21,700 copies of each letter were sent out, including 5,700 of each in Spanish. That is roughly one mailing for every two residents.

Mayor Steve Cappiello called the letters "normal

political rhetoric. I would hope they discuss campaign issues and not do anything harmful to the future of our city."

The letter signed by the Vezzetti supporters calls the councilman "the only candidate for mayor who has the commitment to guarantee development which benefits all of us. He has the courage to stand up to the Port Authority." They call themselves "a coalition of old-timers and newcomers, tenants and homeowners."

Among those listed as supporters are Councilman Pat Pasculli, school board member Steve Block, Republican leaders Angelo Valente and Pat Caulfield and leaders of the anti-nuclear movement and the Neighborhood Alliance.

Cappiello said there were "no surprises" among Vezzetti's supporters.

Cappiello denied his opponent's assertion that Port Authority controls municipal



Thomas Vezzetti 126 sign letter

government. "We will hold as many public hearings as necessary for the public to determine its future," he said.



Dispatch File Photo

The Hoboken Shipyards, on which purchase bids are to be considered, is shown as it appeared a year ago.

## \$12.5M offered for idle Hoboken Shipyards

By BRAD KELLY Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—A bid of \$12.5 million for the purchase of the idle Hoboken Shipyards Inc. facility is one of several that will be considered by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in South Carolina next week, according to the firm's top official.

Elliot Braswell, chief executive officer of the shipyard, confirmed

yesterday that a number of companies have submitted bids on the 65-acre property and that a hearing on those bids is scheduled in the bankruptcy court which will meet in Columbia on Thursday.

The firm that submitted the \$12.5 million bid—described as low by city officials yesterday—was not identified. Braswell said higher bids have been submitted but he said he does not have any information on them.

Braswell Shipyards Inc. of South Carolina bought both the shipyard and one in Bayonne from the Bethlehem Steel Corp. in 1983 for approximately \$8.5 million.

In July, the Hoboken facility closed because it could not compete with rival shipyards in the South and the Northeast. Two months later, the BSI Corp. and its two subsidiaries, Hoboken Shipyards Inc. and Braswell

Shipyards Inc., filed for protection from creditors under Chapter 11 of the federal bankruptcy laws.

Braswell said yesterday the proceeds of the sale of the property here will be used by the company to pay back most of the \$18.5 million owed to its secured lenders. He said another \$9 million is owed to vendors.

Braswell said BSI Corp. had the Sea SHIPYARD, Back Page

## Vezzetti's mailing contested

By BRAD KELLY Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The Hudson County Superintendent of Elections is looking into whether Councilman Thomas Vezzetti violated state election laws by sending out campaign literature on City Hall stationery.

Approximately 22,000 city residents this week received letters from Vezzetti in which he criticized the current administration and invited residents to attend a March 2 fund-raiser. Vezzetti is seeking to oust Mayor Steve Cappiello in the May 14 mayoral election.

The two original letters—one in English and one in Spanish—were typed on city stationery, photocopied and mailed to city residents. The mailing and copying costs were paid for by the Vezzetti campaign.

The city's law department Thursday sent one of the letters to Joseph T. Brady, the superintendent of elections, and asked him to look into the possibility that Vezzetti violated state election laws. Brady said yesterday he has yet to find a section of the state election laws that prohibits the use of official stationery for campaign literature.

"It may not be illegal, but it's unethical. The city paid for that letterhead," Cappiello said yesterday.

"If I did anything wrong, I apologize," Vezzetti said earlier this week. "If they want me to give the 10 cents back, fine," he said, estimating the cost of the two pieces of city stationery.

Vezzetti and Councilman-at-large Thomas Kennedy both have announced their intentions to run for mayor. Cappiello has announced he will seek re-election to a fourth term.

## Hoboken offers to join suit

By BRENDAN NOONAN Special to The Dispatch

HOBOKEN—The city was just sending a message to the state when it offered to enter the case of the Marineview Plaza Tenants Association vs. the Housing Finance Agency, a city lawyer said yesterday.

Attorney Bernard Kenny said the city merely wanted to highlight its concern over the decline in low- and moderate-income housing when it offered to enter the case as a "friend of the court."

The Tenants Association has filed three lawsuits since September 1983 in the Appellate Division of state Superior Court, charging rent increases granted by the building owners by the HFA are excessive.

Kenny said the HFA has been concerned too much with the owners' budgetary concerns, while ignoring the city's desire to "maintain the diversity of Hoboken."

"It shouldn't be looked at in the cold light of a banker's eye," Kenny said. He said some of the expenses claimed by the owners are questionable.

Tenants say the owners include in their current budget mortgage payments that are not due until 1990 or even 2025.

In a letter to the HFA in July, the tenants detailed costs in the budget that they considered excessive or examples of inefficient management.

The tenants also say the HFA has been too concerned with protecting the \$3.2 million worth of bonds it issued to make construction of the complex feasible.

The complex almost went into foreclosure in the late 1970s, but a modified mortgage agreement prevented this. Steven Zamrin, the tenants' attorney, said the owners now stand to make a "huge profit" on the sale of the complex.

## PBA upset about dead radios

By BRAD KELLY Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—A patrolman who was shot at last week could not call for assistance because his radio did not work, according to a grievance filed by PBA President Thomas Meehan yesterday.

Patrolman Anthony Romano was shot at by a suspected purse snatcher Thursday night while chasing him through the industrial end of the city. Meehan said Romano could not call for a backup because the radio in his patrol car was not working.

"The fact that these patrol cars are without radios is a violation of our contract," Meehan said in the grievance sent to Public Safety Director James Giordano yesterday. "The PBA is requesting all patrol cars that do not have working radios be removed... until radios are placed in them," the grievance said.

Meehan estimated that between five and seven of the city's 25 patrol cars are without working radios. He said if the city is not going to fix the radios in those cars, the cars should be occupied by at least two police officers. The city's Police Department no longer has two-officer patrols.

Meehan said the city's ordering of new police cars "... is all well and good, but how long will it take to get them? We need these (radios) fixed right now."

Giordano could not be reached for comment.

## Hoboken to review pier plans

By Margaret Schmidt

Plans for the \$500 million development of Hoboken's waterfront are moving forward this week with a presentation to the City Council and the preparation of a resolution to hire a "Big Eight" accounting firm.

Representatives of the Port Authority and Cooper Eckstut Associates, which drew the master plan, will meet the council in a special meeting tomorrow, 7 p.m., at City Hall. Special sub-consultants may also be present at the meeting, which is open to the public. The presentation will be the

same as that made at public hearings, said Fred Bado, director of the Community Development Agency.

Representatives of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which is developing property owned by the city, NJ Transit and Stevens Institute of Technology, will answer ques-

tions by council members.

Not all of the council members have attended the public hearings, Bado explained, so the special meeting was scheduled. "If there are any serious reservations, we'll have to deal with them."

Preliminary plans for the development include a 40-story office complex, a hotel, a marina and 1,500 units of housing.

Meanwhile, a resolution is being prepared for next Wednesday's council meeting to authorize the hiring of a Big Eight accounting firm as financial analyst for the development.

Ernst and Whinney, which has its headquarters in New York and offices in Jersey, would work several months and be paid approximately \$50,000, Bado said.

Mayor Steve Cappiello said the firm would represent Hoboken in on-going negotiations to determine how the city will profit from the development.

One of the issues to be decided is payments in lieu of taxes since the Port Authority cannot be taxed.

Ernst and Whinney, Cappiello said, will be working in the interests of Hoboken.

The firm will take an "adversary position" with respect to other negotiating parties, he added.

## 422-unit highrise would be largest in Hoboken history

By James Kopchansky

It may be the beginning of a new surge in housing development in Hoboken, but for the present, the developers of a planned 422-unit luxury highrise in Hoboken are just making sure construction begins.

The \$40-to-\$50 million project planned for 16th Street and Willow Avenue would be the largest single residential development in the city's history. But what is really causing attention is the fact that the building will be new, rather than renovating existing buildings.

"We're really one of very few developers building new housing in Hoboken," Daniel Gans, one of the two partners that control West Bank Construction Corp., said. "Most development still remains small with mostly renovation projects being done throughout the city."

Since the city's Zoning Board of Adjustment granted a variance approval last month to West Bank for the projects, developers have been closely watching the progress Gans and his partner George T. Vallone make in building the two high-rise buildings.

If successful, the project

may encourage other developers to build new construction.

"Right now, I know many people who would like to build new construction in this city, but they just don't want to make that first step. If West Bank can make their project work, then maybe that will be the step that many of them need to move," one real estate agent, who refused to be identified in print, said.

For Gans and Vallone, the new project will be their third new residential building in Hoboken in the space of only two years. In each case, the builders have seen their ambitions increase, building bigger and more complex projects with each new development.

Already, their first new construction (a 30-unit condominium project at Second and Bloomfield streets) is operating at full capacity. The second project (a \$9 million, 100-unit condominium complex at Newark and Clinton streets) has already broken ground and is scheduled to be completed in December.

The newest project, which is tentatively known as Hudson View, consists of two identical 22-story highrises located between the Park

Avenue and Willow Avenue ramps that connect Hoboken and Weehawken.

As planned, the towers would contain about 178 two-bedroom apartments, 88 one-bedroom units, 88 studio apartments. Underground parking garages would hold approximately 600 automobiles for residents and visitors.

In addition, a lobby plaza would have space for a restaurant, convenience stores, and a health club, Gans said. A swimming pool complex is also planned for the buildings, he said.

The towers feature a "step"-type design with windows along the buildings' walls placed at right-angles to each other and roofs arranged in a descending style of levels. As designed by the engineering firm of Mayo-Lynch Inc. of Hoboken, the style features exactly the preferred ideas of Gans and Vallone.

"I think that layering allows more window space for the residents who would desire it. With the old box-type of design, some windows would have a view and some wouldn't."

## Hoboken tax rate scheduled for cut

By Margaret Schmidt

Funding for tenants' programs, the arts and capital projects will be included in the 1985-86 Hoboken budget expected to place a lesser burden on taxpayers.

Edwin Chius, business administrator, said yesterday that the new budget will probably result in a slight tax decrease and the creation of the three programs.

While he declined to specifically discuss the programs, he said the one for tenants will help stop displacement of low- and middle-income renters.

He likened it to the "first-of-its-kind" low-interest loan program Hoboken began in the 1970s that has been credited for the city's housing stock "renaissance."

The other programs involve encouraging the arts in Hoboken and capital projects. Also, secondary sewage treatment through privatization is expected, Chius said.

The budget is nearly complete, he explained, and will probably be presented to the City Council at a special meeting next week.

The only thing holding up the process is state aid figures, he added.

The city will have a budget surplus of more than \$2 million, Chius said, and enter the fiscal year in "excellent financial condition."

"We have to brace for 1986," he said, "when federal aid cuts go through. But we've lost so much in the last 12 years that the aid really isn't a significant portion of the budget anymore."

He estimated that 5 percent of the city's budget comes from Washington.

Cuts will have an impact, he added, but won't be catastrophic.

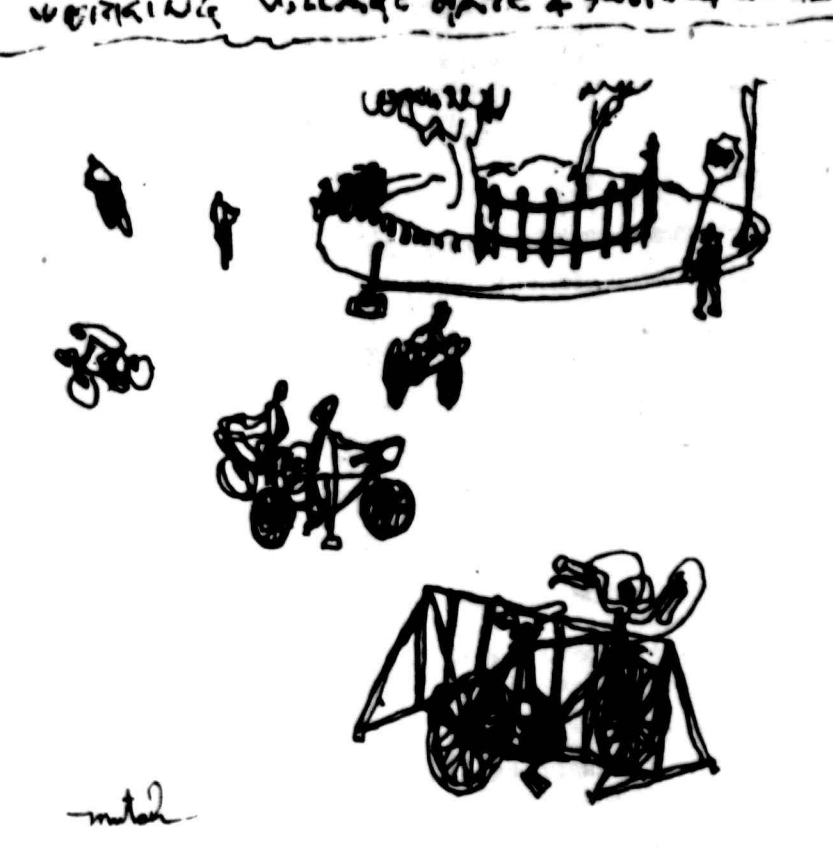
Mayor Steve Cappiello is expected to make a State of the City address when the budget is introduced to the council.

Last year, the city budget was approximately \$23 million and taxes dropped about \$20 from a state-high of \$183 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

The new budget is expected to decrease slightly, Chius said.

He couldn't estimate the final impact on taxes since the municipal budget only accounts for part of the tax burden. Tax levies are also placed by the county budget and the Board of Education budget.

This was with 50 PARK-1973-OR 50-when I WAS WORKING VILLAGE GATE 2 sleeping in 2nd floor



A SKETCH of Washington Square Park in Manhattan by vagabond artist William Mutch, whose lightning-fast sketches earned him the nickname Dr. Zip.

## Journey to Hoboken was street artist's last

By BRAD KELLY Staff Writer

William Mutch drifted into Hoboken Saturday looking for a glass of water and a place to sleep. On Sunday morning, he rested his head on the shoulder of a friend and died.

Mutch, whose lightning-fast sketches earned him the nickname

Dr. Zip, had been a free spirit and a vagabond for as long as his friends can remember.

"Home was where he hung his hat," Lou Graff, an artist who shared his New Orleans studio with Mutch, said yesterday.

But Mutch's Bohemian life took a turn for the worse last week when



William Mutch

Continued from Page 1

he came to New York City to draw caricatures of passers-by for "a dollar and a smile." Mutch was quick with a pen, but not fast enough to convince people to pose in the cold streets of Manhattan.

The 64-year-old artist spent Friday night in the Port Authority Bus Terminal at 42nd Street and Eighth Avenue in Manhattan with little more than a New York Times and a blank sketch pad.

When Mutch came to the Washington Street apartment of Jill Preis the next morning, he was complaining of stomach cramps.

Mutch was taken by ambulance to St. Mary Hospital that morning. There, he was treated and released several hours later, according to a friend who wished to remain anonymous.

Mutch woke up Sunday morning with the same stomach pains, but refused to go back to St. Mary. He told Preis of a doctor he knew in Denver, where his sister lives, but died before she could get him there.

A spokesman for St. Mary said the hospital had a record of Mutch's visit, but could offer no further details yesterday. The state Medical Examiner's Office in Newark is conducting an autopsy.

Interviews with friends and relatives and Mutch's letters tell the story of a street artist who worked most of the year in Jackson Square in New Orleans' French Quarter for whatever money people cared to donate. He lived in the studio he shared with Graff or

at friends' houses. He also traveled quite often.

Preis met him in Jackson Square about three years ago.

"He drew caricatures on the square. That's how he made his living. He was very, very independent. A Bohemian," Preis remembered fondly.

On an index card sent to Preis this summer, Mutch talked about the World's Fair in New Orleans: "Had five great days at the so-called world's fair till the officials came down with rules. Must charge certain set fee (and) split 55% w them-I worked free St. Theatre style. Everybody loved it. It would have brought \$5 to 10 thou. in 20 weeks. Free donations or \$1.00 Back On Square where it is peanuts

Preis said Mutch used to leave her notes in the trees surrounding Jackson Square when he wasn't on his corner there. "He was very childlike. He was a rodeo clown, a philosopher," she said.

Mutch often dressed up like a clown or Charlie Chaplin and performed pantomime, according to his sister, Doris Headley.

Graff remembers him as "a brilliant artist" who will be sorely missed by his friends down at the Alpine Restaurant in the French Quarter, where several of his caricatures hang.

There will be something missing in a small corner at Jackson Square this summer—an old, white-haired man who was happiest making others happy.



# There's a lot happening on Hoboken's waterfront

## A matter of taxes may stall development

By Earl Morgan

Hoboken Councilman Thomas Kennedy said last night he will not vote for any waterfront development plan that does not include "substantial tax payments" on land belonging to Stevens Institute of Technology and NJ Transit.

Kennedy made his remarks at a waterfront briefing presented to the City Council by officials of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and representatives of the firm that created the master plan for the Hoboken waterfront.

"I don't want to see a dor-

mitory or research center built on the Stevens land that will become a part of the campus and exempt from taxes," Kennedy said. He added that NJ Transit, as a state agency, pays no city taxes on its railroad property and bus terminal.

The councilman said he wants no agreement struck with the P.A. and the waterfront developers that does not include tax payments for developments or improvements on land owned by the school and NJ Transit.

During the briefing Councilmen Pat Pasculli and Tom Vezzetti criticized Mayor Steve

Cappiello for appointing three council members to a group formed to negotiate with the P.A. for the economic development benefits of the waterfront.

The councilmen claimed that the choices for the bargaining group should be made by the council.

In answer to questions asked by Kennedy and Councilman E. Norman Wilson, Saul Samperi of the P.A. said that suggestions from the public have resulted in changes in the master plan.

He also said job training for the employment the development is expected to generate has

been added to the project. The training plan will include a site in the city for a job referral service.

P.A. officials said the amount of park land has been increased to 10 acres, which is 50 percent of all the park acreage currently in the city, as a result of suggestions received at public hearings on the plan.

They also said the amount of parking to be included in the plan was reduced and the height of several proposed buildings decreased by the officials after listening to suggestions at public hearings.

## Three items face Hoboken historic unit

Three items are on the agenda for the Hoboken Historic District's meeting Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. at City Hall.

Stevens Institute of Technology is seeking approval of the erection of 10 directional signs in or adjacent to the historic district.

The developers of 2 Hudson Place are seeking approval for construction, and Washington Street Realty Corp. is seeking approval for replacements of windows at 221 Washington St.

## Hudson towns seek asbestos removal funds

By ROBIN WATKINS  
Staff Writer

Bayonne and Hoboken are leading the pack in submitting state and federal applications for asbestos removal aid, officials said yesterday.

Stiff competition and a Friday deadline for complicated and lengthy federal applications has frustrated many Hudson and state-wide municipalities, state leaders said.

Education officials reported yesterday that Bayonne had applied for both federal and state aid and said Hoboken had submitted a state application.

State applications outnumbered federal requests 2-1 yesterday, they said, due to a May 15 deadline, no financial need requirements and more money available to fewer districts.

New Jersey public schools can draw from a \$10 million state pool.

See ASBESTOS, Back Page

## Building may rise on stilts

By Margaret Schmidt

An elevated 11-story office building overlooking the Hudson River is envisioned by developers of 2 Hudson Place, Hoboken.

Representatives of Hoboken Land Building Inc. and Gerald Baker et al revealed the plans yesterday before the Subdivision and Site Plan Review Committee of the planning board.

The building, which will need the approval of the city's Historic District Commission, would be elevated three stories to allow for a pedestrian mall joining the train station and the Port Authority waterfront development.

Part of the building would  
See BUILDING — Page 1A.

## Building may rise on stilts in Hoboken

Continued from Page 1

The plans were disclosed at a meeting of the city Planning Board's Subdivision and Site Plan Review Committee.

The sale depends on several factors:

- The project cannot begin without a major change in the city's zoning laws.

- The 45-acre site along the waterfront from 12th to 18th streets is slated for industrial use only. A proposal to make the area commercial-residential is now before the Planning Board.

- It will have to go before the City Council for approval, a process expected to take several months.

- Impact studies of the city's traffic, water supply and sewerage systems are needed.

- Financial studies in-

cluding whether the developers plan to apply for grants and abatements must be conducted.

- Site testing on the landfill used and a determination that there are no toxic wastes and verification of riparian rights.

If everything is approved, the project would be built in four or five phases, said architect Richard Blinder of Beyer, Blinder, Bollo of New York.

No new piers would be built, he said, meaning the development would actually rest on about 15 acres.

Some of the office and shop buildings may be reused in the first housing phase, Blinder said.

Once plans begin to move forward, he said, public hearings will be held.

He asked the planners if the

public should become involved in the early stages and the committee agreed that the developers are working in the proper manner.

"The developer is very anxious to move the project and to cooperate with you and the town government in every way," Blinder said.

The commercial uses would be small scale, the architect said, "not anything that would be a big attraction of any sort."

Winthrop Chamberlin of Orb, the potential developers, said his company has done similar re-use projects in New York City where large commercial spaces have been converted to apartments.

He said no decision has been made on whether the apartments will be rented or sold, nor on their sizes.

The Hoboken Shipyards, which had its heyday during World War II, have been virtually unused since July when the owners, Braswell Shipyards of South Carolina, announced its closing.

Bids, of which the Orb offering has been called low, are to be opened today in U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Columbia, S.C.

Elliott Braswell, company head, has said the sale of the property will offset \$16.5 million owed to secured lenders and \$9 million owed to vendors.

Braswell bought the shipyards, where Navy ships were repaired, and one in Bayonne from the Bethlehem Steel Corp. for approximately \$8.5 million in 1983.

The Chapter 11 proceedings were begun in September.

## Shipyard could be small city

By Margaret Schmidt

Developers who hope to buy the Hoboken Shipyards today envision a small city with 1,600 housing units on the Hudson River site, according to plans revealed yesterday.

The "very preliminary" plans include space for businesses, such as grocery and convenience stores, a recreational pier and a marina.

A waterfront park would provide public access to the river.

Orb Management Limited of Manhattan, which bid \$12.5 million for the shipyards, proposes a series of low-rise buildings and four 30-story towers.

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## Shipyard could become a small city

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rest on still-like structures while the center would be above a glass-enclosed lobby.

Originally, the developers envisioned a five-story office building. They more than doubled the planned height to make room for the plaza.

The committee advised the developers to speak with the Historic Commission because the building height isn't consistent with that of other buildings in the area.

Although the offices would be much taller than places like Schaefer's Restaurant and low-

rise buildings along River Street, it would be low in comparison to the 30- and 40-story building proposed in the Port Authority plans.

The owners also need certification from the Public Works Department that the city's water and sewerage systems can handle an 11-story building.

The \$12 million to \$13 million project has already spurred inquiries from potential tenants, the developers said.

Although the plans now call only for office space, a

restaurant for workers hasn't been ruled out.

In other business, the committee met with developers of an old industrial building on Third Street between Adams and Grand streets.

The developers of 406 Third reported they had rearranged parking plans to provide 71 off-street spots, 10 more than they'd had last month.

The 83,000-square-foot building will be converted to 104 housing units, according to the plans.

## Jersey City-Hoboken investigation produces charges against two

By Raul Vicente Jr.

Police hope a crime spree may have ended in Jersey City with the arrest of James Spellman, a suspect in a Hoboken shootout.

According to East District Detective Commander Michael DeLoughery, Spellman, 20, and Victor DeGross, 20, have a long list of charges accusing them of aggravated assaults.

DeLoughery said an unfinished joint investigation with Hoboken police has already produced seven charges against Spellman in Jersey City, and seven against DeGross, not including the charges leveled by Hoboken.

Spellman has been charged with four counts of robbery, aggravated assault, theft, and simple assault, and DeGross has been charged with three counts of robbery, two aggravated assaults, one criminal attempt charge, and theft.

Spellman's bail was set Wednesday by Judge Edward Zampella at \$55,000, and DeGross' was set at \$25,000.

According to police, charges against the pair stem from crimes spread out over three city police districts. DeLoughery also said that investigations are in progress on other similar crimes in other districts.

The investigation by Jersey

City and Hoboken centered around one of two vehicles a 1976 Oldsmobile, police suspect was used during a long Jersey City crime spree.

"We were already looking for that car in connection with an assault here in Jersey City,"

said DeLoughery.

DeLoughery said that in a purse-snatching attempt charged to Spellman and DeGross, the woman being attacked tried to hold on to her purse, which one man tried to grab from the Oldsmobile's window.

The woman was dragged by the escaping suspects but was unhurt, said DeLoughery.

DeLoughery credited the Jersey City investigation to Detectives Michael Kelly and Anthony Guma of the East District Station.

## Hoboken council seeks state aid for damages caused by fire

By Margaret Schmidt

The Hoboken City Council will consider a resolution tomorrow requesting \$1 million in emergency state funds and grants to businesses destroyed or damaged by last month's fire at the Levelor-Lorentzen complex.

The council, which normally meets in caucus on Monday, is meeting tomorrow, 7 p.m., because of today's holiday. The regular meeting will be Wednesday, also at 7 p.m.

Damage to buildings and equipment in the Jan. 15 fire has

been estimated at more than \$15 million.

While the Levelor company accounts for about \$2 million of that total, the window blind manufacturer is insured by up to \$0 percent.

However, of the 12 businesses housed in 830 Monroe St., a building destroyed when the general alarm fire spread beyond the Levelor complex, three have no insurance and most of the others are only insured for about half their losses, according to a city report.

In addition, 78 automobiles were destroyed.

Mayor Steve Cappiello has

already sent Gov. Thomas Kean his request for aid and Assemblyman Robert Ranieri, a Hoboken councilman, has gotten a bill through the state Assembly.

The Senate bill, sponsored by Sen. Christopher Jackson of West New York, is scheduled to go before that body Thursday.

Ranieri said the bill is fully supported and he believes it will pass easily.

Also on the council agenda this week is a resolution to hire Ernst and Whinney, a Big Eight accounting firm, as Hoboken's financial analyst for the

proposed \$500 million Port Authority waterfront development.

Cappiello has said the firm will act in Hoboken's interests and take an advisory position with respect to other negotiating parties.

The several-month, flexible contract will be about \$50,000, according to Fred Bado, director of the city's Community Development Agency.

Other items include the approval of ordinances setting new salaries for municipal employees, police and fire officials.

## Hoboken shipyard sale for \$13M OK'd

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

A U.S. Bankruptcy Court judge yesterday gave debtors of the bankrupt Hoboken Shipyards Inc. the authority to sell the facility to a group of private developers for \$13.2 million.

The order in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Columbia, S.C., clears the way for a mixed-use development project to be constructed on what was once the site of a bustling shipyard.

A number of bids for purchase of the idle shipyard were reviewed by the judge yesterday. He approved a bid of \$13,250,000 submitted by developers Winthrop Chamberlin and Barnet L. Liberman — principals in the New York City management company of Orb Management Ltd. — and Gotham Organization Inc., a New York City contracting firm.

Beyer Blinder Belle of Manhattan, the architectural firm hired last year by Hoboken Shipyards to develop an alternate plan for the site, has proposed commercial of-

fice buildings, four 25-story residential towers and a marina. The facility is at the foot of 16th Street.

Susan Hewitt, a project manager for Chamberlin and Liberman, said yesterday the two developers plan to follow the architectural company's recommendations.

The shipyard was operated by the Bethlehem Steel Corp. from 1988 to 1983. It sold the yard — and its Bayonne facility — to Braswell Shipyards Inc. of Charleston, S.C., in 1983 for approximately \$8.5 million.

A poor economic climate in the shipping industry was blamed for the yard's closing in July. In August, the BSI Corp. and two subsidiaries, Hoboken Shipyards Inc. and Braswell Shipyards, filed for protection from creditors under Chapter 11 of the federal bankruptcy laws.

The proceeds from the shipyard's sale will be used by the company to pay back most of the \$16.5 million owed to secured lenders.

## Hoboken

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next step is to award contracts to outfit the hallways.

- Claremont Painting and Decorating Co. Inc. in Bridgewater won the contract to paint senior citizen apartments.

## Hoboken plans new sewer

The Hoboken Housing Authority plans to add a sewer line along Harrison Avenue from Fourth to Sixth streets to remedy "severe" flooding.

Dominic M. Gallo, authority executive director, said yesterday the line should relieve backups that usually occur during rainstorms.

Basements in the Andrew Jackson and Harrison Gardens housing projects usually fill when the sewers back up, he said.

The sewer will allow the Housing Authority to use the basements, Gallo said, for com-

munity rooms and teen clubs.

Advertisements for bids will probably be published within two weeks, he said, so work may begin as early as mid-April.

Permission to advertise was granted at Thursday's meeting of the Housing Authority, as was permission to advertise for a general elevator repair contract for emergency service in all buildings and for trash compactors in the projects.

The city now leases the compactors, Gallo said. Money for the purchase will come from government funds.

Several contracts were awarded:

- Abel Exterminating Co. in North Bergen received a \$40,536, two-year contract to service all Housing Authority buildings.

- Parkway Power Corp. in Wayne received \$105,838 to put smoke detectors in apartments of the three senior citizen buildings — Foxhill, Monroe and Adams Gardens.

Andrew Jackson, Christopher Columbus and Harrison Gardens already have the systems, Gallo said, and the

See HOBOKEN — Page 4.



# Hoboken council race shaping up as a free-for-all

By Margaret Schmidt

A high number of requests for petitions in Hoboken's at-large council race has prompted the city clerk to order more forms.

Thirteen persons have already taken out petitions for the three at-large seats, said James Farina, city clerk. Several others are still expected to join the race.

Farina ordered the petitions two weeks ago when he realized the requests would exceed his supply.

Usually, the at-large race attracts fewer than 10 participants, said Anthony Amoroso, who was city clerk for 40 years.

Petitions must be filed by 4 p.m. March 28. Although those who take out

petitions usually put their own names on them, would-be candidates aren't required to pick up their own materials.

So far Michael Sarullo, a supermarket manager, and Police Officer James Mancuso have collected the 205 signatures needed to run, officials said.

Others who requested petitions are Nunzio Malfetti, who also took out petitions for the mayoral race. He lost the June Democratic primary for county freeholder to Mayor Steve Cappiello by a small margin; Aaron Miranda Forman, Hudson County representative to the

Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey; Frank Raia, a property owner and partner in the conversion of the Sadie Leinlauf School to apartments; Mario Mercado,

superintendent of the police garage, and Steve Block, board of education member and opponent of the administration.

Also, Florence Amato, Rocco Cavallo, Ruben Rivera, Michael R. Tulli Jr. and Oswald Johnson.

Councilman-at-large Robert Ranieri and Council President Helen Macri are expected to seek re-election although no announcements have been made.

At least nine at-large candidates should be on the ballot as running mates of announced mayoral candidates Cappiello and Councilmen Tom Vezetti and Thomas Kennedy.

Kennedy has already taken out petitions for the mayoral race as have Malfetti and Eugene R. Failla Jr.

By Bill Campbell  
A Port Authority official has assured members of the City Council that the economic result of the city's waterfront development would not be threatened by similar projects in other communities.

Sal Samperi, the official, responding to a question by Councilman E. Norman Wilson, said that other Hudson waterfront projects were "compatible" with Hoboken's.

"We believe that Hoboken has unique characteristics that can't be duplicated," Samperi said.

"Most of our development is centered around mass transit - the PATH, the busses and possible ferry service - it's something that can't be offered by anyone else," he said.

Samperi said the two major projects to the south, Harborside Terminal and Newport City, both in Jersey City, could co-exist with the proposed \$500 million Hoboken development.

"Harborside is different from what we're talking about here," he said. "It's aimed at a different market from ours."

He said that the only permit taken out for Newport City called for 800,000 square feet of shopping space, something not offered in the Hoboken proposal.

Samperi added that north Hudson communities may utilize rail service on the existing railroad tracks, to gain access to Hoboken. The proposal is under the scrutiny of the Governor's Waterfront Advisory Committee.

## New Books by Hoboken Author

Jersey City resident Bill Miller, the author of a dozen previously published books on the great ocean liners and a teacher at Hoboken's Calabro School, will add three new titles to his list this winter.

The *Fabulous Interiors of the Great Luxury Liners*, by Dover Publications, will make its debut at a "launching" on Feb. 25 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., at the South Street Seaport Bookshop, 207 Front St. in New York City.

According to Miller, "This is especially unique as it includes only interior views of the great ships, their sumptuous lounges, suites and salons, from the 1890's to the present. Of course, there's strong emphasis on the thirties, when ships such as the *Normandie* and *Queen Mary* steamed into port, bringing new dimensions to the Art Deco era. White pianos, glossy floors and stainless furniture, it was a period that might best be described as 'early Ginger Rogers.' My chief assistant on this work has been Lee Beck, a Hoboken architect."

*Transatlantic Liners at War*, by Arco Publishing Company, will appear on the shelves this spring. It covers the largely undocumented wartime exploits of the three big Cunard Queens, the original *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth* in the Second World War and, more recently, the *Elizabeth 2* in the Falklands.

Miller comments, "This earlier *Queens* carried 15,000 GIs to each crossing, many of them arriving at the docks in Manhattan from New Jersey's Camp Kilmer, from 1942 until 1945. Winston Churchill remarked that these two ships helped to shorten the war in Europe by at least a year."

The *Last Atlantic Liners*, by St. Martin's Press, will also be released in the spring. Filled with photos and anecdotes of the final transatlantic passenger liners before their demise from commercial jets beginning in the late fifties.

this work includes recollections of the Holland-America Line and their terminal in Hoboken.

Miller adds, "This book is particularly rich in anecdotes, not just of the captains and pursers, but from the likes of the Queen of England, Greta Garbo, Mae West and even Liberace. It was a glorious era of transoceanic travel, now replaced completely by the anonymity of passages through Kennedy Airport."



Theresa Sasso, director of the Hoboken Free Public Library since June, 1979, asked to be replaced so that the library could once again receive state aid.

## A Smooth Transition of Directors

By Bill Campbell

In an emotional meeting last Wednesday, the Board of Trustees of the Hoboken Free Public Library quietly passed a resolution naming Virginia Vogl as director, effective February 25.

Outgoing Director Theresa Sasso, who requested the change, will remain on staff as a supervisor and continue in a policy making position.

The seemingly routine change in leadership was "the hardest sacrifice the board has ever had to make," according to chairwoman Mary Gaspar.

At question was whether the library would seek financial aid from the state. According to New Jersey law, a library must have a director and one staff person per 10,000 residents who have passed state requirements.

The library is making an active effort to replace staff members without a masters in library science, through attrition. Sasso, though, who has served as director for five and a half years, does not have an MLS.

Aware of the benefits state aid would bring the library, Sasso decided not to place the board in a dilemma. "I spoke to the board last September in regards to personnel," she said. "I told them this might be a good time to start searching for a new director. They were not too happy," she added.

Despite requests from the board to remain in her position, she decided to step down but remain on the staff. "We all knew in 1979 that this would happen. We knew the end would come," said Gaspar.

The library received state aid until two years ago when the board was informed it had had enough time to find state certified employees. Rather than fire non-certified staff members and replace them with state approved employees, the board decided not to file for aid. "We're not letting people go, we're waiting for them to retire. We don't just say, 'So long Mrs. Jones, we're going to hire a professional,'" Gaspar said.

She said the aid should cover the cost of the professionals and open the door to new opportunities. "Other things, like grants, are easier to get if you receive aid. The state does not look favorably on you if you have been refusing to file for their aid," Gaspar said.

The library will meet state qualifications in April when it expects to fill positions in the adult and juvenile departments.

For Sasso, who was born in Italy and who has lived in Hoboken for 48 years, the rise to library director "represented the American dream," according to Gaspar.

On a Saturday in June, 1979, nine years after Sasso joined the staff, Lucille Cunningham, the director, suddenly died. At an emergency board meeting the following week, the trustees asked Sasso, a friend of Cunningham, to fill the position until a permanent director could be found. "At the time, I knew nothing about running a library," Sasso said.

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## Library

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What started as a temporary appointment turned into a permanent position. "I would say, let's give it two months and see what happens," Gaspar recalled. "Then, as time passed, I'd say, let's give it some more time."

"I found myself learning the ropes," Sasso said. "I felt I had to prove to the board that I could do the job. As time went by I wanted to begin implementing some new things," she said.

Sasso, who also credits

her staff, Mayor Steve Cappiello and city Business Administrator Edwin Chius, started more than 16 new programs including: films for children and adults, summer arts and crafts, reading contests, a pre-school film and story hour, school tours, a homework hour, a circulation program, a Frank Sinatra memorabilia section ("They lived next door to us and were often visitors to our home," she says), a yearly book sale, inspection of rare books, an IRS program for senior citizens and a work study program with St. Peter's College.

Finally, last week, the

library received a VCR and monitor for the children's library. "I simply found myself in the right seat to make these changes," said Sasso.

She said she considered working for her MLS after becoming director but job and family demands took priority. "My family is always placed first," Sasso said. "I did not want to short-change them."

"Terry is a great lady," Gaspar says, "but our new director is just as nice."

## Hoboken officials brief Kean aides on waterfront

TRENTON — Hoboken officials yesterday briefed the Kean Administration on the Port Authority's \$625 million plans to resurrect the city's waterfront spanning 60 acres or nearly a half mile along River Road from the Jersey City line north to the Stevens Institute of Technology campus.

Assemblyman Robert A. Ranieri arranged the two-hour State House meeting with a W. Cary Edwards, Gov. Thomas H. Kean's chief counsel, and his assistant counsel, Todd Caliguire.

It also was attended by Mayor Steve Cappiello; Fred Bado, Community Development director; Stan Tanenbaum, special city counsel on waterfront development; Sal Samperi, P.A. executive in charge of the Hoboken project; Philip LaRocca, P.A. divisional director; and Larry Witsler, assistant counsel to Kean, in charge of the Jersey City and Hudson waterfront development office.

Ranieri explained Hoboken and P.A. officials outlined to the administration progress already made on the project, asked for continued sup-

port, and to make sure that no "last-minute" problems hampered development.

Ranieri predicted that the City Council would approve the master plan within 90 days with construction expected to begin late this fall on the five-year plan to be completed in 1990.

Hoboken and P.A. officials, Ranieri continued, were encouraged by the support pledged by the governor's office. Edwards urged the Hoboken and P.A. officials to contact his office directly on any problems that might develop.

Ranieri further revealed that Hoboken last night retained the New York auditing firm of Ernst and Winney to negotiate with the P.A. on the ultimate financial arrangements.

Again, Ranieri predicted that the in lieu of tax payments to Hoboken by the private developers will be "well over a million dollars annually." This would help stabilize property taxes, Ranieri said.

Ranieri explained that the development timetable calls for solicitation of private firms for various elements in the project within six months, after final

City Council approval on the master plan.

Some 1.5 million square feet of office space are planned in a 22-story office tower, to be built on the south end; a 500 room luxury hotel and restaurant, also on the south end; three high-rise high income apartment buildings on the present P.A. piers, A, B and C, a marina, and a number of specialty shops. They are projected to create 1,500 construction jobs and 500 permanent jobs, Ranieri said.

While most of the project will be built on deteriorated waterfront areas, the apartments housing 1,200 residents will be located on platforms stilts or to be built at pier-level areas over the Hudson River.

Ranieri suggested the Hoboken project is slightly ahead of schedule. The P.A. is committed to \$125 million in site preparations and infrastructure work, which is expected to generate \$500 million from the private sector. Work at the Stevens campus will include a park and a major research facility expected to attract a professional staff of national renown.

## Librarian steps down to save aid from state

Continued from Page 1

who have 25, 20 and 18 years experience. "If they possessed the MLS, they couldn't do a better job."

She added that she and the women are all certified and got their jobs after taking Civil Service exams.

A native of Bari, Italy, Sasso came to America with her family 48 years ago and settled in Hoboken. She married and raised three sons.

"For 17 years of my married life," she explained, "I didn't work. I raised children."

In 1970 when she decided to return to the work force — she had previously held clerical jobs — Sasso went to the historic library building at 500 Park Ave.

"I worked almost every department," she said. She didn't know if she could handle full-time work and care for her family full-time, but, "I found myself liking this work very, very much. I love this work."

Sitting at her desk surrounded by photos, books and news clippings, Sasso recalled being asked to fill in as temporary director when her predecessor, Lucille Cunningham, died in July 1978.

"At first I panicked," she explained. "But then I found myself wanting to learn the ropes. I learned a little bit more, a little bit more, every day. After the first year I realized I could do the job."

"Then I thought to myself, 'I'd like to start a few programs.'"

Sasso began in the Children's Department where she instituted a reading contest, arts and crafts, films and story hours. Then she got the Hoboken Kiwanis Club to start a memorial section and 225 books have already been donated.

She started a Frank Sinatra Memorabilia collection for Hoboken's most famous son, an accomplishment of which she's proud. The collection is used by persons doing research on Old

Blue Eyes or others who are just interested in the singer. She's had requests from around the country and recalled a visitor from England who stopped in last year because she's heard of the Sinatra section.

She's held four art exhibits with works by Jersey City and Hoboken artists. And Sasso has more ideas.

One project she hopes to get through is putting the entire collection of Hoboken history — photos, newsclippings, etc. — on microfilm "so that future generations will be able to use it."

Sasso was director in a period marked by budget crises and renewed interest in the library. With the so-called Hoboken renaissance, the library's resources, particularly the adult collections and the Hoboken reference room, have been used much more frequently. The adult circulation has doubled.

She felt she has handled the job as well as a professional could, a sentiment echoed by the Board of Trustees.

The director considered taking night classes to get the degree but it would take about six years and too much time for her family life, she said.

Her family must come first, she said, thanking them for already understanding why she's had to attend night meetings and spend so much time on work.

She thought of her own family when she was growing up.

"When you were 17, 18, you went to work. We had to go to night school just to finish high school. You didn't go to college then and get degrees."

Her eldest son has just finished his masters degree in hospital administration, the middle one is an accountant and her youngest a student at St. Peter's College.

"I'm just thankful," she said, "that we could give our kids the education we couldn't have."

## Hoboken budget has funds for 30 new jobs

The Hoboken business administrator expects to have funding for about 30 new city employees in the 1985 budget.

Edwin Chius, the administrator, said among the new employees would be firefighters, police officers, a painting crew and street cleaners.

"These jobs are legitimate," he said, denying that they would be used to muster support for Mayor Steve Cappiello in his bid for a fourth term.

Chius added that, despite ac-

cusations that the city is overhiring and padding the payroll, the administration has lost 120 employees in the last three years. Fifty-three were laid off during a budget crisis in 1983.

The new budget is nearly complete, Chius said, and will include funding for new programs while resulting in a slight tax decrease.

If the funding for the new jobs goes through, hiring could begin as soon as the budget is approved, he added.



## Hoboken school board fixes budget

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—A budget move that did not get by Hudson County's top school official was corrected last night by the Board of Education. The board's proposed \$25 million budget was rejected by Louis C. Accolla, Hudson County's superintendent of schools, last week because salaries for the district's 42 crossing guards were placed under the transportation line item rather than the contract and services line item, according to board President John Pope.

Pope said the board decided to put the salaries under transportation because state reimbursement of that line item is approximately 15 percent higher than other line items.

"We tried to save the city some money. The county rejected it," Pope said yesterday.

The board last night transferred the salaries back to contract and services and will resubmit the budget to the county. School crossing guards make \$25 a day.

Reached at home last night, Accolla said "It (the school

budget) was overcapped in transportation, and I had some concerns about it." He said the North Bergen school budget was rejected for the same reason.

The proposed 1984-85 school budget is almost \$3 million higher than the 1983-84 budget. Pope said the increase is the result of raises

given to teachers and administrators last year.

City Business Administrator Edwin Chius said yesterday the city's overall tax rate will drop this year despite the school budget. He said the 1985 municipal budget, which is almost completed, calls for a substantial tax decrease.

## Hoboken plans hearing on park plans

The Hoboken Community Development Agency will hold a public meeting on improvements for Church Square Park tomorrow, 7 p.m., at the library, 500 Park Ave.

The plans were devised after the CDA and architects from Clarke and Caton, Trenton, met with the public twice over the summer to determine the kinds

of facilities and improvements the community wanted. Community members had requested facilities such as a Tot Lot, an enclosed area with play equipment for young children, while the city was suggesting more basic improvements such as new benches and sidewalks.

Tomorrow's meeting will

feature a principal of the architectural firm explaining the proposed layout of the park. After the public comments, the plans can be defined and fit into a budget, mechanical drawings will be made and the city will go out to bid for the construction, a CDA spokesman said.

# Welfare chiefs rap Hoboken shelter

By Margaret Schmidt

The Municipal Welfare Directors of Hudson County yesterday accused the Bishop Mahurter Shelter in Hoboken of mismanagement and allowing six welfare recipients to live there three years.

In a prepared statement the directors, led by Hoboken Welfare Director Robert K. Drasheff, suggested that the county evaluate programs for the homeless and channel funds to the one they believe functions best.

Sister Norberta, who runs the shelter along with the Hoboken Clergy Coalition, could not be reached yesterday.

Neither could Angel Harrison, director of the Hudson County Welfare Office.

Drasheff said the directors of welfare programs in Bayonne, East Newark, Harrison, Hoboken, Jersey City, Kearny, North Bergen, Union City, Weehawken, and West New York attended a morning meeting at the Hoboken City Hall and approved the statement.

Directors of programs in Guttenberg and Secaucus were unable to attend he said.

The statement pointed to unemployment and welfare statistics that have gone down in the county in the last year. Drasheff called the increase of

homeless at the Hoboken shelter "illogical."

Only problems at the Hoboken shelter were discussed in the statement while the Jersey City program run through the American Red Cross was praised.

There was no mention of programs in Union City, North Hudson or Bayonne.

Drasheff said the emphasis on Sister Norberta's shelter was because she had "complained" in recent newspaper articles. She had said cities were fighting over the homeless, a situation where people in need might "fall between the cracks" and that she gives overflow persons the

75-cent PATH fare to New York City shelters.

"We believe the fault lies primarily in the current leadership of the Hoboken shelter," the statement said. "Designed as a temporary facility, the Hoboken shelter is plagued with a large number of clients who have made it their permanent home."

Drasheff said six of eight city welfare clients at the shelter have received their checks at the shelter for the past three years. He discounted the possibility that Sister Norberta was allowing them to simply receive their checks there.

In Jersey City, welfare checks to the homeless have the

welfare office's address on them.

Drasheff said Social Security recipients also live there as do occupants with steady income.

"Is she running a shelter or a hotel?" he asked. "If there weren't the large number of repeaters, there would never be a problem down there. If she doesn't know how to solve her problems, we will solve it for her."

The directors believe the "problem" can be solved by having a centralized system through which the homeless would be sheltered either in a single county facility or in facilities run by one agency on a contract. All state funding channeled

through the county welfare office would go to the one facility rather than being split.

The agency would work with the welfare departments to be sure relocation efforts were underway to find permanent homes for the clients.

Drasheff said he believed the system would be possible despite a superior court ruling last week that requires municipalities to provide shelter and aid to the homeless.

The public advocate's office has interrupted the ruling broadly to mean that municipalities cannot send homeless persons to other cities for shelter.

## Hoboken collects back taxes

The Hoboken tax department collected nearly \$350,000 in delinquent taxes last week from a realty company that handled the sale of the old Washington Knitting Mills.

Amorsag Realty paid \$349,844 on the four parcels of land at 50 Harrison St., said Thomas Callighy, assistant city attorney.

The property was listed on the tax sale list in September of 1983 but the city worked with the owners to help them find a buyer so that the taxes could be paid.

Had the city gone through tax foreclosure procedures, Callighy said, the property would have had to have been sold at auction.

## Sponsors of shelter call 'hotel' label unwarranted

By Margaret Schmidt

The Hoboken Clergy Coalition conceded yesterday that several homeless persons sleep at the Bishop Mahurter Shelter regularly, but said it has a responsibility to help them.

"The fact is that these people have no alternative," the coalition said in a prepared statement. "They are mostly elderly and in poor health, will never be able to work and with their limited income from welfare or Social Security would never be able to afford a room. If the shelter refused to accept them, they would be forced to spend their nights out on the streets."

The Rev. George A. Ligos, coalition president, said the "four or five" persons who show up at the shelter nearly every night are "locked into" a lifestyle.

"There are people," he said, "who, by their very nature, cannot help themselves. Our responsibility is to provide for them as best we can. People who are able to help themselves and refuse to do so are not accepted at the shelter."

The Hoboken Clergy Coalition was reacting to a statement

by the municipal welfare directors of Hudson County who accused the group of mismanaging the shelter so that it ran more like a hotel than a facility for the homeless.

The coalition called the accusations a "vicious and uncalled for attack." It added that the directors should have more compassion for those they serve.

Continued from Page 1.

diversion of government funding to the provider deemed best able to handle the homeless. They said they hope to set up a meeting with the County Subcommittee on the Homeless to discuss the centralization plan.

"In advocating a centralized location and centralized administration," the Hoboken Clergy Coalition said, "Mr. Drasheff is forgetting one important feature of the Bishop Mahurter Shelter, that is, the respect and dignity with which the individuals are treated, something that, for the most part, is absent from their lives."

"They are addressed by name and given the opportunity to shower and to wash their clothes, again things that would otherwise be missing from their lives."

Ligos said that local shelters are more cost-effective than a county-wide plan would be. The Jersey City chapter of the American Red Cross, which the welfare directors praised, rents rooms in hotels, a more expensive procedure than setting up a facility.

Ligos said his organization isn't planning any legal action, but should it become necessary the option is there. He added that he hopes the problem will

Robert K. Drasheff, Hoboken welfare director, said the statement arose from an equal concern for the homeless and the taxpayer.

The group called for the creation of a county-run plan that would consist either of a single county-run facility or the

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be settled without either party's going before the county subcommittee.

The Hoboken shelter has an operating budget of \$106,329 a year, said the Rev. Trif Felske, treasurer of the Hoboken Clergy Coalition. Of that, \$17,738 is funneled through the Hudson County Welfare Office, and approximately \$42,000 has been promised in federal funding. The rest of the budget comes from the churches participating in the coalition and individual donations.

Ligos said the curtailing of government funds would severely limit the shelter. Paid night supervisors would probably have to be laid off.

The shelter, which opened in March 1983, has been closed twice. It was closed six weeks after its opening because the coalition was unable to find night supervisors. The second time it closed, the facility, located in the basement of St. John's Lutheran Church, underwent major renovations to meet buildings and safety standards.

Mayor Steve Cappelletto said yesterday he was unaware that Drasheff and the other welfare directors were preparing the statement.

After attending the meeting of the coalition, he said he sup-

## Hoboken shelter defended

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The president of the

Hoboken Clergy Coalition yesterday said recent attacks by the city's welfare director on the clergy's

operation of a homeless shelter were "vicious" and showed "a total lack of sensitivity" in understanding the problems of the poor.

Welfare Director Robert Drasheff last week charged that the city's only homeless shelter was mismanaged. He criticized coalition members for allowing "chronic drifters" and people with jobs to stay at the overnight shelter and suggested that a central county agency take over the task of housing the homeless.

"In advocating a centralized location, Mr. Drasheff is forgetting one important feature of the shelter... the respect and dignity with which the individuals are treated," the Rev. George A. Ligos, president of the coalition, said in a press release issued yesterday afternoon.

Ligos said the shelter, located in the basement of St. John's Lutheran Church at 300 Bloomfield St., was started in 1983 "... only following a series of fruitless meetings with Hoboken city officials who refused to do anything themselves about the problem." The shelter has a certificate of occupancy that allows 30 people to spend the night there. Another 25 persons come to the shelter each night for dinner, according to Ligos.

He said it is almost impossible to find shelter for the few people who are turned away from the shelter each night. In fact, clergy coalition member Sister Norberta Hunnewinkle often gives those people 75 cents for PATH fare into Manhattan.

"If individuals decide then to seek shelter in New York, it is not the policy of the Hoboken shelter that is to be questioned, but the failure of Hudson County officials to provide other adequate facilities," he said in the press release.

Ligos said to deny funds to the shelter is not the answer to the problem of the homeless.

"Rather than being constantly critical and obstructive, we would hope that director Drasheff ... would be appreciative of the good that is being done," the clergyman concluded.

## Hoboken to join Secaucus to block hospital shift

By Margaret Schmidt

Hoboken is joining Secaucus in the fight to stop Hudson County from turning over the old Margaret Hague maternity hospital to Jersey City.

In a letter explaining the move to Hoboken City Council members, Mayor Steve Cappelletto said he agrees with Secaucus that the county should sell the property directly rather than give it to Jersey City to sell to a developer.

Assistant City Attorney Thomas Callighy said the city will file its claim in Superior Court before Monday's deadline.

Hoboken will actually file a crossclaim as all the other Hudson municipalities were named as defendants.

The Board of Freeholders voted Jan. 24 to eliminate a reverter clause in the hospital's deed. The change would permit Jersey City to sell it to a developer.

Secaucus Mayor Paul Amico said yesterday he was pleased that Hoboken was joining the fight. He didn't know if the crossclaim would help the town's suit.

The town decided to go alone, he added, so it moved as

quickly as possible. It feared Jersey City might sell the property before any legal action by a group of municipalities could be taken.

Secaucus has contended in its suit that any profit from the sale of county property should be divided among all the municipalities whose residents pay taxes to the county. If the deed change is permitted, it claims all the profit will go to Jersey City.

County Executive Edward F. Clark has said he agrees with Secaucus' position and won't take any action or transfer the deed to Jersey City until the lawsuit is resolved.

Cappelletto feels the city should take the same position as Secaucus and believes that to allow Jersey City to sell it would be "inequitable," Callighy said. The mayor is asking the City Council to approve the move in a resolution that will go before them next week.

The council meeting will be after the filing deadlines, Callighy noted.

The Margaret Hague Maternity Hospital was the first building in the Jersey City Medical Center complex. It was built from 1928 to 1931 and was once the busiest maternity facility in the continental United States, said Rebecca

Rabinowitz, spokeswoman for the Medical Center.

It closed in the late 1970s and is now nearly vacant. The Medical Center's Family Health Center occupies about 75,000 square feet.

The building is named for the mother of former Jersey City Mayor Frank Hague, in whose administration the complex was built.

In 1974 the county deeded the facility and surrounding the property to Jersey City for \$1 a year as long as it was used as a public facility. If the city stopped such use, the reverter clause would enable the county to take the building over.

No assessment of the property value is available.

At a meeting last month, the freeholders decided to eliminate the reverter clause so Jersey City could sell the property to an unnamed developer. A provision stipulated that Mayor Gerald McCann submit a written guarantee that the money would go back into developing the area. McCann, who became embroiled in a heated exchange with Freeholder Anthony DeFino, mayor of West New York, and Amico, said the money would be used to build a parking garage to make the area more attractive to potential developers.

## Anti-Cappelletto coalition Vezzetti names running mates

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Anti-administration City Council members Thomas Vezzetti and Patrick Pasculli teamed up to oppose Mayor Steve Cappelletto in the May 12 election. Vezzetti announced yesterday.

Pasculli and two others — community activist Helen Canning and Annette Illing, a member of the Marine View Tenants Association — have agreed to join the Vezzetti ticket. They plan to run for the three council member-at-large seats that are up for grabs in the election.

"I think this ticket here is the best ticket Hoboken has ever been offered," Vezzetti said yesterday.

Pasculli and Vezzetti have been an anti-administration voting block on the council since both men took office in 1983.

"The strongest asset we have coming into the campaign is the

bond Tom and I have created on the council," Pasculli, a 6th Ward councilman, said yesterday. "We have been opposing the administration and that voice should be united for the election," he said.

Both men upset council incumbents in the 1983 council election and since then have been the minority voice on the council.

They have fought Cappelletto about the 1984 municipal budget. The two men wanted more cuts in the budget than the administration proposed. They also opposed the sale of the Sadie Leinkauf school to private developers for condominium conversions. They wanted low- and middle-income housing built there instead.

Canning is a founding member of the Hoboken Neighborhood Alliance, a year-old community activist organization. She also was involved in Angelo Valente's unsuccessful bid for 6th Ward councilman in 1983.

Cunning said yesterday she resigned from Neighborhood Alliance because she did not want it to become associated with a mayoral candidate.

Illing fought against rent increases at the Grogan Marine View apartment complex, where she lives with her husband.

Cappelletto has announced he will seek a fourth term as mayor, but has not announced a ticket.

Councilman-at-Large Thomas Kennedy, like Cappelletto, also has announced his mayoral campaign, but has not announced his running mates.

## Dissatisfied Vezzetti backer will run

A supporter for Tom Vezzetti's bid in the Hoboken mayoral race has taken out his own petitions for an at-large council seat.

Jaime Munoz, who was reportedly dissatisfied with Councilman Vezzetti's choice of a Republican over an Hispanic on the election ticket, requested

the petitions yesterday, said City Clerk James Farina.

Vezzetti, who has said his record as an anti-administration voice in the council proves his concern for the city's large Hispanic population, is scheduled to have his campaign kickoff tonight at the Hoboken Manor.

Munoz, who declined comment while meeting with his committee, reportedly will have two other persons take out council petitions on Monday.

To be placed on the May 14 ballot, potential candidates must have 205 valid signatures to the city cert by 4 p.m. March 28.

# State aid voted for fire victims

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

Fifteen Hoboken businesses that suffered an estimated \$11 million worth of damages in a Jan. 13 inferno will be eligible for \$1 million worth of loans under a bill approved by the state Senate yesterday.

The bill, which already has passed the Assembly, is aimed at getting those businesses operating again while the U.S. Small Business Administration reviews Hoboken's application for disaster loans.

The bill also applies to the 39 people who lost their automobiles in the blaze.

City officials this week filed an application with the SBA to declare Hoboken a federal economic disaster area. The designation, if approved, would allow the SBA to make low-interest loans of up to \$500,000 for those businesses that were underinsured for the amount of damage they received.

The 15 businesses all were underinsured for the amount of estimated damage they received by a total of \$4.6 million, according to statistics

## Legislature backs loans for Hoboken

compiled by the city Community Development Agency.

Eight businesses were destroyed in the blaze that began in an empty building being demolished by Arko Wrecking Co. of Bayonne.

The cause of the fire has been attributed to both the careless use of acetylene torches by the demolition workers and a barrel fire the workers had set to keep themselves warm.

The building was owned by Levolor Lorentzen Inc. of Hoboken. The bill was sponsored in the Assembly by Robert A. Raniere, D-Hoboken, and in the Senate yesterday by Christopher J. Jackman, D-West New York.

The bill needs the signature of Gov. Thomas H. Kean.



# Rue School in a vocational pioneering role

By James Kpochains

When the David E. Rue Elementary School opened its doors in Hoboken this year, it wasn't just another elementary school, but a forerunner in change expected for the entire city's school system.

The 270-student school, which ended its controversial five-year, \$2 million rebuilding program with its September opening, now houses the district's new program of introducing grade school children to career choices early in their lives.

The program, long a goal of Superintendent of Schools Dr. George Maier, uses Rue for four central vocational laboratories designed to help teach children the skills and training required to prepare themselves for future employment.

"Back in the late 1960s, the federal Department of Labor identified 15 major clusters—career labor employment," Maier explained. "What we have

intended to do originally was to establish in most of our elementary schools a central area which is called 'Introduction to Vocations.'

Rue School, so far, is the only school in the district to feature an overall approach to such education. Maier said he hoped to start similar programs in all the schools in the future.

"The idea is to motivate the youngsters to greater learning and the development of an attitude. If this was successful I would hope the board of education sees fit to expand it to all schools."

At present, the school, under the direction of Principal Francis Chiochio, uses the four laboratories for central fields where closely related vocations are taught.

One laboratory is used to teach various careers in mechanics, while another deals with construction skills. The other two laboratories teach food services skills and home and nursing care, respectively.

By using modules, specified by the state Department of Education, the teachers introduce the students to the basic tools and skills needed in the fields as well as the opportunities that those entering it could explore.

"Under the old concepts, you used to have a wood shop in school. Now, we don't have a wood shop; we have a construction laboratory in which we are teaching concrete, steel, wood, plastics so that we are presenting a broad range of, hopefully, avenues of employment for later life," Maier said.

These laboratories are not meant to steer children into any one field, Maier said, but rather to give information to the students and let them choose what they might be comfortable doing.

The new laboratories were included in the overall plans to renovate Rue soon after the plans were determined,

according to John Pope, president of the board of education. The renovation was originally planned to merely rehabilitate the aging grammar school after the state ordered it closed in 1979 when masonry began falling off its exterior walls.

"We were going to renovate the school totally and we also were interested in this plan of education, so we decided to combine them in Rue School and we sent our ideas down to Trenton, where they received an enthusiastic response," Pope said. "This had never been done in Hoboken previous to now."

"We can assure motivation among the students immediately," Maier said. "We have a problem motivating children based on school alone, but if you give them a goal towards which they can see a relationship between learning and actually experiencing something with their hands they become motivated much more easily."

Besides the vocational laboratories, Pope said he was most proud of the additional room and services the renovation has brought to the students at Rue. In addition to an increased number of classrooms and additional administration and counseling space, the school also features a renovated combined gymnasium and auditorium and a new heating system featuring two huge boilers.

Although he is happy with the improvements, Pope agrees that much of the renovation could have been made simpler by better planning by the board throughout the work.

Since work was announced on a \$1.4 million renovation of the school, the project has been plagued by inconsistent work and additional costs. Perhaps its most difficult point came when the general contractor hired by the board, Deerpath Construction Co. quit midway through their work after contractual difficulties. Eventually the work was completed by board employees, but this delayed opening of the school for over a year and it eventually cost close to \$2 million.

The board eventually resolved its problems with Deerpath last year by agreeing to an arbitrated settlement.

## Developer proposes park for shipyard

By BRAD KELLY

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—A local developer wants to turn the vacant Todd Shipyard into a city park to ensure that nothing will blot the view from the two 22-story residential towers he is planning to build between the bridges on Park and Willow avenues.

George Vallone, a principal in the West Bank Construction Corp., said last week he has discussed with city officials the idea of taking title to the shipyard, turning it into a park and donating it to the city. He said he is willing to spend \$1 million to renovate the property.

In return, Vallone said he would require a written assurance from the city that the property would not be developed for at least 60 years.

Vallone said he sees no sense in having to purchase the property, since he would be giving it back to them.

"I would like to see a plan," Mayor Steve Cappiello said yesterday when told about Vallone's offer. Cappiello and other city officials said yesterday they have not been approached by Vallone.

Vallone yesterday would not say to whom he had spoken.

The 23-acre shipyard—currently owned by the city—is mostly under water.

But Vallone said he would like to prevent any construction at the shipyard, located on the waterfront between 16th Street and the Weehawken border.

Vallone is proposing to build two 22-story residential towers, to contain 412 condominiums, on the inland side of the Willow Avenue Bridge between 16th Street and Weehawken.

## Cappiello to unveil his slate

By BRAD KELLY

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Mayor Steve Cappiello is expected this week to announce a ticket that includes Councilman-at-Large Robert A. Ranieri, George W. Crimmins, the Hudson County Utilities Authority controller, and Edwin Duroy, the Salvatore Calabro School principal, sources said yesterday.

Cappiello will be the last mayoral candidate to announce a ticket. He is expected to make the announcement either today or at a \$250-a-plate fundraiser to be held at the Union Club tomorrow night, sources said.

Ranieri has been a councilman-at-large for the past 12 years. He has been Cappiello's running mate in the past three mayoral elections. Ranieri also is a Democratic assemblyman for the 33rd Assembly District, which includes Hoboken.

Duroy, a Puerto Rican, is expected to bring in a portion of the city's Hispanic vote. Of the 20,462 Hoboken residents who were registered to vote in the November election, 5,238, or 26 percent, were Hispanic.

Mayoral candidates Thomas Kennedy and Nunzio Malfetti also have put Hispanics on their tickets. Councilman Thomas Vezzetti is the only mayoral candidate who is not running with a Hispanic on the ticket.

Crimmins, who is the son of Police Chief George Crimmins, is valued for his background in business and finance, sources said. His experience in finance will be helpful in dealing with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's \$50 million Hoboken waterfront project, according to sources.

The deadline for filing petitions for the mayoralty and the three council-at-large seats is tomorrow. The mayoral election is scheduled for May 14.

## 2 named to review ed budget

By BRAD KELLY

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—City Council members Helen Macri and Salvatore Cemelli were appointed to the Board of School Estimate last night over the protests of anti-administration council members, who accused their two colleagues of neglecting to cut school spending in administrative areas in the past.

The current proposed 1985-86 Board of Education budget calls for an increase of \$10 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation above the current school tax of \$58.71.

The estimate board, which consists of two council members, two school trustees and Mayor Steve Cappiello, is scheduled to meet tonight to discuss ways of reducing the proposed school budget.

Macri and Cemelli were on the estimate board last year when it recommended approximately \$700,000 in cuts for the 1984-85 school period.

But according to Councilman Thomas Vezzetti, who is running in the May 14 mayoral election, the estimate board also should have consolidated administrative positions last year.

"I want severe cuts in the budget," Vezzetti said last night, referring to the proposed 1985-86 budget.

Vezzetti, as well as other school board critics, have proposed consolidating the board secretary and business manager positions.

Vezzetti sponsored a resolution to appoint himself and independent Councilman E. Norman Wilson Jr. to the board.

The resolution was voted down last night by Council Members Robert A. Ranieri, Anthony H. Romano, Mary Franccone, Macri and Cemelli. Councilman Thomas Kennedy voted present because he did not want to be accused of playing politics. Kennedy is running for mayor. Councilmen Patrick Pasculli, Wilson and Vezzetti voted for the resolution.

Another resolution to appoint Macri and Cemelli was approved by the same majority that voted against the resolution to appoint Vezzetti and Wilson.

Before the votes, former Trustee Steve Block implored the council not to approve the school budget until the board comes up with a plan for "overhauling the school system."

Block long has been a critic of the school district, which recently was denied state accreditation.

Block resigned from the board earlier this month, saying he believed he would not be reappointed to it by Cappiello in May and that as a lone administration critic he had accomplished nothing in his six years as a member.

In other business, the council approved a resolution authorizing the city's Law Department to consider establishing an off-street parking garage trust fund.

According to Assistant City Attorney Bernard Kenny, the municipal zoning ordinance requires developers to provide a parking space for every new unit of residential housing they create.

Kenny said developers who put an unspecified amount of money toward the construction of a parking garage could become exempt from this zoning law.

## Hoboken businesses eligible for loans

By BRAD KELLY

Staff Writer

The U.S. Small Business Administration yesterday made approximately \$4.6 million in low-interest loans available to Hoboken businesses that were either damaged or destroyed in a Jan. 15 fire that swept through a section of the city's industrial area.

Carl Jordan, area director for the SBA, said yesterday his office approved the city's application for a federal economic disaster area designation, which will allow 15 businesses to apply for low-interest loans of up to \$500,000 each.

Eight businesses were destroyed, and seven businesses were damaged in the fire that began in an abandoned warehouse owned by Levolor Lorentzen Inc. of Hoboken.

Fire officials have attributed the cause of the fire to both the careless use of acetylene torches by workers demolishing the building and a barrel fire the workers had set to keep themselves warm.

Jordan said those businesses un-

able to get credit through another agency are eligible for up to \$500,000 in loans, to be paid back at an interest rate of 6 percent during a period of up to 30 years. He said businesses that are able to get credit elsewhere will be eligible for up to \$500,000 in loans, to be paid back at an 8 percent interest rate during a period of three years.

SBA representatives are scheduled to be at the city's Community Development Agency at 134 Grand St. on Thursday and Friday between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. and on Saturday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to take applications for the loans, according to Jordan.

Jordan said the 78 people who lost their automobiles in the fire also are eligible to apply for low-interest loans Thursday through Saturday.

Both houses of the New Jersey Legislature recently approved a bill that would provide \$1 million in low-interest loans to those same businesses and automobile owners. The legislation needs the approval of Gov. Thomas H. Kean.

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## Hoboken awash in nominating petitions

By Margaret Schmidt

Nearly 8,000 petitions are already circulating around Hoboken as 28 persons have asked for the forms they need to be put on the May 14 municipal ballot.

Only four seats are up for election in the city that has about 21,000 registered voters. Twenty-one sets of 300-signature petitions have been given out for the at-large council race and five have been taken for mayor, said City Clerk James Farina.

Voters can sign three at-large petitions since there are three seats and only one mayoral petition.

The high number of requests for petitions in the councilman-at-large contest has forced Farina to twice order new forms.

Some believe the push is indicative of anti-administration sentiments because several of the expected to run independently are city employees.

Mayor Steve Cappiello has already announced he will seek a fourth term and will run with a slate.

James Roarty, campaign manager for Councilman Tom Vezzetti, who has announced his candidacy for mayor, picked up a set of petitions in that race yesterday.

Rocco Cavallo, who is working with mayoral candidate Tom Kennedy, a councilman-at-large, also picked up a set. Kennedy has already taken a set and it is believed he is gathering more signatures than necessary.

Eugene Failla Jr. and Nunzio Malfetti, a former councilman who narrowly lost to Cappiello in last year's Democratic primary for a

county freeholder seat, have also taken petitions in the mayoral race.

In the at-large contest two men have filed petitions so their names can be placed on the ballot.

Police Officer James Mancuso and Michael Sarullo, a supermarket manager, are the official candidates.

Others who have taken petitions in for councilman-at-large are: Jean Forest, a member of the Hoboken Neighborhood Alliance; local developer Perry Belfiore; restaurant owner

Joseph Lisa; Malfetti; Florence Amato; Frank Raima, a partner in the conversion of the Sadie Leinkauf School to apartments; Mario Mercado, superintendent of the police garage, and Cavallo.

Also, Steven Block, a member of the school board and a vocal opponent of the administration; Ruben Rivera; Michael R. Holmes; Nicholas Pasculli Jr.; Oswald Johnson; Garciella A. McEwen; Charles White, and Michael Finnegan, who is believed to have taken the petitions for Helen Manogue, a member of the Hoboken En-

viorment Committee and Hioitric District Commission. Aaron Miranda-Forman, Hudson County representative to the Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey, has taken three sets.

Petitions must be filed by 4 p.m. March 28 for names to be put on the ballot. Although petitions are usually taken out by the person who wishes to run, would-be candidates aren't required to pick up their own materials.

Petitions must be signed by 205 persons.

## Hoboken rent-control law under fire

By Margaret Schmidt

Hoboken's new rent-control ordinance—at first hailed by most as the best law possible—is coming under fire from different sectors.

Only a month after the City Council passed the ordinance and Mayor Steve Cappiello approved it, the law is seen as at once too lenient and too strict.

A group of 60 tenants' rights advocates signed an open letter to the mayor and council yesterday

and pointed to three sections of the law they believe will foster displacement of low- and middle-income tenants, the situation that prompted the rewriting of the law.

Meanwhile, some city officials fear the law is too hard on landlords and will lead to "condomania."

And, many landlords are complaining to City Hall that the controls placed on them don't allow for free enterprise.

The major changes in the ordinance included the elimination of substantial rehabilitation rent increases and limiting vacancy decontrol. The provisions were generally viewed as having propelled the so-called renaisance by forcing low- and middle-income tenants to leave Hoboken.

Cappiello has designated a committee to oversee the new law's enforcement and expects a report within a year—a time

period some say is too long. Councilman Tom Vezzetti has asked the Law Department to draw up some amendments to the new ordinance but discussion of the potential changes haven't been put on the council agenda.

Tenants' rights advocates disagree with three provisions in the law: decontrol through major reconstruction of a deteriorated and vacant building; capital improvement

surcharges up to 33.3 percent of the base rent, and tenants paying up to 60 percent of the cost of bringing a deteriorated building up to code.

"The new law encourages landlords to remove tenants and let buildings run down by promising an exemption from rent control for vacant and deteriorated buildings," the group said in its letter. "We believe this provision rewards negligence and harassment and

will force many tenants to leave Hoboken."

The law stipulates that the exemption won't be allowed if the vacancy was forced or the deterioration was through neglect or any unlawful means "which can be attributed to the applicant."

Rev. Paul Hagedorn, one of the signers and a member of the Hoboken Clergy Coalition and

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## Hoboken planner eyes zoning shift

By BRAD KELLY

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The city's planning consultant is seeking a change in the city's master plan that would allow residential and commercial development to take place on waterfront properties currently zoned for industrial use.

At a special meeting of the City Council yesterday, consultant Ralph Seligman said the redevelopment of the Hudson River waterfront will someday hit the city's northern shore.

The waterfront south of Stevens Tech is zoned for special waterfront use—a designation that allows mixed-use development—and is expected to become part of the \$500 million Port Authority of New York and New Jersey development project.

The waterfront north of Castle Point is still zoned for industrial use, but Seligman said recent development trends indicate the area is becoming ripe for mixed-use development and should be given the waterfront designation.

The sale of the vacant Hoboken

shipyards Inc. facility to private developers and the recent proposal to build two 22-story residential towers along Park Avenue are two examples of that trend.

Seligman said safeguards such as buffer zones would have to be created between any mixed-use developments and companies such as Maxwell House Coffee and Union Dry Dock, which still are operating on the waterfront.

Yesterday's meeting, called by Councilman Thomas Kennedy, was mostly a briefing session on Seligman's current review of the city's master plan.

As mandated by the state's Municipal Land Use Law, the city is currently re-evaluating its land uses.

Councilman Thomas Vezzetti said yesterday he is opposed to the change in zoning because he believes it will drive out Maxwell House—the city's largest taxpayer.

Although Seligman is proposing that the city's northern shore be charged from an industrial zone to a waterfront zone, he wants to keep the rest of the city's industrial zones intact.

## Hoboken rent-control law under fire

Continued from Page 1.

The Campaign for Housing Justice, said he believes there will be many attempts to vacate buildings illegally and the landlords will send official-looking letters, for example, to disguise their motives.

"Many tenants do not know their rights," he said, "and believe what the landlord tells them."

He added that by putting the onus on the applicant, the law might miss cases in which a building was transferred in name only and the "previous" owner harassed tenants or let the building run down.

The law, he said, should be strict enough that no such loopholes can be found.

One city official countered that the group should be more concerned with educating tenants so that such problems will be brought to authorities' attention.

He added that by specifying that vacancy or deterioration must not be attributable to the applicant, cases in which the applicant was party to activities such as forcing tenants out or turning faucets on in vacant apartments to ruin electrical wiring are covered.

With respect to the charges passed on to tenants when work is done in the building, Hagedorn said tenants shouldn't be made to pay for upgrading the building, particularly when code violations are being corrected.

The letter alludes to "inadequate code enforcement," which Hagedorn said referred to the entire process, especially when

small fines are levied in court. It wasn't meant as an attack on the city's housing inspection office, he added.

Chief Housing Officer Jude Fitzgibbons took exception to the statement yesterday, saying "Code enforcement in this town is more than adequate. In the early 70s there were more slums here than in any town in New Jersey. I saw the housing stock at its worst. The stock has improved greatly."

Rent Regulation Officer Joseph Santiago said that only one application has come in so far under the vacant and deteriorated buildings section and one under the capital improvement section.

"This law will never be applied," he said. "Right now I have people running away from capital improvement."

Because of the several steps that must be taken to certify that vacancy and deterioration occurred legally and reconstruction included major overhauls such as installing all new plumbing, the law will discourage landlords from applying for that exemption, he said.

"Nobody's going to apply for it," Santiago predicted. "It doesn't make sense to go through the rent control board."

Instead, landlords will find it easier to gut a building, rehabilitate it and sell it as condominium apartments. That way, he can get back a sizable profit on his investment and not have to bother with the long procedures and then tenant relations.

Although the effect of the law won't be felt for a while, Hoboken's housing stock is already leaning more and more toward condominiums. Signs are posted all over the city, even across the street from housing projects in the southwestern section, what is often called The Frontier.

Mayor Cappiello, who said his office has already heard from several landlords complaining that the new law is too restrictive, agreed that the tougher the rent control the more condos that will be created.

They are particularly concerned, he said, that vacancy decontrol has been limited to 25 percent once in three years.

Even in trying to strike a balance, he added, "You can't please everyone."

See HOBOKEN—Page 8.

## Brennan may run for council

By BRAD KELLY

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Martin Brennan, a former City Council president, yesterday took out petitions for what could be one of the most crowded at-large council races in recent memory.

Brennan became the 21st person to take out petitions for the at-large race, according to officials of the City Clerk's Office. Four people have taken out petitions for the mayoral race. Both elections are scheduled for May 14.

Brennan, 67, was a city councilman between 1971 and 1979. He was president during his last six years in office. He was defeated in the 1979 election by current 5th Ward Councilman E. Norman Wilson Jr.

"I think I can be useful down there. I think the council can use experienced people down there (City Hall)," Brennan said yesterday.

Brennan was deputy county clerk in Hudson County between 1953 and 1963 and was Hoboken city clerk between 1964 and 1965. He is a linotype operator for the Jersey Printing Co. of Bayonne.

Brennan said he will run an independent campaign.

Other people who have taken out petitions for the at-large seat include: residential developer Frank Raima; Steve Block, a Board of Education trustee; former Councilman Nunzio Malfetti; and Aaron Miranda-Forman, Hudson County representative to the Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey.

Michael Sarullo, a manager for a Jersey City supermarket, and Police Officer James Mancuso already have returned their petitions with the 208 necessary signatures.

Councilmen Thomas Vezzetti and Thomas Kennedy and James Roarty and Malfetti have picked up petitions for mayor.

Mayor Steve Cappiello has announced he will seek a fourth term as mayor, but has yet to pick up his petitions.



# Waterfront development made slow but steady progress last year

3/1/85 H.D.

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

Companies racing to develop the Hudson River waterfront continued a slow but steady progress last year, and for the first time in many years, new signs of life could be seen stirring among the rotted piers and abandoned railroads.

In North Bergen, construction workers began digging foundations for 70 residential units expected to open later this year.

Steel framing for a 17-story office building was begun at the foot of Warren Street in Jersey City.

In Weehawken, framers nailed together the skeleton of a 600-seat waterfront restaurant.

Several new entrants — the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, former North Bergen Mayor Peter Mocco, and The Sperry Group — presented their plans to local municipalities and are waiting for a green light to begin development.

Arcorp and Hartz Mountain Industries Inc. were sent back to the starting line in Weehawken by public opposition to pro-development measures, but are expected to be in the race again this year.

"The development of the waterfront has gone from pipe dreams to blueprints to bricks and mortar," authority Chairman Alan Sagner said recently.

The Edgewater waterfront is being cleared and leveled for the thousands of residential units that are planned.

The Borough Planning Board has approved nine residential development projects along River Road, including:

- Conversion of the Alcoa plant into 104 residential units. The project, which has undergone several changes in the past year, also calls for 220 residential units to be built in a series of three- to five-story buildings.
- Ferry Plaza North. Townhouses, two 14-story residen-

tial towers and 20,000 square feet of commercial space are being proposed.

- Conversion of the vacant Ford plant into 700 residential units.
- Ferry Plaza South. The project calls for two 14-story highrises.

- The Commodore. Sixty townhouses have been constructed. Two 14-story highrises also are proposed for the site.
- Dunro. A total of 142 residential units is proposed.

- The Market Place. The project calls for the construction of 14 retail stores.
- Altier. Thirty condominiums are proposed.

Paul Hoinash, former chairman of the borough Planning Board, said he is surprised development has not begun. He said the smaller developers may be waiting for American Landmark Development Inc. of New York City to start a \$70 million renovation of the old Alcoa plant.

"That should start a chain reaction. In the spring, we should begin seeing pilings being driven and concrete being poured," Hoinash said.

In North Bergen, construction workers are "just fighting the weather," according to John Doyno, vice president of the Ror Harbor Development Co.

Foundations are being laid for the first phase of development, which calls for 70 residential units. Doyno predicts that people will be living along the North Bergen waterfront by the end of the year.

The total project calls for 351 residential units in a number of low-rise buildings and three 17-story highrises.

Trucking magnate Arthur E. Imperatore has been silent about development plans along the West New York waterfront. The 150-acre tract he purchased four years ago remains vacant, and no plans have been presented to town officials.

Plans for a \$3 billion development project, proposed by Imperatore's

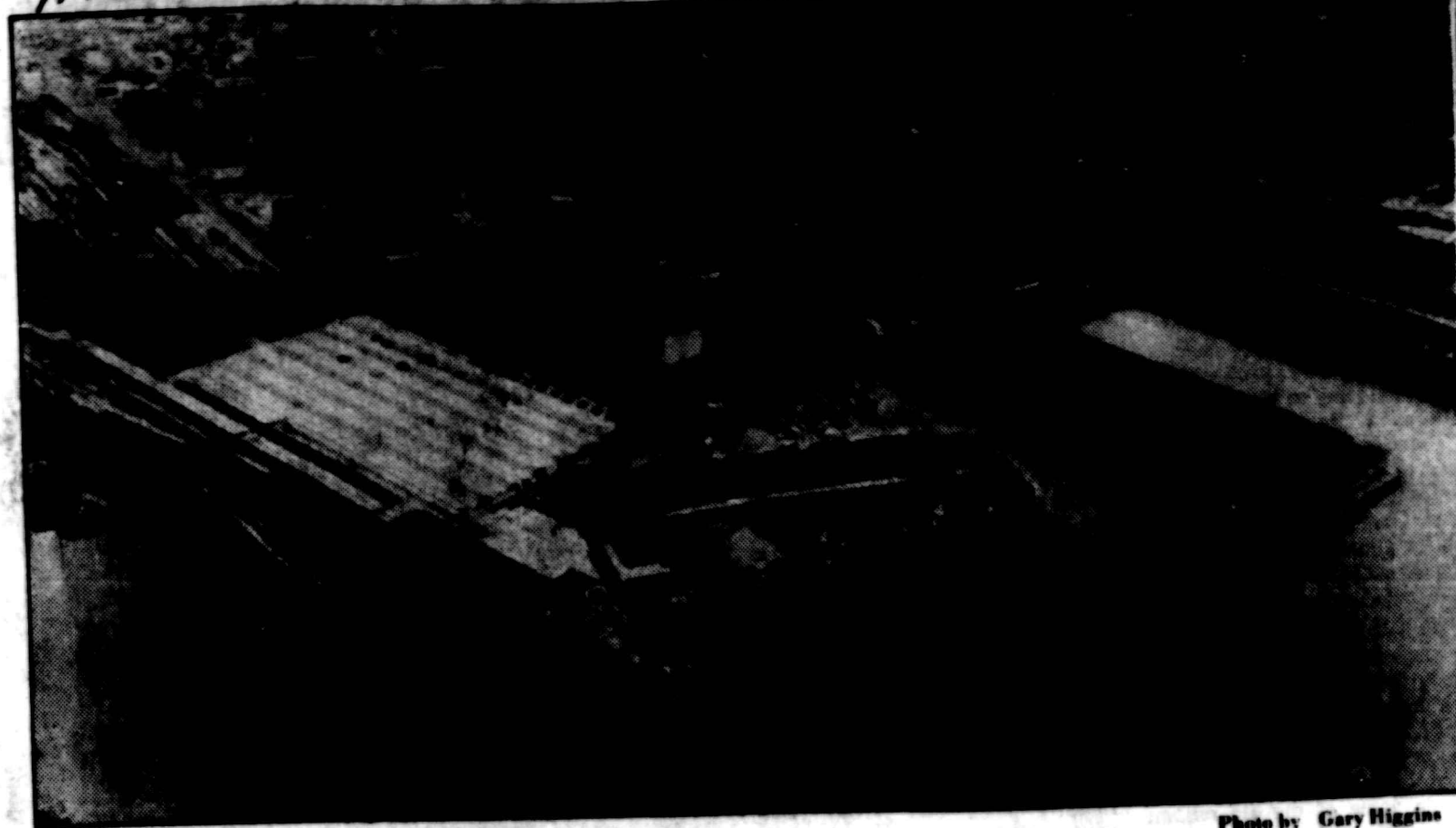


Photo by Gary Higgins

For the first time in many years, new signs of life can be seen along the Hoboken waterfront.

Arcorp for 160 acres of Weehawken waterfront, went back to the drawing board for revision last year after township residents successfully defeated a section of the township zoning ordinance that would have allowed for highrises to be built above the Palisades.

A spokesman for the project said revised plans are scheduled to be presented in the near future.

A 600-seat restaurant is near completion on the 61-acre tract of Weehawken waterfront property owned by Hartz Mountain Industries Inc.

Hartz' plans to turn that tract into 3 million square feet of office space and 300 condominiums hit a snag last year when township residents

defeated a referendum to grant the company five-year tax abatements. Hartz' application for a \$15 million Urban Development Action Grant to help finance the project was held up last year pending the outcome of a battle over that grant program between New York and New Jersey.

Mort Goldstein, vice president of law and public relations for Hartz, has said the development project may have to be scaled down and will now proceed at a slower pace.

State legislation authorizing the Port Authority to proceed with its \$500 million waterfront development in Hoboken was signed into law last year, ending a two-year battle between officials from New York and New Jersey.

Officials earlier this year unveiled plans for a hotel, three 30-story office towers, 1,500 condominiums, a marina and several science and technology facilities for the city's waterfront.

The authority is hoping to have buildings completed within the next several years. Development plans

will have to be approved by the City Council.

The purchase of the bankrupt Hoboken Shipyards property by three New York City developers earlier this year is expected to bring a mixed-use development project to the city's northern waterfront. Tentative plans call for four 25-story residential towers and a marina.

Jersey City's application for a \$40 million UDAG to help finance the \$1.4 billion Newport City development project was approved last year. Although the site remains vacant, the developers are expected to come before the city next month for permits to begin grading other infrastructure preparations.

The conversion of 25 million square feet of warehousing into office space is under way at the Harborside Bankers Trust development project in Jersey City, but city officials are concerned that New York City's attempt to block a \$9.5 million UDAG for the project may slow its development.

The first phases of the proposed \$220 million Caven Point development project has been granted preliminary approval by the city's Planning Board.

The project calls for 1,600 luxury residential units, a hotel, commercial office space and boat slips to be built along a series of canals immediately north of Liberty State Park.

The project is expected to come under lengthy review by local, state and federal regulatory agencies, because dredging would be required to create the canals.

Mocco's plans to turn 75 acres of waterfront property into a \$400 million mixed-use development project is expected to come before the city Planning Board for site plan review in April.

Demolition of Roosevelt Stadium to make way for a residential development project on the Hackensack River is expected to be approved this spring. The project calls for 1,000 residential units.

Construction workers have begun erecting steel framing for a 17-story office tower that will become part of the Evertrust office development. The project calls for 80,000 square feet of office space.

The first phases of the proposed \$220 million Caven Point development project has been granted preliminary approval by the city's Planning Board.

## Council will discuss trustee's appointment

By Margaret Schmidt

The appointment of a local banker to the Hoboken Public Library board of trustees will be discussed Monday at the City Council caucus, 7 p.m.

Nidia Reitor, vice president and branch administrator of the Hoboken office of Hudson United Bank, has been appointed to the board by Mayor Steve Cappelletto.

The City Council will be asked to approve the appointment by passing a resolution.

Mary Gaspar, president of the board, said the addition of Reitor will put the body at full capacity. It has been operating with only four members for several months.

Also on the agenda is a resolution to ratify the city's filing legal papers to join Secaucus in the fight to stop Hudson County from turning over the old Margaret Hague Maternity

Hospital to Jersey City. The city has indicated it will sell the facility to a developer.

Mayor Steve Cappelletto asked the Law Department earlier this week to file the papers, which are due in Superior Court by Monday.

Cappelletto has said he agrees with Secaucus' position that if the building is sold the county should receive the profits, not Jersey City.

Other items on the agenda include discussion of bids and proposals for improvements to the Little League Field, towing, ammunition for the Police Department and sports supplies and equipment.

Payment of \$163,204 to a contractor for repairing several ruptured sewer lines will also be discussed.

The council will vote on the issue at its meeting Wednesday, 7 p.m.

## Hoboken CDA plans park improvements

New sidewalks, better lighting and a new railing around Church Square Park are among several changes planned by the Hoboken Community Development Agency.

Working with a budget between \$300,000 and \$350,000, the CDA also plans to prune the trees the park and add some trees and shrubs and repair a pavilion in the center of the park, said Fred Bado, executive director.

The plans were revealed at a public meeting attended by about 20 residents, Thursday night.

John Clarke of the Trenton architectural firm Clarke and Caton made a presentation to the audience.

Bado said most of the residents thought the plans called for overly expensive sidewalk construction. The architects estimated it will cost about \$150,000 to replace and realign the sidewalks.

"Being lay people, they were really shocked at the cost," Bado said. "But the architects' opinion is that to use cheaper cheaper materials wouldn't be satisfactory."

Two existing paths the architects had decided to leave out of their plans were put back in when the audience said they are well used, Bado added.

In general, the western portion of the park will still be for passive recreation, such as sitting, and the eastern half will be for activities such as basketball, and play equipment.

The plans were drawn up after two public meetings during the summer.

Concerns repeatedly voiced are for better maintenance and security and materials that will be vandal-proof.

The architects will now make mechanical drawings and the CDA will go out to bid for a contractor to do the park work, a spokesman said.

## Block quits Hoboken school board

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Steve Block said yesterday he beat Mayor Steve Cappelletto to the punch by resigning his seat on the Board of Education.

Block — the only anti-administration voice on the nine-member school board — is up for re-appointment, and it is doubtful he would have been asked to serve for a seventh year.

"My term is up this year. I never had any power. I certainly had no influence (over the board)," Block said yesterday.

Block was one of the key people behind Councilman Thomas Vezzetti's campaign to unseat Cappelletto in the May 12 mayoral election, until the two men split over who should be on the ticket.

Cappelletto, who received a scathing letter of resignation from Block yesterday, would not com-

ment on a possible replacement for Block.

But according to sources, Cappelletto is likely to appoint an Hispanic to the board in an attempt to gather Hispanic support in the election.

Vezzetti may have lost key support when he failed to name an Hispanic to his ticket.

In his letter, Block called his past

six years on the board "the most powerful public involvement of my life."

But he said the problems facing the school district — low teacher morale, incompetent management, political patronage and low pupil achievement — will not be solved until Cappelletto replaces the entire board "by people who care about kids and education."

## Hoboken planners surprised by space

By Margaret Schmidt

Hoboken's Planning Board was caught by surprise Wednesday night when a slide presentation showed vacant land in residential sections of the city.

"We were really surprised," said board chairman Michael Ocello. "I'm 60 years old. I was born a half block from where I'm living and I didn't know there was so much empty space."

The slides, taken by photographer/filmmaker Nora Jacobson, were presented by board consultant Ralph Seligman and showed areas in the city's center where projects could be built.

"When I looked at those slides," Ocello added, "I began to wonder, 'Why does everybody want to go to the outskirts?'"

Ways to build up the areas were discussed.

The presentation was part of a special meeting on proposed

changes in the city's zoning master plan.

The world meeting was attended by Fred Bado, director of the Community Development Agency, who suggested moving the northern boundaries of two residential sections north of 14th Street, Ocello said.

Also discussed were ways to keep industry, particularly Maxwell House, on the northern end of the waterfront while changing the zoning from industrial use to mixed uses, the chairman added.

The group further reviewed a proposal to put a revenue-generating Municipal Land Use law into the city's code.

The law would allow the city to create a fund for infrastructure improvements by charging fees to developers who created more than 10 housing units or 10,000 square feet of non-residential space.

"That's only in the talking stage now," Ocello stressed.

## Vezzetti defends skipping Hispanic for council race

By Margaret Schmidt

Tom Vezzetti feels he made the right decision in putting a Republican rather than a Hispanic on his ticket in Hoboken's mayoral race.

Now, his problem is to convince the city's largest Spanish-speaking population that he's serious when he says the community should have an elected representative at City Hall.

"I'm getting a lot of flack," he said yesterday. "The Hispanics are annoyed. I can't say for sure that they'll support me. Hopefully, they will."

Vezzetti, a councilman running for mayor, announced Wednesday that his running mates in the May 14 election will be Sixth Ward Councilman Patrick Pasculli, community activist Helen Canning and Annette Illing, a Republican and a leading force in the Grogan Marineview apartments tenants association. The three will run for the at-large council seat.

In picking Illing, Vezzetti passed over Jean Rodriguez, an employee of Columbia University who instructs Head Start teachers.

Both women would make "great candidates," Vezzetti said, but he was forced to make a choice between them because of infighting among the Republican and liberal forces in his coalition of supporters.

"Both (groups) have validity to their arguments," he explained. "I had to decide quickly because we're committed to our kickoff on Saturday."

He chose Illing, he said, because she lives in the First Ward, where Vezzetti needs support. Also, she's 37, 10 years older than Rodriguez, and Canning is 25. With the two younger women, Vezzetti would have

feared his slate would be viewed as a "baby ticket."

The councilman said several other Hispanics were asked to be on the ticket but declined.

To counteract a possible backlash, Vezzetti will make numerous guarantees to the Hispanic community such as ensuring an end to displacement through gentrification.

"And as soon as I can," he said, "I will get a Hispanic person into office. As mayor, I will be able to do a lot of maneuvering to get a Hispanic into elected office."

Vezzetti added that, with or without a community representative on his ticket, he believes he is the best choice for Hispanics.

His record, he said, shows that he votes for laws and programs that aid the community.

He is running against announced candidates Mayor Steve Cappelletto, who is seeking his fourth term, and Councilman-at-large Tom Kennedy. Neither man has announced his ticket, but it is believed both will include a Hispanic.

Vezzetti said when announcing his ticket that his Hispanic supporters agreed with his choice. Rodriguez and Jaime Munoz, a close advisor, could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Vezzetti credits Munoz and the Hispanic population with helping him get elected to the City Council in 1983 when he upset the incumbent.

Hoboken's Hispanic population was listed as 17,000, about 40 percent, in the 1980 census. Estimates of the community's size today varies because of the uncounted persons who have been forced to leave Hoboken because of spiraling rents.

## Tax drop slated in Hoboken

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Mayor Steve Cappelletto is expected to submit to the City Council tonight a 1985 \$23 million budget that calls for a tax decrease of almost \$7 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

According to a copy of the 1985 budget obtained yesterday by The Dispatch, the city has cut the amount to be raised through taxation by \$556,727. The cut reduces the municipal portion of the overall tax rate from \$64.70 per \$1,000 assessed to \$57.82.

The overall tax rate — which includes the municipal, school and county tax rates — is expected to drop from \$165.58 per \$1,000 to \$162.69, according to City Business Administrator Edwin Chius.

Chius said the proposed county budget is expected to cost city tax-

payers almost \$3 more per \$1,000 on their tax bills. He said the school budget calls for a tax increase of 92 cents per \$1,000.

The spending plan includes:

- The addition of 18 firefighters and six police officers in the middle of the year at a cost of approximately \$216,000.
- A total of 10 new police cars and three new pieces of firefighting apparatus at a cost of \$640,000.
- A \$50,000 rental assistance program. The program is expected to provide rent subsidies to senior citizens who cannot afford rent increases.
- The addition of approximately 10 to 15 part-time employees to clean city streets and parks.
- A \$55,000 grant program to encourage the arts.

The council is scheduled to review the budget tonight.

City Councilman Thomas Vezzetti yesterday criticized the hiring of part-time employees as an attempt by Cappelletto to obtain votes in the mayoral election scheduled for May 14. Vezzetti is one of Cappelletto's opponents.

A total of \$12 million worth of taxes is needed to support the 1985-86 school budget and the 1985 municipal budget, according to a statement released yesterday by Cappelletto.

"This is my 12th budget as mayor, and I am proud to say that Hoboken has become a textbook case for what an enlightened, dynamic city government can accomplish for its people," he said.

Last year, the total budget was \$23.2 million.

3/1/85 Senate OKs Hoboken fire aid

TRENTON — The Senate yesterday adopted, 21-11, and sent to Gov. Thomas H. Kean for his signature legislation appropriating \$1 million to provide emergency insurance for victims of the \$10 million fire that ravaged a six-block industrial

area in Hoboken Jan. 15.

The set was sponsored by Assemblyman Robert A. Ranieri of Hoboken and Sen. Christopher J. Jackson of West New York.

It would provide aid for more than a dozen small businesses and 78 auto owners.

## Hoboken denies condo proposal

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—A proposal to construct 108 condominiums in the city's industrial section was knocked down last night by the city's Board of Adjustment.

The plan by developer Harvey Gerber Jr. faced strong opposition from two longtime industries — the Henkel Corp. and Ferguson Propeller & Reconditioning Limited — located adjacent to the property slated for conversion to residential use.

Jack Fallon, Henkel plant manager, said after the meeting that the proposal to turn the 44,000-square-foot lot with two vacant warehouses into condominiums was "completely incompatible" with the area.

The lot, located at 1225 Grand St., sits directly across the street from Henkel — a massive development headquartered at 1201 Jefferson St. — and just south of the propeller company located at 1125 Clinton St.

Fallon said heavy truck traffic goes through the area. If the condominium proposal had been approved, the residents of that project eventually would have banded together to protest the truck traffic, he argued.

"When it comes to local residents vs. industries, I know who wins," Fallon said. The board recently granted several variances to developers who plan to turn abandoned warehouses located in the city's industrial section into condominiums.

The first such variances were granted in January to two local concerns, the Museum Development Corp. and the West Bank Construction Corp.

Museum Development has plans to construct 18 condominiums at 1200 Grand St.

West Bank wants to construct two 22-story residential towers between the Park and Willow avenue bridges.

Thursday night, the board granted a variance for the condominium conversion of a residential factory at 818 Jefferson St.

But the board last night denied Gerber the variance by a 4-3 vote.

Gerber, who has had an option since August to buy the property for \$500,000, said after the vote last night that he is no longer interested. He said he lost approximately \$30,000 from the option and from professional fees.

Mary Perry, who along with board member James Greany voted to grant the variance, said last night she approved of a proposal to turn property that is "in a pretty bad state into something worthwhile."

She also argued the city could use the increased taxes the condominiums would bring.

Mari Vernaci, who along with board members Frank Camerone, Salvatore DeGennaro and Vincent D'Agostino voted against the variance, said she could not see housing being built in such an industrially active area.

Those who were against the variance said their vote had nothing to do with a letter sent Thursday to the entire board by Mayor Steve Cappelletto. The letter urged the board to put a moratorium on such variances until a review of the city's master plan is completed.

Ralph Seligman, the city's planning consultant, has recommended that the city's waterfront north of Castle Point be changed from an industrial zone to a special waterfront designation, which would permit mixed-use development there.

Also, Rolly Realty Corp. wants to construct a three-story building in the rear of 133 at 1107 Washington St., and Caulfield Associates will see a variance to N.Y., is seeking variances for convert an industrial building at residential use, lot coverage, 1021-1027 Grand St. to a five-floor ratio, lot width, lot area, story residential building.

The Hoboken Zoning Board of Adjustment will meet tomorrow, 7:30 p.m., at City Hall to review four applications for variances.

L. & G. Medina is requesting a variance to build a penthouse at 1107 Washington St., and Caulfield Associates will see a variance to N.Y., is seeking variances for convert an industrial building at residential use, lot coverage, 1021-1027 Grand St. to a five-floor ratio, lot width, lot area, story residential building.

The side yard and parking site plan approval for 1200-1222 Grand St.

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## McCann may support anyone who opposes Cappiello at polls 3/9/85 J.D.

By Margaret Schmidt

Jersey City Mayor Gerald McCann, the Hudson County Democratic leader, may support all the candidates opposing Steve Cappiello's bid for a fourth term as mayor of Hoboken.

"It's no secret we've been against Steve Cappiello," said Aaron Schulman, a top political operative for McCann. "and we're not going to be with him now."

He said no commitments have been made to any of the candidates opposing Cappiello in the May 14 election but that he and McCann might support them all.

"We're for everyone who's against Steve Cappiello," he said.

The question of McCann's involvement was raised when Hoboken mayoral candidate Tom Kennedy, an at-large councilman, confirmed Aaron Miranda Forman as one of his running mates.

Forman worked for a McCann-backed candidate in the county freeholder race last year and considers himself "a good friend" of McCann and Schulman.

The 22-year-old member of the Regular Democratic Organization said he chose to run with Kennedy because he is "between the bullhorn and the boss."

"The bullhorn" refers to Councilman Tom Vezetti, who began his campaign for mayor by walking the streets and shouting through a megaphone, and "the boss" was an attack on Cappiello.

It led the mayor to remark, "I'm not a political boss. He's taking orders from the real boss, Aaron Schulman."

Forman said he does only what he feels is best for the community.

The candidate — who originally said Freeholder Nidia Davila Colon, whom he supported wasn't connected to the McCann organization — acknowledged later that he and the two Jersey City men are "on the same side."

But he denied any commitments have been made for financial backing.

Asked about the possibility of future commitments, he said, "I can't answer for them," and added, "I'm confident they'll help me in the future."

Kennedy was vehement that no negotiations were going on between his camp and McCann. "As God as my judge," he said, "I haven't seen Jerry McCann in two months and when I did see him it was at a function and I didn't even speak to him."

Schulman, if I've met him four times in my life, that's a lot."

When told of Schulman's comments, however, he said the backing would "boost" his campaign.

He noted that another mayoral candidate, Nunzio Malfetti, ran on McCann's ticket in the freeholder race. Malfetti narrowly lost to Cappiello who unsuccessfully ran against Republican Roger Dorian, also backed by McCann, in the general election.

"I'm dependent on the people of Hoboken," Kennedy said, "not on people from outside."

Kennedy is expected to confirm two other candidates on his ticket this weekend. They reportedly are Mary Gaspar, president of the Library Board of Trustees and past school board member, and Joseph Lisa, a local restaurant owner.

## Small-business loans available for fire victims

By Margaret Schmidt

The federal government has approved disaster aid to businesses and car owners affected by the Jan. 15 general-alarm fire at the Levelor Loretzen complex in Hoboken.

The Small Business Administration will give out applications for low-interest loans Thursday, Friday and Saturday at the city's Multi-Service Center, 124 Grand St., said Carl Jordan, area director for the SBA in Fairlawn.

Meanwhile, Assemblyman Robert Ranieri, a city councilman, is confident Gov. Thomas Kean will sign legislation allowing the state to grant \$1 million in low-interest loans to the fire victims.

The offices of 15 businesses were destroyed or severely damaged in the fire that affected a six-block area of the city. Levelor, the window blind manufacturer, lost a vacant building that was slated for demolition.

Seventy-eight cars were destroyed when the fire spread to Levelor's company parking lot.

While Levelor is insured for 80 percent of its losses, most of the small businesses were insured for less than half or none of the damage, according to statistics collected by the Hoboken Community Development Agency.

About 200 persons worked in those companies.

Jordan explained that individuals who lost real estate are eligible for up to \$100,000 in SBA loans, and individuals who lost personal property, such as

cars, can receive as much as \$20,000.

Businesses can borrow up to \$500,000, he said.

Applicants with credit elsewhere would be charged 8 percent interest, while those who don't have credit but are deemed able to repay could receive loans at 4 percent interest, Jordan added.

"We can't make loans to someone who is unable to pay," he said.

Insurance will be deducted from the amount of loss.

SBA workers will be at the Multi-Service Center 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday. They will explain the procedures and give material to potential borrowers.

The applicants need bring nothing but will have to submit financial documents when they turn in the applications, Jordan said.

Ranieri said yesterday he hopes the governor can act quickly so that state and federal loans can be applied for at the same time.

"The SBA loans can be a slow, bureaucratic process," he explained. "The state money would provide for immediate startups."

Rather than feeling the governor will decline to sign the legislation because loans are now available through the federal government, Ranieri said Kean should be encouraged.

"It would fall into place very easily," he said.

Ranieri sponsored the emergency relief legislation that passed in the state Assembly and Senate and adds Kean's signature to become law.



Hudson Place and River Street, which intersect at the New Jersey Transit bus terminal and PATH station form one of the city's most hazardous pedestrian crossings. 3/5/85 J.D.

## Hoboken traffic survey under way, with many hazards to be corrected

By James Kopchansky

With approach ramps to the Lincoln Tunnel to its north and the Holland Tunnel to its south, traffic in Hoboken takes on the form of a barrel tapped and pouring out both its ends.

Beginning in the morning and ending at night, heavy traffic circulates through the city's streets, seeking the quickest and most efficient route to either tunnel and the major access roads attached to both.

But in a city designed more for the pedestrian than the automobile, these cars and trucks have always been a serious, and sometimes deadly problem for Hoboken police and city administrators.

## Traffic DANGER SPOTS

And it's a problem that could grow worse as the city continues to expand in development in the years to come.

According to Public Safety Director James Giordano, the most hazardous areas of the city for both pedestrians and drivers tend to follow the route that many drivers take to reach or leave either tunnel.

"You get a wide variety of traffic coming from both the north and the south. What happens is that many of these people are in a rush to get to where they are going."

In addition, Giordano said, many pedestrians use the city's narrow streets as an invitation to cross in the middle of streets or against the lights, which only adds to the hazards.

"We have tried to minimize all dangerous intersections in the city by installing traffic lights and stop signs, and to a large extent we have succeeded, but there still are trouble spots remaining."

Both Giordano and Mayor Steve Cappiello said they hope to better understand the situation and discover solutions to traffic problems with a new survey being done on parking and traffic by the city's Community Development Agency.

The survey, which is part of a three-part study financed

by \$120,000 in federal grants to study commercial activity in the city, will assess the current traffic situation for city officials. With this information in hand, Cappiello said the city could start on an overall program to improve traffic in the city.

By consensus after talking to city officials, policemen and traffic crossing guards, the most hazardous sections of the city for both pedestrian and driver alike are:

• Hudson Place: In actuality, this takes in a six-block area that stretches from the entrance to the PATH station and the Erie-Lackawanna train terminal on Hudson Place to Second Street and includes traffic traveling north and south on Hudson and River Street.

According to Giordano, the mixture of automobiles entering the area to pick up and drop off passengers and double-parking to deliver packages to the many offices located in the area creates an obstacle course for the many pedestrians who cross there toward PATH and New Jersey Transit.

• Sinatra Drive: Known popularly as Shore Road, the drive represents a short-cut to many motorists who seek to escape the stop-and-go traffic on Washington Street. Running along the Hudson River between Fourth and 11th Streets, the drive almost invites impatient drivers to speed beyond its official 35 mph speed limit. However, since the road winds around the Castle Point Heights, cars are often speeding without seeing the road in front of them.

• 14th Street Viaduct: The streets leading to the ramp of the 14th Street Viaduct pose a special problem for police. Since the streets are fed by cars running downhill off the viaduct and off two bridges on Willow and Park Avenues that lead to the Lincoln Tunnel, traffic tends to speed up, particularly at night. Giordano said the use of traffic lights does cut down on speeding in the area, but said it still remains hazardous to pedestrians.

• Jackson Street: According to Sgt. Carl Fause, who heads the city's traffic crossing guards, Jackson Street is hazardous because of the heavy trucks that use the road to travel from the Holland Tunnel to the city's industrial sections. In addition, most of the city's public housing projects are located along Jackson, which means a steady flow of pedestrian traffic along its route.

• Observer Highway and Henderson Street: Although not as dangerous as it once was, the intersection still remains hazardous, largely because of traffic that tends to "whip" around the curve as it enters Hoboken from Jersey City and the Holland Tunnel. The creation of a traffic island in front of the Observer Highway fire station has cut down on its hazards, Giordano said.

## Malfetti wants Cappiello's seat 3/7/85 J.D.

By Margaret Schmidt

Former Councilman Nunzio Malfetti is running for mayor of Hoboken.

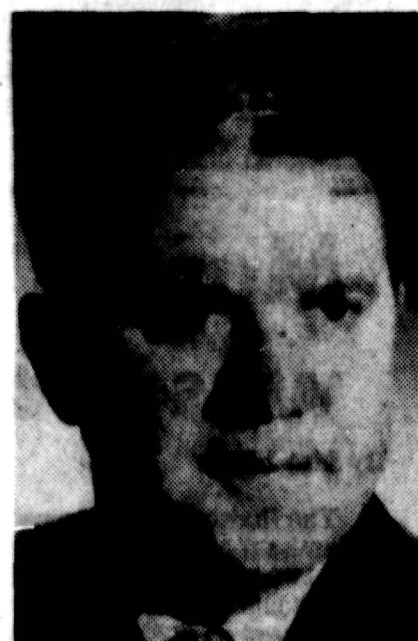
Malfetti, who narrowly lost the Democratic primary to Mayor Steve Cappiello in last year's race for Hudson County freeholder, said yesterday his campaign will work for a "new direction" in Hoboken.

"People want a change," he said, listing seven areas his candidacy will stress. Rather than discussing multi-million-dollar issues such as the waterfront development, Malfetti is approaching everyday problems of Hoboken life in his campaign.

He said he plans to run with a slate of candidates for the three at-large council positions, to be announced in about two weeks.

Also running for mayor in the May 14 election are Cappiello, Second Ward Councilman Tom Vezetti and Councilman-at-large Tom Kennedy. Nearly two dozen potential candidates have then out nominating petitions in the at-large race.

Malfetti, 38, said he will concentrate on the problem of rising



Nunzio Malfetti promises changes

Other areas are taxes, sewerage, schools, police, parks and streets.

Tax abatements must be brought to an end, Malfetti said, because many were granted indiscriminately. The practice, he said, has led to Hoboken's state-high property tax of more than \$150 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

He proposed a five-year phased plan to correct what he calls a sewer system maintained in a "haphazard, patch-up manner," and he further proposed a elected school board.

"I believe," he said, "the time has come that we should do away with an appointed school board and give the people an opportunity to choose their own Board of Education members."

He said it would be less political.

Malfetti called for more police on his streets and better maintenance of parks and streets.

"The 'tobacco road'-like condition of some of our streets is disgraceful beyond description," he said. "The people of Hoboken should not be made to accept dirty, pothole-ridden

streets as an everyday way of life." Malfetti served as councilman in the Sixth Ward from 1975 to 1982. He was defeated by Councilman Pat Pasculli, now a candidate for councilman-at-large on Vezetti's ticket.

In the June primary of the freeholder race, Malfetti narrowly lost the district to Cappiello, but he won the Hoboken portion.

"It was because it was Malfetti that was running," he said yesterday, "never mind the anti-Cappiello sentiment."

Cappiello lost the district in the November election to Republican Roger Dorian.

## Kennedy sorry for anti-Munoz literature 3-7-85 J.D.

By BRAD KELLY

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Councilman-at-Large Thomas Kennedy yesterday apologized to Our Lady of Grace Church for campaign literature critical of a respected Hispanic leader that was distributed to church members after the Spanish Feast Sunday.

The literature, which criticized community leader Jaime Munoz for his longtime support of Councilman Thomas Vezetti, was distributed Sunday by members of the Alliance Tenant Organization, a Hispanic group backing Kennedy for mayor. The literature included Kennedy's name.

"I had nothing to do with members of ALTO going in front of the church and knocking a respected leader in the Hispanic community," Kennedy, a parishioner of Our Lady of Grace, which is at 400 Willow Ave., said yesterday. "We making attacks... is not the way to win an election. They (ALTO) shouldn't have put my name on it (the literature)," he said.

Kennedy said he apologized to the Rev. Frederick Eid, the church's associate pastor, yesterday. He said he has told Juan Garcia, the head of ALTO, that other campaign literature cannot be distributed without his permission.

Eid yesterday said he thinks the distribution of campaign literature in front of a church is "not in good taste."

"We don't want the church involved in political matters," he said.

Eid said he believes the literature was distributed without Kennedy's knowledge.

Garcia yesterday said his people were "just out on the streets doing what we have to do to win this

election." He said the literature was distributed without Kennedy's knowledge or approval.

The literature criticized Munoz, also a parishioner of Our Lady of Grace, for his longtime support of

Vezetti. He and Munoz split earlier this month because Vezetti did not put a Hispanic on his mayoral ticket.

"I have the highest regard for Munoz," Kennedy said yesterday.

## Cappiello to join fight on fund cuts 3/1/85 J.D.

By Margaret Schmidt

Hoboken Mayor Steve Cappiello will be among 27 mayors at Grace Mansion in New York City tomorrow discussing how to stop President Reagan's proposed funding cuts to cities.

The morning meeting is sponsored by New York City Mayor Ed Koch and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. It is one in a series of meetings.

Cappiello, the only Hudson County leader invited, will represent the region, said Lee Jones, deputy press secretary to

Koch. Other New Jersey mayors will be from Trenton and East Orange.

"The point is to defeat the president's budget — or at least make it better for the cities," Jones said.

He said the mayors from different parts of the country will work on a strategy to pressure Congress and Reagan into keeping vital programs.

For Cappiello, then, the question will be "How do we make sure the New Jersey delegation will be behind us?" Jones added.

New York City stands to lose approximately \$1 billion in federal aid if Reagan's budget passes, according to Koch's office.

Cappiello was unable to say how many dollars Hoboken could lose but called the amount significant. He said that more than 2,500 people live in subsidized housing in the city.

The mayor said he accepted Koch's invitation "to help maintain as much of the assistance that we do get. A lot of people in Hoboken are in the low- and middle-income bracket and need assistance."

## New law could cut taxes in Hoboken 3/4/85 J.D.

By Margaret Schmidt

The Hoboken school budget, expected to ask for a \$1.5 million increase in the tax levy, may result in a tax decrease because of a change in state law.

The preliminary 1985-86 budget, approved by the Board of Education and the Hudson County superintendent of schools, calls for \$7.4 million from the local tax coffers. The current budget includes \$6 million from city taxpayers.

The budget goes before the Board of School Estimate on

March 10 when the five-member panel can change it in any way.

If it chooses it can now dip into the Board of Education's surplus to lower or maintain the tax levy without losing state aid.

City Business Administrator Edwin Chius explained that had Gov. Thomas Kean not signed the law last week the school board would have had to choose between increasing the tax levy or losing \$600,000 in state aid.

Under the old law, school districts were penalized for appropriating surplus funds to ease the local tax burden.

The Hoboken system has a \$2.9 million surplus that it could dip into and still have funds left over, Chius said.

The preliminary budget is nearly \$24.8 million, up from \$23.6 in the 1984-85 fiscal year, which ends June 30.

Most of the increase is for a negotiated 10 percent, across-the-board salary increase.

The Hoboken school population has decreased steadily in the last decade. The 1984-85 population is 4,900, down from 5,300 the year before.

## Hudson sued by Hoboken to stop Hague Hospital sale 3/5/85 J.D.

By Margaret Schmidt

Hoboken is seeking to enjoin Hudson County from turning the old Margaret Hague Maternity Hospital over to Jersey City.

In papers filed yesterday in State Superior Court, Jersey City, Hoboken called the title transfer "tantamount to an unlawful and unconstitutional taking."

The papers support Secaucus in its suit to block the transfer, a move also supported by West New York.

Jersey City has leased the facility for \$1 a year since 1974. The building is nearly vacant

with about 75,000 square feet being used by the Medical Center's Family Health Center. An unnamed developer reportedly wants to buy it.

The county Board of Freeholders voted in January to delete a clause in the deed that would have the property revert to the county when Jersey City stopped using it for the public.

At the meeting, Jersey City Mayor Gerald McCann agreed to use any profits from the sale for area development.

Secaucus has maintained in its suit that the county should sell the property and divide any

profit among all the municipalities, which pay taxes to the county, rather than give the property to Jersey City to sell.

County Executive Edward F. Clark has said he agrees with Secaucus' position and will wait until the lawsuit is resolved before taking any action.

West New York asserts that since the building is a county asset, all 12 municipalities should share in any sale of the structure at its fair market value. The West New York Commission authorized intervention on Secaucus' side.



# Hoboken election: Weighing lettuce, politics

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—It is not often that a person is asked to weigh the political future of the city while weighing lettuce at the local supermarket. Unless, of course, you live in Hoboken.

"Hello, how are you feeling? My name is Thomas Vezzetti and we need your vote to stay in Hoboken," the councilman said yesterday to a skeptical shopper at the Foodtown supermarket at Clinton and Seventh streets.

"Hi ya, gorgeous!" he yelled to an elderly woman before stuffing a piece of campaign literature into her shopping bag.

Supermarkets are just another stop on a relentless campaign trail that has not slowed since Vezzetti ran successfully for 2nd Ward councilman in 1983. Vezzetti is running for mayor in the May 14 election.

Back then, he used a bullhorn to get his anti-Mayor Steve Cappelletto message across. Next month, he plans to broadcast his views from a public address system strapped to an automobile.

His opponents call it badgering. Vezzetti calls it "Vezzettism." "We're not afraid of the public," Vezzetti said yesterday, referring to himself and his three running mates—Councilman Patrick Pasculli, Helen Cunningham and Annette Iling. "This is the most effective way (of campaigning). Nothing can replace this."

But Richard England, a manager at Maxwell House and the campaign manager for mayoral candidate Thomas Kennedy, said he finds Vezzetti's style of politicking "abrasive."



HOBOKEN CITY COUNCILMEN Thomas Kennedy, left, makes a point to a voter, while Thomas Vezzetti, hands out literature on Seventh



Street, as they campaign for mayor of that city yesterday. Both are challenging incumbent Steve Cappelletto.

"They are persistent... they hound. They won't accept 'yes,' 'no.' 'I'll think about it.' I would not like to be hounded," he said, referring to the Vezzetti ticket.

Kennedy and his running mates—Mary Gaspar, a former school board trustee, restaurant owner Joseph Lisa, and Aaron-Miranda Foreman, a Hudson County delegate to the Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey—on the contrary, have waged what some believe is an almost nonexistent campaign.

Yesterday, Kennedy was so grateful for being interviewed by The Dispatch that he tried to slip this reporter a \$20 bill at the end of the interview. It was refused.

Kennedy, earlier in the interview, said his ticket has started talking to local residents but also said he will not start campaigning aggressively until after the March 29 filing deadline.

"We have been campaigning. Not everyday and every night," Kennedy said yesterday. "Mr. Lisa

here meets more people serving food at his restaurant than knocking on doors," Kennedy said.

Kennedy said Foreman already has laid much of the groundwork in the city's 1st and 6th wards because of his support there for Nidia-Davila Colon, the 6th District Hudson County freeholder.

Colon defeated incumbent freeholder Frank Manzo for the freeholder seat in the district, which includes sections of Jersey City, Union City and Hoboken.

Manzo lost in the two Hoboken wards even though he was supported there by Cappelletto.

"The all know we're out there. There's nobody I haven't talked to," Gaspar, a former school board trustee who now sits on the Hoboken Library Board of Trustees, said yesterday.

Cappelletto said yesterday he has decided to wait before he begins the grueling door-to-door campaign that has made Vezzetti the most

visible candidate.

"You can knock yourself out in a long-winded campaign,"

Cappelletto said yesterday. The three-time mayor, who has yet to announce his ticket, said the campaign has been limited so far to strategy meetings and appearances at local functions.

Cappelletto said he plans to begin campaigning for re-election heavily after Easter week.

## Block resigns from Hoboken school board

By Margaret Schmidt

The anti-administration voice on the Hoboken Board of Education is resigning.

Steve Block, a professional education consultant who has served on the board nearly six years, blamed "a system that at the top lacks the political will to make education a priority" for his decision.

Although he has always been the dissenting force on the school board, Block said he chose this time to resign because "increasingly I've had no effect; my being there serves no useful purpose."

Block, who recently pulled

out of the campaign to elect Councilman Tom Vezzetti mayor, was appointed to the three-year board term in 1979 and 1982. His current term is set to expire May 15, the day after the mayoral election.

"It is quite clearly time for me to retire from the (Mayor Steve) Cappelletto Board of Education," Block said in a letter mailed to the mayor yesterday. "I do this with a heavy heart. Six years of my life have been devoted to various efforts at shaking you and your board majority loose from the disastrous policies you and they impose on the public school children of Hoboken, their

parents and the staff.

"That I have failed may well be in part due to my own limitations. But I'd rather believe I was doomed to fail no matter what approaches I took because you and your board and I hold such fundamentally different values about public education."

Block said he has proposed more than a dozen "concrete" programs to better the school system but has been turned down every time.

There is a broad consensus that the system is poor, he added, but the administration and school board have refused to take action to change it. Proof of the problem, he said, is that the new

Hoboken residents who can afford to send their children to private schools have shunned the system.

"The system is small enough that if serious reform were done properly, it could work," Block said. "But you need a broad-based committee. As a professional, I know what's possible."

Block, who moved to Hoboken in 1975, holds a master's degree in education from Kean College and has worked toward a doctorate at Rutgers University.

As a professional education consultant, he has provided policy analysis for School Watch, a statewide advocacy

project based in Trenton. He has also been director of research at the Education Law Center in Newark.

His work focuses on education reform and policy analysis, he said.

The Hoboken school district, which has been losing thousands of students over a decade, is locked into a political frame, Block said. "There does not appear to be a way out."

In his letter, Block told Cappelletto that making the system work will be difficult.

"Whoever replaces me, no matter how talented, will not by herself or himself succeed

alone," he said. "The disease you and your people have spread infects everything and requires radical surgery... A team of representative teachers, parents and the best administrators must be assembled to identify, with the help of school improvement consultants, the identify, with the help of school improvement consultants, the fundamental deficiencies in policy, program, instruction, staffing and management."

Block, whose son attends second grade at the Wallace School, said he would gladly join such an effort if done earnestly by the city.

## 6% drop expected in Hoboken municipal tax rate

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—City residents can expect a 6 percent decrease in the municipal portion of their tax bill this year, city Business Administrator Edwin Chius said yesterday.

Chius said approximately \$4 million will be shaved off the current municipal tax rate of \$64.70 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation according to the

terms of the proposed 1985 municipal budget, expected to be released next week.

Without giving specific figures, Chius estimated the 1985 proposed budget would be several hundred thousand dollars less than last year's \$23.2 million budget.

According to Chius, the amount of municipal taxes needed to support this year's spending plan will drop by approximately \$400,000. One of

the reasons, he said, is because the city last year had to pay back \$313,000 worth of emergency appropriations it borrowed from the state in 1983 to offset budget deficits.

Chius said the budget calls for a "small tax decrease and a small increase in overall spending," although more money is being spent on new programs and personnel. He added that approximately \$1.9 million of the city's \$2.3 million surplus will be used to keep the budget down.

The overall city tax rate—which includes the municipal, school and county tax rates—was most spiraling to \$123.50 in 1983 after the City Council failed to adopt the proposed budget, and the state mandated one that was approximately \$1 million less.

Although the municipal tax rate

is expected to be cut by \$4, the overall tax rate of \$123.50 will increase by approximately \$6 assessed unless the city Board of School Estimate cuts the proposed 1985-86 Board of Education budget, Chius said.

The school budget calls for a \$1.4 million increase in the amount to be raised through taxation.

Chius said this year's municipal spending plan calls for six new

police officers and approximately 19 new firefighters.

He said \$50,000 has been set aside for a tenant assistance fund.

A total of \$10,000 has been set aside for the purchase of computers and the hiring of additional employees to handle the citywide rent registration. Earlier this year, the council passed a rent control ordinance that requires all landlords to register their rents by Oct. 1.

## Vezzetti ticket will be first in mayoral race

By Margaret Schmidt

Hoboken councilman Tom Vezzetti, a candidate for mayor, and his three running mates plan to file nominating petitions this afternoon.

The Vezzetti ticket has more than the required 205 signatures, Vezzetti said.

The Second Ward councilman is challenging Mayor Steve Cappelletto in the May 14 election. He will be the first official mayoral candidate.

Other announced candidates for mayor are Councilman-at-Large Tom Kennedy and former councilman Nunzio Malfetti. The contest for the three at-

large seats has attracted nearly two dozen candidates.

Vezzetti has announced his slate will include Sixth Ward Councilman Patrick Pasculli, former Hoboken Neighborhood Alliance member Helen Cunningham and Annette Iling, a member of the Marineview Plaza Tenants Association and a Republican.

Vezzetti, a Democrat, lost several supporters when he declined to put a Hispanic on his ticket.

At 56, the councilman has long spoken out against Cappelletto. He and Pasculli often vote together on the council and become heated in their opposition to the administration.

## Hoboken budget meeting adjourned after bickering

By BRAD KELLY  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—A meeting held by the City Council yesterday to accept the proposed 1985 municipal budget was adjourned after almost two hours of bickering and politicking by council members and city officials.

The tone of the long and rather raucous meeting was established at the outset when Councilman Thomas Vezzetti refused to acknowledge his presence during the roll call.

Vezzetti, who is running for mayor, said repeatedly during the meeting he would not vote for a budget that still includes several department director positions and

the position of budget examiner. The councilman has been sponsoring ordinances to eliminate those positions for more than two years, but has been unable to get a majority vote.

"If we vote for the mayor's introduction of the budget, we're voting to keep unnecessary jobs in City Hall," Vezzetti said. The outspoken councilman said he felt the council should cut the proposed \$23 million budget before accepting it.

But Joseph Lisa, budget examiner for the council, said the council cannot cut the budget until it first accepts it and then send it to the state Division of Local Government Services for approval.

"Can we cut the budget without accepting it?" Vezzetti yelled.

"No," Council President Helen Macri answered back.

"I say we can," Vezzetti retorted.

"Tom, whether you like it or not, you're wrong," Macri responded.

"Tom, you've been harassing people all year... you've been putting up ordinances all year..." she continued.

"I love you as a person Helen, but Vezzetti began.

"Well, I don't love you as a person, Tom!" Macri interrupted.

Mayor Steve Cappelletto deviated from his prepared budget message yesterday to direct a statement at

Vezzetti, his fiercest critic.

"They don't laugh at Hoboken anymore, Tom," he said.

Vezzetti responded by criticizing Cappelletto's performance as a Hudson County freeholder.

"Why did you allow the county budget to go out of bounds?" he asked.

Cappelletto said he consistently voted against county budgets when he was a freeholder.

The proposed municipal budget calls for a tax decrease of \$7 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

"We have instituted stringent budget control, proving fiscal stability and effective city government,"

Cappelletto said in a lengthy budget message. He said the city has become "America's comeback town."

"Walk our streets. And you'll see neighborhood people, all concerned with maintaining their dignity and helping their neighbors," he said.

Councilman Patrick Pasculli, who is running for councilman at large on Vezzetti's ticket, said Cappelletto has "lost touch with the people of Hoboken."

"It's a comeback city, but where are all its people?" Pasculli asked, referring to the displacement of low-income residents throughout the city.

Pasculli called on his colleagues to reject the introduction of the budget and work out a new one.

## State tries to bar Hoboken from entering Marineview suit

TRENTON—The state attorney general's office has filed papers in the appeals court to stop Hoboken from joining a lawsuit brought by the Marineview Plaza Tenants Association.

The tenants are fighting three rent increases approved by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency.

The Hoboken Law Department has asked to file a brief on displacement of low- and middle-income families because of rising rents and conversions from rented apartments to condominiums.

The brief would include a copy of the city's new rent control ordinance as proof that the

city is concerned about the housing market for those who cannot afford high rents, said attorney Bernard Kenny Jr.

The two Grogan Marineview apartment buildings are for middle-income tenants who must have qualifying salary levels when they apply. The city has expressed concern that rising rents at the buildings will force out the people who are supposed to be served.

Steve Zamarin, attorney for the tenants' association, said the information the city would provide couldn't be offered by his clients because in the appeals case only materials already used in opposing the increases could be submitted. The

rent control ordinance wasn't passed until after the increases went into effect.

In opposing the city's entry as "friend of the court," the state says the tenants are adequately represented and the city's briefs would only be time-consuming. It also argues that the city would take an adversary position and quotes a case prohibiting such entry.

In the last two years, the majority of tenants in the apartments have received 21 percent increases. Others have received 10 percent increases.

The state-funded project isn't guided by city rent control and all rent increases must be approved by the HFA.

## Hottendorf to aid Ranieri on school legislation

Otto Hottendorf, a member of the Hoboken Board of Education for 33 years, has been named special legislative aide for public education in the 33rd Assembly District.

"Your experience and reputation as the dean of school board members," wrote Assemblyman Robert Ranieri in appointing Hottendorf, "will be of great assistance to my office in the preparation of legislation in the area of education."

Ranieri said the responsibilities of the non-salaried position will be to research educational problems and suggest solutions.

Hottendorf, who is "older

than three-quarters of a century," said he hopes to work on problems such as the increase in teen suicides and how to make school time more effective.

Modern technology, he explained, has taken education, even for the youngest, way beyond the reading, riting and arithmetic days of his youth.

Hottendorf, who has been president of the Hoboken school board several times, has served on several education panels such as the Hudson County Interscholastic Athletic Association, the Hudson County School Boards Association and the New Jersey Urban Committee.

## Asthma course offered at St. Mary Hospital

A family asthma program will be offered at St. Mary Hospital in Hoboken starting April 1.

The American Lung Association of Central New Jersey, is offering the six-week program to help children with asthma and their parents better understand and cope with the illness.

"Asthma is the most common of severe lung diseases in childhood," a spokesman for the association said, "and is the leading cause of school absenteeism."

The six consecutive Monday evening classes will be held from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the hospital. People may register by calling Margaret Crowe, assistant coordinator of the rehabilitation department at the hospital.

"This program," Ms. Crowe said, "is a family education experience designed to teach the participants the facts about asthma in a relaxed fun-oriented environment."

"Our goals are to enhance

the child's self-concept, to introduce the idea of family participation in asthma management, and to improve the physical ability of the child through breathing exercises and recreational activities, including games, crafts and swimming."

Some children recover from asthma as they mature, she said, but others do not. "The treatment that children with asthma receive and the way they learn to cope with it may have a lasting effect on the rest of their lives, which is why we're encouraging children with asthma and their parents to attend the family asthma program."

"It will give them the knowledge and skills they need to control the disease."

The American Lung Association, sometimes known as the Christmas Seal People, is committed to the control and prevention of lung diseases and their related causes, including smoking, air pollution and occupational hazards.

## Hoboken aiming at scofflaws

By Margaret Schmidt

Hoboken scofflaws beware. The Hudson County city perhaps best known for limited parking and unlimited summonses is cracking down on 320,000 outstanding parking tickets.

Four persons will be hired next month and take over the top floor of City Hall to work on the project for six months to a year, said Edwin Chius, business administrator.

The project was put together by Chius, Municipal Court Judge Peter Giordano, Hudson County Assignment Judge Burrell Ives Humphreys, violations bureau personnel and representatives of a private data processing company.

The city, working with National Computer Utility Company, a Bergen County firm better known as Computil, hopes to collect on the outstanding tickets and generate up to \$1.2 million in revenue, Chius said.

About 85 percent of the tickets are on New Jersey license plates and 10 percent from New York.

Hoboken is currently the New Jersey municipality with the second lowest collection rate, collecting 43 percent.

The city contracted with the private company after going out to bid last fall. Previously, the City of East Orange and Essex County dataprocessed the tickets.

Computil will receive a 15 percent commission on the backlogged tickets. It will be paid 6 cents for every new ticket it processes.

Nearly half of the city's backlog are tickets issued prior to 1981.

Of the license plates involved, 87,000 have one to five tickets; 11,000 have six to 20; 1,300 have 21 to 40; 108 have 41 to 60, and 42 have 61 or more.

Tickets start at \$5 as do penalties for paying late, Chius said.



## 200 stand in line 48 hours for 20 apartments in Hoboken

Nearly 200 low-income families have applied to be tenants at the Caparra Homes Project in Hoboken where 20 apartments are available.

The applicants, who began waiting on line outside the Jefferson Recreation Center on Monday afternoon, placed their names on the list of potential tenants yesterday.

The Section 8 housing is offered through a program that combines public and private investment. The newly constructed two-family homes are owned by middle-income families who have agreed to live there and rent to low-income tenants.

The owners are mostly Hispanic members of the Hoboken community.

The turnout for the federal Housing and Urban Development applications forced police to put up barricades and patrol the area.

The crowd was orderly, said Fred Bado, executive director of the city's Community Development Agency, and was allowed inside the recreation center Tuesday night when the temperatures dropped.

"The need for apartments in Hoboken is so great that people are desperate," said Lena Milan, a CDA employee who helps families relocate. "They have nowhere to go."

Milan, who knows many of the applicants, said the first-come, first-served process will begin immediately.

The first 60 of the 195 families that went to the project were given applications and interviewed. The rest had their names, addresses and phone

numbers taken in case 20 eligible families cannot be found among the 60.

Bado said the applicants must meet federal income requirements but must also have a family suitable for a three-bedroom apartment.

**It's a shame that you have to people lining up 48 hours before the opening.**

The initial 60 are all Hoboken residents, the CDA said, and the rest are from Hudson County.

The so-called Hoboken renaissance is often blamed for a gentrification process that has

forced out uncounted middle-and low-income families. Many have been Hoboken natives reluctant to leave the city.

"It's a shame that you have to have people lining up 48 hours before the opening," said Aaron Miranda Forman, Hudson County representative to the Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey. "It shows what is happening in the community and I don't think it's fair."

Forman, who is running for councilman-at-large in the May 14 municipal election, expressed sentiments similar to those of many other candidates as displacement is becoming an issue invoked often.

Norma Soto, whom Milan described as a single mother of three, was the first person on the line Monday. She couldn't be reached for comment yesterday. Family members said she was sleeping after being up two days.

## Cappiello asks public forum to refute Vezzetti political ad

By Earl Morgan

The mayoral race in Hoboken dominated the City Council meeting last night with Mayor Steve Cappiello touching off a controversy by asking to speak to the council before the public portion of the meeting to refute a paid advertisement by

his opponent, Councilman Tom Vezzetti.

Cappiello's request was granted after the council took a narrow 5-4 vote to allow the mayor to speak.

In other business, the council voted unanimously to file a cross-complaint disputing Hudson County's right to allow Jersey City to sell the Margaret Hague Maternity Hospital.

Cappiello told the council he wanted to respond to an advertisement Vezzetti ran in a local publication claiming the mayor conducted a secret meeting concerning the city's waterfront development.

Vezzetti, Councilmen Tom Kennedy, E. Norman Wilson and Pat Pasculli all said they felt the mayor should speak during the public portion of the meeting

and not be granted the special privilege of addressing the council before the agenda was disposed of.

In a four-page statement the mayor read, he claimed there have been "no secret backroom deals," and that Vezzetti's advertisement is "misleading and inaccurate and in many instances just plain wrong."

Cappiello said the waterfront project is a careful and balanced blend of uses to give the city and the residents job opportunities, revenues, open space and public access to the waterfront.

In filing the suit against the county's suspending the reverter clause, Hoboken joins Secaucus in its legal action to stop Jersey City from selling the former maternity hospital to a private developer.

## Hoboken on lookout for cubicles

Hoboken's housing officer is asking anyone with information about people living in basement cubicles to call his office.

Jude Fitzgibbons, the chief housing officer, said yesterday that recent newspaper articles about such conditions in Union City have prompted his office to investigate Hoboken.

"We don't think there are any," he said, "but if anyone knows about any we want to know. If my department finds any in Hoboken, the owner will feel the full strength of the law."

The city sparries with a happy glow. "The best of times is now," Cause Mayor Cappiello makes it go.

And so Come on and hop aboard Behind the man's who's got the real know-how It's Steve for every word Because the best of times is now!

Is now! Is now! Other candidates in the May 14 race, who have said they think the so-called renaissance has hurt as many people as it has helped, could not be reached for comment.

## Federal funding is sought

The Hoboken Housing Authority has approved a resolution to request \$12 million in modernization funds from the federal government.

The authority, headed by board chairman Andrew Scherer and executive director Dominic Gallo, has received \$23 million for modernization from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development since 1982.

The application, approved at last Thursday's meeting, will request funds for work such as installing vestibules and intercom systems, site work to eliminate hazards caused by settling, apartment rehabilitation and energy conservation.

Also at the meeting, the board awarded a \$282,000 contract for a new sewer line to J. Fletcher Creamer and Son, Edgewater.

The line, which will run from Fourth and Harrison streets to Sixth Street, is expected to alleviate severe flooding and accompanying problems of rat and mouse infestations at several housing projects.

In other business, the board voted to advertise for bids to install storm doors on the balconies at the Fox Hill apartments and for security at the three senior citizens projects and Columbus Gardens.

## Council will check budget

The Hoboken City Council will review the proposed 1985 municipal budget tomorrow at noon, in the council chambers at City Hall.

The budget is expected to show a slight overall decrease from the \$23.2 million, 1984 budget and to provide for new programs including one to offer subsidies to senior citizens hit with capital improvement surcharges in their rent.

A public hearing on the budget and tax resolution will be held 7 p.m. April 24 at Hoboken High School, Ninth and Clinton streets.

## Hoboken reacts to its education losses suffered over one week

By Margaret Schmidt

Questions about the state of public education in Hoboken arose yesterday as news spread that a member of the Board of Education was resigning and that the district had lost its certification.

"This really scares me," one father said. "I have three boys in the schools."

Steven Block, a member of the school board for nearly six years and a vocal opponent of the city administration, on Wednesday resigned, effective immediately, saying local politics had made education a low priority.

Meanwhile, the state Board of Education announced that Hoboken was refused certification because of financial and educational deficiencies.

Several city officials and educators questioned who would replace Block, whose term was set to expire May 15.

Mayor Steve Cappiello, who appoints the board trustees, said a search will be on to find a replacement.

"Right now, I have nobody in mind," he said. "I will be looking around."

Several persons have already asked for the volunteer position or made recommendations, he said.

Block made sweeping accusations, which Cappiello refused to comment on. He had just received it and, second, he hasn't served on the board and is not an educator, he said.

John Pope, president of the board, and George Maier, superintendent of schools, said that the system is improving and is better than most other urban districts in the area.

Block, a professional education consultant, said there is a board consensus that the city's system is poor. Programs he has suggested to upgrade it, he said, have been rejected.

"Perhaps he's had some good ideas," Pope said. "But he lacks the skills to implement his own ideas."

Asked why the board couldn't latch onto the ideas and implement them, Pope answered that the ideas were buried under political rhetoric and a philosophy that "I know what I'm talking about and you people are stupid."

Pope congratulated Block on making a timely announcement and capitalizing on press. Chances he would be reappointed, he said, were slim.

While no city officials opposed to Block's resignation could be found, several educators and community activists said they were saddened he was leaving.

"We will miss him," said George Gonzalez, head of the Hoboken Teachers Association. "He has always, in my opinion, looked after the best interests of the school children."

Sue Newman, director of the Hoboken School, a private facility for gifted children, and Jerry Costa, founder and president of United Child Services Inc., of Hoboken, had similar reactions.

"The city and the kids have lost their greatest advocate," Costa, a friend of Block said. "I've seen him fight for openness and competence in the face of overwhelming opposition."

Pope denied that the district's loss of certification bore out Block's complaints.

Hoboken was among six districts denied certification in the state's revised monitoring process.

State officials said the loss of certification meant there were deficiencies to be corrected but that there would be no loss of state aid or intervention at this point. Pope added that the status wouldn't prevent students from graduating.

Hoboken failed because students in the third and sixth grades hadn't reached mandated reading and math skills; because some financial reports were filed late, and because of a slightly higher than allowable rate of absenteeism among teachers, officials said.

Superintendent Maier said a self-study group, mandated by the state, has already been set up and had two meetings. The state notified the failing boards in January, more than a month before its final vote on Wednesday.

Ten teachers, nine parents and community members, two administrators and two business representatives are on the panel.

"Yes, we have a great distance to go," Maier said. "But we will continue to strive to the best of our abilities. There are no miracle cures."

He stressed that several years ago the district fared very poorly in evaluations.

Both Maier and Pope, while not minimizing the loss of certification, said that the results weren't that critical when compared with those of other urban districts.

Facilities weren't criticized and more educational problems are on the list of elements the state looks for, they said.

## Victims of Hoboken blaze start process of securing SBA aid

By Margaret Smith

Victims of the general alarm fire that ravaged part of Hoboken's industrial area Jan. 15 began applying for loans yesterday to reopen businesses, repair offices or buy cars.

"I've been waiting for a loan to relocate," said Nathan Filler, president of The Sweet Touch, a lingerie manufacturer located at 830 Monroe St. "You need money."

Filler, one of the first three businessmen to pick up a loan application from the federal Small Business Administration, estimated he lost \$500,000 worth of stock, machinery and fixtures in the fire.

His 20 employees are unemployed, he added, saying he hopes to rehire them when he relocates.

The loans are available to the 15 businesses that were either destroyed or damaged in the fire and 78 persons whose cars exploded when the blaze spread to a parking lot.

Applications can be picked up at Hoboken's Multi-Service Center, 124 Grand St., until 8 p.m. today and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. tomorrow.

The fire started in a century-old wooden building that was being demolished on the Leveior-Lorentzen window blind manufacturers' Monroe Street complex. High winds swept the flames to 830 Monroe St., where several businesses were located, and the Leveior parking lot.

Embers blew across the city and touched off fires a mile away.

City officials have

blamed the fire on the carelessness of demolition workers.

Tom Ahern, director of economic development, said yesterday that several of the businesses and car owners are in the process of instituting lawsuits against Arko Demolition of Bayonne and others.

Data collected by the city puts the damage at nearly \$15 million.

Officials hope the federal funds will be coupled with \$1 million in state loans. The state Legislature has approved an emergency measure sponsored by Assemblyman Robert Ranieri, a Hoboken councilman. The bill needs Gov. Thomas Kean's signature before the loans can be requested.

Most of the companies were either uninsured or insured for less than half of their damages, officials said.

David Rosborough, treasurer of Pan-Asia Fashion Inc., which was insured for \$2.5 million of its \$3 million loss, said the insurance will pay off debts, but more funds are needed to purchase the Fall line of women's outerwear the company imports.

The entire Spring stock was lost in the fire, he said, and the profits from that line usually pay for the Fall line.

The company has found a Fourth Street warehouse and plans to rent it on a five-year lease.

Pan-Asia stayed in Hoboken, Rosborough said, because of the city's strategic location. Proximity to New



Hoboken Mayor Steve Cappiello, standing, looks on as Orlando Calogant, left, loan specialist for the United States Small Business Administration, watches as David Rosborough, treasurer of the Pan-Asia Fashion Co. Inc., completes a loan application.

York makes it ideal for deliveries.

"We're trying to keep our head above water," he added.

Herbert Cohen of Clara Finishing Corp., another company that was destroyed, said he lost all of his equipment, inventory of lace and records. The company has rented a small Hoboken building to start over.

The SBA loans go up to \$500,000 for businesses and \$20,000 for the car owners. The low-interest loans are repaid according to the borrowers' ability and may be

extended to 30 years, said Carl Jordan, area director of the SBA.

The loans are available because the government surveyed the affected area and found it in a state of disaster.

Once applications are received, money can be given out within four to six weeks, Jordan said.

"We're still trying to get things together," Cohen said before picking up his application. When asked if any of his employees were injured in the fire, he added, "No, everybody was lucky."

## Board will vote on dwelling units

The Hoboken Zoning Board of Adjustment last night completed testimony on a proposal to build 108 residential units in an industrial area and will conduct a vote on the variance at a special meeting on March 22.

Harvey Gerber, head of Museum Developing Inc., Hoboken, has asked the Zoning Board for a variance to build the apartments at 12th and Grand streets.

Representatives of local in-

dustries voiced opposition to the plan, claiming it will eventually force manufacturers out of Hoboken.

Testimony on the proposal began at a March 7 hearing.

In other action, the board granted a variance to Rolly Realty Corp., Hoboken, to build a three-story structure behind 133 Madison St. with the entrance on 2nd street but put off until March 21 a hearing on a variance for 1021-1027 Grand St.

## Assistance board meets

The Hoboken Local Assistance Board will meet Monday, 7 p.m., at City Hall. The public.

## Hoboken board will meet

The Hoboken Board of Education will hold a public caucus tonight, 7 p.m., 1115 Clinton St.

Among the items for discussion are a tentative agreement

with the custodial union and proposals to hire matrons for girls' bathrooms in the district, a security guard for the newly renovated David E. Rue School, and two replacement teachers, said John Pope, board planner.

## Cappiello campaign gets itself a new theme song

By Margaret Schmidt

Cappiello IV is taking off the boxing gloves and picking up a feather boa.

The newest addition to the Cappiello camp in Hoboken is camp.

Steve Cappiello, seeking his fourth term as mayor of Hoboken, is replacing his Rocky theme song with a tune from the Broadway play La Cage aux Folles, a campy musical about female impersonators. The show title is translated as Birds of a Feather.

The song, "The Best of Times," with new words by a Hoboken composer/lyricist

who requested anonymity, debuted at City Hall last week on a portable cassette player.

While the theme is designed to attract longtime Hoboken residents who remember pre-renaissance days, it will also appeal to newcomers — particularly artists and professionals — who may be familiar with the tune, said Maurice Fitzgibbons, a campaign organizer who suggested the song.

Cappiello, who seemed less than impressed, said he didn't know when the song will premier for the public.

According to the new song:

The best of times is now,

## Hoboken will ask two women to attend anti-nuke conference

The Hoboken City Council tomorrow night will formally ask two women to represent Hoboken at the second annual conference on the Nuclear Free Society in Cordoba, Spain, March 28-31.

Councilman Robert Ranieri introduced a resolution at last night's caucus meeting asking Judith Carpova and Allison Valentine of Hoboken Against Nuclear Destruction (HAND) to represent the city at the con-

ference and gather information on nuclear free zones.

The two women led a petition drive last year that developed an ordinance passed by the council establishing Hoboken as a nuclear free zone.

"Hoboken was the 62nd unit of government in the country to so declare," Ranieri said, "and the only one to do that without a referendum."

In other action, the council introduced a resolution authorizing the law department to

review the establishing of conditional parking variances and a municipal parking fund for the construction of off-street parking garages funded by developers of housing units in the city.

The council also introduced a resolution authorizing the mayor to execute a public donor agreement with the board of directors of Hoboken Day Care 100 that would enable the mayor to fund the operation of the Hoboken Day Care program.