

PA offers \$10M for Hoboken fire

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The Port Authority has offered the city nearly \$10 million to settle a suit for insurance money collected by the agency from a 1980 fire on a city-owned pier.

But the agency wants to hold on to part of the money if it does not conclude, successfully, the terms of a massive development deal with the city by June 1.

The details of the proposed settlement, to be discussed Wednesday by the City Council and representatives from the Port Authority of New

York and New Jersey and the city's Waterfront Advisory Commission, were revealed by a key City Hall official yesterday.

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A citizens' group called PASS sued the city and the authority in December, charging that the city, as the landlord, and not the agency, which has a lease for the pier running until 2002, was entitled to the insurance. The city Law Department joined the suit, and negotiators for the authority have been trying to work out a settlement with the city since, contending that the litigation is frustrating their negotiations on development plans for the waterfront.

The \$3 million to be handed over at once could be used for anything from relieving the tax burden to replacing sewer lines.

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If a deal is not worked out by June, the city would receive \$1.5 million of the trust fund and possibly interest, to use for building tide gates and regulators, and the rest of the money would be divided between the authority and the city.

According to the City Hall source, a "deal" probably would mean that the authority would agree to minimum and maximum amounts of development on the waterfront properties it leases from the city. For instance, it could not back out of building most of a huge residential and transportation complex after developing only a small part, and certain heights could not be exceeded, either.

The terms of the settlement package were explained to select council members in a marathon meeting at the mayor's office Tuesday, by two representatives of the port agency's Office of Economic Development. To take effect, the settlement and the terms of the separate development negotiations must be approved by the council, and the suit must be dropped.

Richard Seltzer, head of the citizens' group bringing the suit, said, if the city receives the insurance money due it and an accounting of the interest earned, the group's claim would be satisfied, and the suit would be dissolved. If a settlement is not reached, a motion for summary judgment is set to be heard March 13 in Hudson County Superior Court in Jersey City.

While one City Hall official expressed confidence the settlement will be approved by the council, a councilman who did not want to be named said he is not so sure of this. The strongest opponent might be Councilman Patrick Pasculli, who has fervently supported the Waterfront Advisory Commission, and who insisted on its inclusion in Wednesday's closed meeting.

It was the WAC that brought the insurance money to the council's attention in September. Mayne Jurkat, chairwoman of the WAC, said she would be satisfied with a full cash settlement, but she said that she does not want the settlement to be "smeared with other, separate issues, like development of the waterfront."

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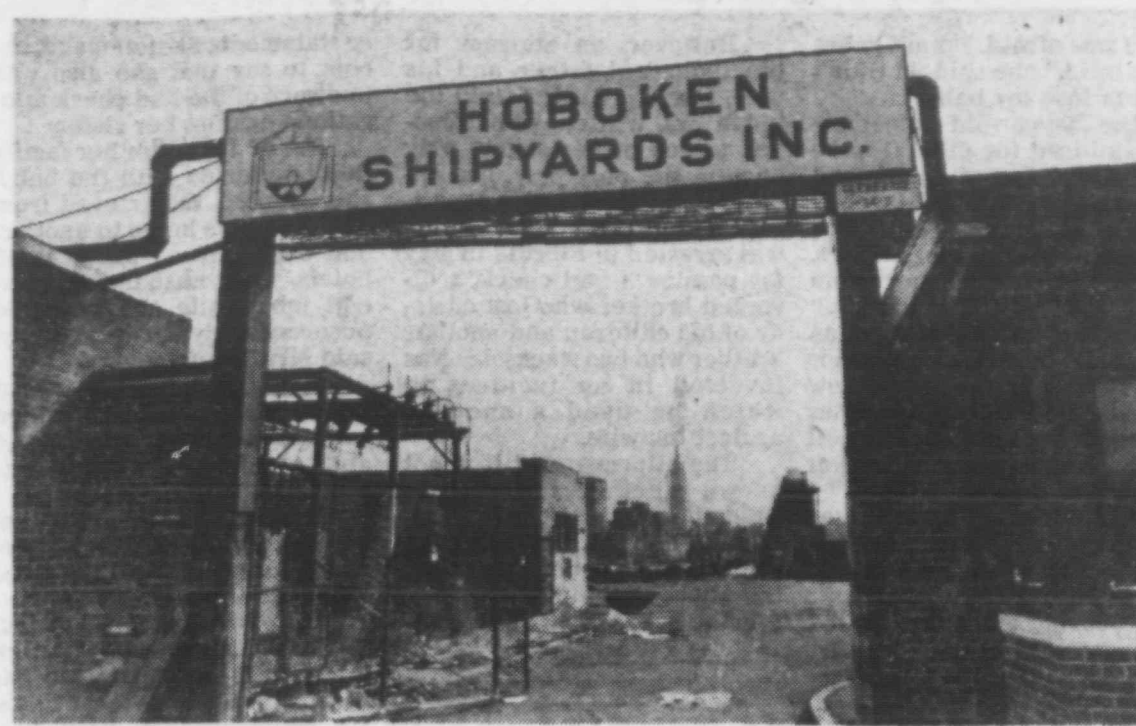
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Several city officials said it could be beneficial for Hoboken to negotiate with Dell' Aquila for the taxes rather than waiting for a decision from the court. Hoboken's tax rate last year was the highest in the state, and this year's rate is expected to go even higher.

"If we were to negotiate for the money, we'd get it a lot quicker and we might do better than we would with the courts," said one official who asked to remain anonymous.

Warehousing ban begins Thursday

By Jim DeRogatis

The clock will begin ticking Thursday for Hoboken landlords speculating on vacant apartments as the city prepares to enforce its controversial "anti-warehousing" law. Jody Manasevit, who was appointed the city's first anti-warehousing officer earlier this month, said yesterday that landlords who are holding vacant apartments will have 60 days to rent them beginning Thursday.

The anti-warehousing law requires landlords of buildings with more than four units to rent vacant apartments within 60 days or face fines of up to \$500 a day per unit. Drafted last summer as a response to Hoboken's critical lack of "affordable housing," the law is intended to curb real estate speculators who are warehousing vacant apartments to increase their value.

The law has been attacked by many realtors, developers and landlords, some of whom

are represented in an organization known as Help Hoboken Housing. HHH was unsuccessful in federal court last November in an attempt to have the law declared unconstitutional, although they are appealing the decision.

The group is also challenging the law in state court, and Hudson County Assignment Judge Burrell Ives Humphreys

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Complaints will be handled by the city prosecutor, Anthony Catalano, and Municipal Judge Steve Zamrin could levy fines ranging from a minimum of \$100 to a maximum of \$500 a day per vacant unit.

Manasevit declined to name the 13 landlords who will be the first targets under the law, although she said several complaints were filed by members of the Campaign for Housing Justice, a Hoboken tenants group that campaigned for the passage of the law and has been active in defending it.

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Anyone with questions concerning the ordinance is encouraged to call Manasevit in the anti-warehousing office at 420-2029.

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• **February, 1987:** The city hires an anti-warehousing officer. The clock will begin ticking and landlords will have 60 days to rent vacant apartments starting Thursday. Judge Humphreys is also expected to rule Thursday on a motion to dismiss HHH's state challenge. — Jim DeRogatis

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In a letter to the city Law Department last week, Hoboken developer Anthony Dell' Aquila offered to negotiate payment of taxes owed on the Hoboken Shipyards since 1984. Dell' Aquila holds an option to purchase the shipyards from Braswell Shipyards, Inc., which is in the midst of bankruptcy proceedings in federal court in South Carolina.

The court granted Dell' Aquila an extension on the option several weeks ago, but city Law Director William Graves said he has received no official notification from the court that the developer is author-

ized to negotiate payment of the back taxes.

"If the trustee for the bankruptcy proceeding has no objections to us negotiating, we'll negotiate," Graves said. "I'll negotiate with anybody who wants to give the city money."

The 45-acre shipyards stretch from 12th Street just north of the Maxwell House coffee plant to 15th Street. The entrance to the property is at 14th and Hudson streets.

The city has been attempting to recover taxes owed on the valuable waterfront land for three years, since Braswell declared bankruptcy. The amount of money owed on the property exceeds \$2.5 million, city officials said.

Dell' Aquila defeated several other bidders, including Hartz Mountain Indus-

tries, and secured an option from the court to buy the property for \$16,850,000 in a December 1985 auction. The enigmatic developer owns the Standard Brands building on 15th Street near the waterfront and has expressed an interest in purchasing the old Todd Shipyards from the city.

Dell' Aquila reportedly plans a massive mixed-use development on the three sites, but he refuses to speak to the press and has never presented details of his plans to the city. Development sources say Dell' Aquila hopes to "flip" the waterfront parcels to another developer for a higher price.

Henry Brown, a South Carolina bankruptcy attorney hired by the city, said he has filed several interrogatories with the court for specific information on the terms

See HOBOKEN—Page 13.

Troubles began four years ago

Here is a chronology of the Hoboken Shipyards controversy:

• **1983:** Braswell Shipyards Inc. purchases the Hoboken Shipyards from Bethlehem Steel for a reported \$8.5 million.

• **February 1984:** Braswell files for protection under Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings, stops paying taxes to Hoboken.

• **February 1985:** Orbe Management Ltd. purchases the shipyards for \$13.2 million with the approval of the federal Bankruptcy Court in South Carolina. It proposes to build 1,600 low-rise housing units, four 30-story towers, a recreational pier and a marina at the site.

• **December 1985:** Orbe fails to complete its option on the shipyards, and the court begins accepting bids from other developers. Hartz Mountain Industries offers \$14 million, but the high bid is from Hoboken developer Anthony Dell' Aquila, who offers \$16.85 million and secures the option.

• **April 1986:** One term of Dell' Aquila's option was that he was to have closed on the property by this time, but he was apparently granted an extension by the court. Bankruptcy proceedings in South Carolina drag on.

• **June 1986:** New Jersey Superior Court denies an appeal by Braswell to reduce the city's \$4 million assessment of the property. The city is spared the confusion of dual proceedings and is free to negotiate with the court for the back taxes.

• **February 1987:** Dell' Aquila is granted another extension on his option to buy the property and offers to negotiate back taxes with the city. — Jim DeRogatis

Hoboken aspires to be movie mecca

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Lookout, Los Angeles. Move over, Manhattan.

The hearts of several members of the administration of Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti appear to have been won by a consultant named Thea Sklover, who will be hired to conduct a feasibility study on whether the city could become the next Hollywood, or at least Astoria, Queens.

Sklover, a film and television industry consultant who appeared at a think tank forum last week on redeveloping the city's dying industrial section, said he believes it could be the perfect place to build a two-to-three-block television and movie production center, complete with studios, scenery, shops, even "ma and pa writer's shops."

"There's a buzz in the industry right now about Hoboken," Sklover said. "It's got its own identity, it's got a wonderful pool of young, talented artists, and most of all, it's got location."

According to a Vezzetti administration source with marketing experience, a prime factor — for television producers especially — is "How many minutes to West 42nd Street?"

Corporate headquarters for several major networks are located in the vicinity of 42nd Street.

Vezzetti, a perennial showman himself, is ready and raring to have his city thrust into the bright lights.

"It's fantastic, I love it," bubbled the effervescent Vezzetti. "For three reasons: jobs, taxes and, finally, because it would make us famous."

Sklover, who would be hired under a city Community Development Agency grant of an undisclosed amount, has experience in the industry as the head of the New York City and New York State film commissions, and he helped to rejuvenate an old studio in Astoria that formerly was part of the Army Pictorial Center. That studio has not succeeded financially, according to one source, because of problems with strong unions.

Sklover's feasibility study would address questions such as whether New Jersey unions representing everyone from electricians to stunt doubles would be willing to let residents of this city be hired before other members with greater seniority, would admit local vocational students as members, and would let the crews of a given project be hired individually.

City Council President E. Norman Wilson, for one, said the idea of a production center sounds very glamorous, but he would have real trouble supporting it if the project did not guarantee jobs for local residents.

MIA flag to be replaced

The Hoboken chapter of the Disabled American Veterans will hold a flag ceremony for POWs and MIAs today at 10:30 a.m. in Mayor Thomas Vezzetti's office at City Hall.

A black flag in memory of POWs and MIAs flies over City Hall in Hoboken beside the American flag and the city banner.

Members of the group will present the mayor with a new flag replacing the old one during a brief ceremony.

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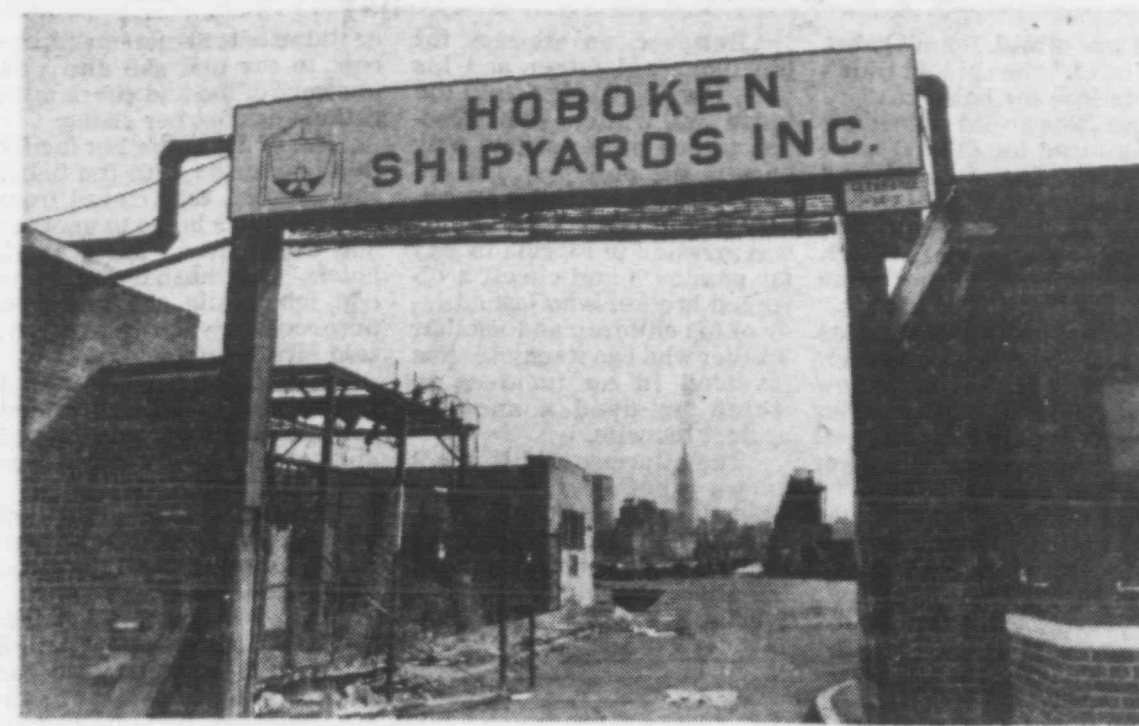
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Dell' Aquila reportedly plans a massive mixed-use development on the three sites, but he refuses to speak to the press and has never presented details of his plans to the city. Development sources say Dell' Aquila hopes to "flip" the waterfront parcels to another developer for a higher price.

Henry Brown, a South Carolina bankruptcy attorney hired by the city, said he has filed several interrogatories with the court for specific information on the terms

MIA flag to be replaced

The Hoboken chapter of the Disabled American Veterans will hold a flag ceremony today for POWs and MIAs today at 10:30 a.m. in Mayor Thomas Vezzetti's office at City Hall.

A black flag in memory of POWs and MIAs flies over City Hall in Hoboken beside the American flag and the city banner.

Troubles began four years ago

Here is a chronology of the Hoboken Shipyards controversy:

• **1983:** Braswell Shipyards Inc. purchases the Hoboken Shipyards from Bethlehem Steel for a reported \$8.5 million.

• **February 1984:** Braswell files for protection under Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings, stops paying taxes to Hoboken.

• **February 1985:** Orbe Management Ltd. purchases the shipyards for \$13.2 million with the approval of the federal Bankruptcy Court in South Carolina. It proposes to build 1,600 low-rise housing units, four 30-story towers, a recreational pier and a marina at the site.

• **December 1985:** Orbe fails to complete its option on the shipyards, and the court begins accepting bids from other developers. Hartz Mountain Industries offers \$14 million, but the high bid is from Hoboken developer Anthony Dell' Aquila, who offers \$16.85 million and secures the option.

• **April 1986:** One term of Dell' Aquila's option was that he was to have closed on the property by this time, but he was apparently granted an extension by the court. Bankruptcy proceedings in South Carolina drag on.

• **June 1986:** New Jersey Superior Court denies an appeal by Braswell to reduce the city's \$4 million assessment of the property. The city is spared the confusion of dual proceedings and is free to negotiate with the court for the back taxes.

• **February 1987:** Dell' Aquila is granted another extension on his option to buy the property and offers to negotiate back taxes with the city. — Jim DeRogatis

Hoboken aspires to be movie mecca

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Lookout, Los Angeles. Move over, Manhattan.

The hearts of several members of the administration of Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti appear to have been won by a consultant named Thea Sklover, who will be hired to conduct a feasibility study on whether the city could become the next Hollywood, or at least Astoria, Queens.

Sklover, a film and television industry consultant who appeared at a think tank forum last week on redeveloping the city's dying industrial section, said he believes it could be the perfect place to build a two-to-three-block television and movie production center, complete with studios, scenery, shops, even "ma and pa writer's shops."

"There's a buzz in the industry right now about Hoboken," Sklover said. "It's got its own identity, it's got a wonderful pool of young, talented artists, and most of all, it's got location."

According to a Vezzetti administration source with marketing experience, a prime factor — for television producers especially — is "How many minutes to West 42nd Street?"

Corporate headquarters for several major networks are located in the vicinity of 42nd Street.

Vezzetti, a perennial showman himself, is ready and raring to have his city thrust into the bright lights.

"It's fantastic. I love it," bubbled the effervescent Vezzetti. "For three reasons: jobs, taxes and, finally, because it would make us famous."

Sklover, who would be hired under a city Community Development Agency grant of an undisclosed amount, has experience in the industry as the head of the New York City and New York State film commissions, and he helped to rejuvenate an old studio in Astoria that formerly was part of the Army Pictorial Center. That studio has not succeeded financially, according to one source, because of problems with strong unions.

Sklover's feasibility study would address questions such as whether New Jersey unions representing everyone from electricians to stunt doubles would be willing to let residents of this city be hired before other members with greater seniority, would admit local vocational students as members, and would let the crews of a given project be hired individually.

City Council President E. Norman Wilson, for one, said the idea of a production center sounds very glamorous, but he would have real trouble supporting it if the project did not guarantee jobs for local residents.

Few are calling on Recall '86

Going, going, gone. . . . These are not the best of times for Recall '86, the once-ambitious organization bent on ousting Hoboken Mayor Thomas Vezzetti.

"For Sale" signs have replaced the "Recall" signs above the prime Washington Street storefront which was above the group's headquarters.

The large picture windows, once a bulletin board for campaign literature, now display advertisements for commercial office space.

Reeling from disunity and a lack of identity, open criticism from former members and a sense of ambivalence from the electorate, the 16-month-old organization is fighting for its own survival.

See FEW ARE CALLING — Page 10.

ON WAREHOUSING

Landlords rush to use loopholes

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—There are 300 to 500 vacant apartments in the city right now, according to official estimates. But just two days after the city began enforcing a law against keeping units empty, landlords are looking for ways to get around it.

Twenty applications were filed this week with the Rent-Leveling Board to convert apartment buildings into condominiums.

Under the new law, landlords who have reached a certain stage in the condominium conversion process do not have to rent empty apartments in the affected building.

Ten applications for waivers from the law because of rehabilitation and repair work were picked up by a single developer, according to Lourdes Arroyo of the rent office.

If a landlord is found to be repairing major health threats or code violations, he can be given a temporary waiver from the new law.

But tenant advocates remain

hopeful.

The approval process for condominium conversion can take several months, and Ira Karasick, attorney for the tenants' group Campaign for Housing Justice, pointed out that, until an application has received approval from the state, the landlord must comply with the law. That means rent the apartments.

"We're optimistic," Karasick said. "The experience they've had in West New York has been that they've gotten compliance." West New York has an anti-warehousing ordinance longer than any other municipality in Hudson County.

But there are other ways to keep the apartments empty, and the next few months will probably bring numerous test cases, as the new anti-warehousing officer, the Rent-Leveling Board and the city Law Department investigate complaints and review applications for waivers.

See RUSH, Page 8

RUSH

Continued from Page 1

"It's very unclear to anyone at this point precisely what the ordinance is aimed at, because it's so broad," said Roger Sauer, attorney for Help Hoboken Housing, a landlords' coalition that continues to challenge the law in court.

"Everything is precedent-setting, and there are so many nuances, it is just hard to tell," said Peggy Thomas of the Community Development Agency, when she was asked how many of the several hundred vacant apartments actually would wind up being rented.

Thomas confirmed that the CDA has been receiving numerous inquiries from building owners about its rental rehabilitation program. If an owner qualifies, the building can be waived from the anti-warehousing law.

Another way a landlord can avoid having to rent empty units is if there are serious health hazards such as no heat, no hot water, missing windows, cracked pipes, holes in the

ceiling or floor, and other building code violations.

The landlord must apply for a waiver in this case also, and can only have three waivers for a total of six months while repair work is being done. After that, the empty apartments must go on the market.

Sauer said the seriously deteriorated apartments have been the subject of HHH's objections all along.

"We're not talking about the currently unrented and inhabitable space," he said. "That should be rented. We're talking about the buildings that need millions of dollars of work."

Landlords say it is not economically feasible to renovate such buildings just for rentals, although they can be eligible for rent increases after major work. Tenant advocates say the law against keeping apartments empty for long periods of time was passed precisely because tenants were being pushed out of buildings because they were so rundown.

POLITICAL SPLIT

Russo is reappointed to utilities authority

Anthony Russo of Hoboken, who was knocked off the Hudson County Utilities Authority last year in a political fight, was put back on yesterday in the middle of another.

In a 5-3 vote yesterday, the county Board of Freeholders approved Russo's reappointment to the HCUA.

Russo was the choice of County Executive Edward F. Clark Jr. to replace Michael Schaeffer. His appointment was most vigorously opposed by Freeholder Anthony M. DeFino of West New York.

Clark, a Democrat, is running for re-election. DeFino, who is also the mayor of West New York, is one of several Democratic leaders supporting Clark's opponent in the primary, former Democratic Assemblyman Robert C. Janiszewski of Jersey City.

The HCUA controls federal and state funds for the upgrading of the

sewage treatment in the county. It traditionally has been a political battleground and now is the subject of an extensive federal investigation.

Voting for Russo yesterday were Freeholders Samuel D. Kaye of Bayonne, Octavio J. Alfonso of North Bergen and Anne H. O'Malley, Elnardo Webster and Marilyn Roman, all of Jersey City.

Voting against Russo's appointment were Roger Dorian of Weehawken, Nidia Davila-Colon of Jersey City and DeFino.

Roman, O'Malley and Kaye had announced that they will run with Clark in the June 2 primary. Webster has said he is "leaning" that way.

Davila-Colon's vote raised a few eyebrows yesterday because she has not announced her intentions.

—Peter Wehrwein



These recall signs have been moved from a Washington Street storefront to a less visible clubhouse on 8th and Willow, but organizers say the movement is not dead.

Few are calling on Recall '86

Continued from Page 1

The group moved from its headquarters at 615 Washington St. to a less visible clubhouse at 8th Street and Willow Avenue. "We moved to make room for a new tenant who can pay a lot more rent than we can," says Mike "Citizen Mo" Mulvaney, the newly elected recall chairman. While Mulvaney insists the group continues to attract new membership, critics maintain the organization is about to vanish from the political landscape.

"No, we're not dead, as our enemies would like to believe," Mulvaney says. "There'll be a recall. Maybe not this year, but certainly before 1989."

Despite a growing consensus that no one in Hoboken, outside a handful of politicians, cares about the recall effort, Mulvaney and the rank and file continue to insist that they are moving ahead with their plans to oust the city's self-styled "reform" mayor.

Founded in November of 1985, four months after Vezzetti defeated then-Mayor Steve Cappiello, Recall '86 was supposed to be a united political base for all anti-administration forces. The recall organizers had hoped to collect enough signatures to force a mayoral recall election by last July.

The group began meeting regularly last January under the leadership of George Crimmins Jr., an unsuccessful City Council candidate on the ticket headed by Cappiello. Between 75 and 90 people attended the initial meetings each week in the old Union Club on Hudson Street. "We had a diverse mix of people," Crimmins said. "Some were affiliated with the old political machine, while others were newcomers."

However, school board victories last April by Vezzetti-backed candidates sidetracked the recall movement, while some members questioned whether the political tide had turned. The confusion spurred infighting by members and a power struggle over control of some 1,900 recall petitions. The group reorganized in June under City Councilman Robert Ranieri.

Crimmins and the more moderate elements of the movement gave way as politicians from the previous administration gained control and Recall '86 opened its new headquarters in the old PSEG building on Washington Street.

Recall organizers circulated petitions requesting that voters oust Vezzetti because he has "surrendered the duties and powers of his office to non-elected persons," and he proved "not to be competent to conduct the functions of the office of mayor."

"We have a weak-willed mayor controlled by a junta of power-hungry mongers," Ranieri told The Jersey Journal last summer after he was elected chairman.

Throughout the summer, Ranieri blamed nearly every woe on Vezzetti, from Liberty Weekend fireworks that were stored in Hoboken to the municipal budget. In July, he urged Vezzetti to resign his seat for "health and safety" reasons. . . . the mayor's, that is.

Ranieri effectively used his council seat last year as a forum of anti-Vezzetti rhetoric. But since Vezzetti forged a working majority in that body, Ranieri's anti-administration speeches have been countered.

In fact, Ranieri's presence may have done more damage than good.

"Bob Ranieri did an excellent job," Mulvaney says. "But times are changing and word was out that while he or Cappiello were involved, other people wouldn't be." Ranieri resigned as chairman of Recall '86 in October.

And Crimmins says, he'll have nothing to do with his brainchild.

"It won't work. There will be no recall of Tom Vezzetti," says Crimmins. "For a successful recall, you need a figure who's hated by everyone. Vezzetti is not that person, he's not hurt anyone. He is not as bad as we all figured."

As time passes, others feel the group lost its opportunity to strike early.

Vezzetti, who recently agreed to undergo a psychological examination at the request of one of his foes, says he's flattered at the recall movement.

"They couldn't be doing this to a nicer guy. . . . me. If they have nothing better to do with their time, let them recall me."

"I don't necessarily think that's true," Mulvaney says. "I intend to meet with all our members and representatives of all the splinter groups to try to unite our efforts. Hopefully we can get back all our petitions and get moving again."

He insists the group will follow through on a promise to endorse candidates for May's City Council elections, but not the April school board election. Ranieri's once-ambitious plans for Recall '86 called for running full slates for both elections.

"We'll back individuals who have been involved and who show interest in our cause," Mulvaney said.

Will it be Recall '87?

"We're not going to change our name because the key is recall, maybe not this year, but certainly before (Vezzetti's term expires in) 1989."

P.A. ouster suit vetoed by court

By Jim DeRogatis

A Superior Court judge dismissed a lawsuit yesterday by a Hoboken citizens group attempting to evict the Port Authority from the city-owned piers.

People Advocating Safe Solutions, opposed to the P.A.'s planned \$600 million waterfront development, charged that the authority violated the terms of a 1952 lease to the piers. But Judge John McLaughlin dismissed the suit, upholding a motion by the city that PASS had not followed the proper procedures for filing a class action suit.

"We were blown out of the water," said PASS attorney Richard Seltzer, although he added that the group will appeal. Under the terms of a 1952 lease, the P.A. retains control of Hoboken's valuable piers until 2002 to operate a marine terminal. The piers have been dormant for two decades and the city and P.A. have been negotiating a restated lease that would allow the authority to build a massive waterfront development.

The proposed Hudson Center project would include several high-rise office buildings, 1,200 luxury housing units, a hotel, a marina and a waterfront esplanade.

A number of residents, including Mayor Thomas Vezzetti's own Waterfront Advisory Committee, are against the plan, saying the powerful bi-state agency could not be adequately controlled by the city. Members of the administration and City Council maintain that the P.A. has a commitment to remain on the piers for 15 more years and a properly negotiated agreement on the waterfront development could provide the city with revenue it desperately needs to lower the tax rate, the highest in the state. "The P.A. has manipulated the intentions of the lease for their own self-interest to enable them to control and monitor real estate development," Seltzer charged when PASS instituted the lawsuit. The suit hinged on an obscure portion of English common law whereby the P.A. would have been "ejected" from the piers because it failed to live up to the terms of the '52 lease to operate a marine terminal.

The P.A. filed a motion to dismiss the suit, saying the lease is still valid. The city also opposed the PASS suit, although city Law Director William Graves has said he has doubts about the P.A.'s rights under the '52 lease.

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for a decision to dismiss this complaint doesn't mean we won't (file suit against the P.A.) ourselves six months down the road," he said several weeks ago. If the authority and the city do not reach an agreement on the waterfront development, the city could institute a lawsuit similar to the PASS suit and attempt to remove the P.A. from the piers.

The city's motion to dismiss the PASS suit was based on "technical deficiencies," Graves said. "The group failed to comply with statutes governing how taxpayers can institute a lawsuit."

"PASS volunteered its time, energy and money to try and create a situation where the city of Hoboken could recover control of one of its most valuable assets," Seltzer said. "But the judge denied the right of a not-for-profit city group to sue the P.A."

Vezzetti criticized PASS and the lawsuit. "Seltzer and his group are always yelling about taxes, on one hand and money on the other with frivolous lawsuits."

"We're negotiating to get the best deal possible out of the P.A. and they just wanted to throw a monkeywrench into things," he said.

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"Just because we moved

WAC criticizes P.A. settlement

By Jim DeRogatis

Mayor Thomas Vezzetti's Waterfront Advisory Committee is strongly criticizing a proposed settlement to a lawsuit between the city and the Port Authority over \$9.6 million in insurance funds.

WAC set off the controversy over the insurance funds last October when it released a report charging that the P.A. wrongly kept \$7.5 million in insurance money collected after the city-owned Pier B was destroyed by fire in 1980. With accrued interest, the money now totals \$9.6 million, according to the P.A.

The P.A. refused to turn the funds over to the city, claiming they were earmarked for use in the \$600 million Hudson Center project. The authority and the city had been negotiating an agreement for an ambitious mixed-use development on the city piers, but negotiations dis-

integrated when Hoboken joined a lawsuit by a citizens group seeking to recover the funds.

The City Council is scheduled to meet today at 4 p.m. in closed session to discuss a settlement that would net the city \$3 million in cash plus \$6.5 million in capital improvements and other benefits. The council could vote to accept the settlement next Wednesday.

But WAC Chairman Mayme Jurkat said it would be "the height of foolishness for the city to settle for a third of the money when it could have it all." WAC met Monday night and the 18-member committee was reportedly unanimous in its objections to the settlement.

The group is expected to urge the council not to accept the settlement this afternoon. "The settlement proves once again that our (city) nego-

See WAC — Page 20.

State probers to quiz city school personnel

By Jim DeRogatis

The state team conducting Level 3 monitoring of the Hoboken school system is set to begin interviewing city and school officials, principals and teachers.

A three-member team from the compliance office of the state Education Department has been poring through financial and curriculum records in the school board offices for the past two weeks in the first phase of what will be a comprehensive evaluation of the school system and its procedures.

The Hoboken school system is one of

five districts out of nearly 500 throughout the state that have not been certified and are under Level 3 monitoring. The other Level 3 districts are Jersey City, Asbury Park, Camden and Penns Grove-Carneys Point in Salem County.

Hoboken lost its state certification because its scores on standardized basic skills tests are consistently among the lowest in the state.

According to Superintendent of Schools Walter Fine, the state compliance team has reviewed facilities plans, accounting records, curriculum guides and textbooks and minutes from board of edu-

cation meetings over the past six years. The investigators are expected to begin interviewing city officials today or tomorrow, Fine said.

The team will "start by talking to the mayor and move right on down the line," he said. The investigators will interview city officials, past and present board members, principals, school teachers and members of the community as part of their effort to pinpoint the cause of educational problems in the schools.

According to a spokesman for the state

See STATE'S PROBERS — Page 10.

State's probers will question school personnel

Continued from Page 1

Education Department, the team of investigators working in Hoboken includes some of the same people who are undertaking Level 3 monitoring of the Jersey City schools. The team is overseen by Richard Kaplan, director of the compliance office, who is also overseeing the Jersey City inspection.

The second phase of Level 3 monitoring involves an inspection of the schools by an external committee of staff members from other school districts who are experts in the areas in which the school district is deficient. The emphasis in Hoboken will be on basic skills education, Fine said.

The compliance unit and the external committee will put their findings together in a report to the Education Department's assistant commissioner for county and regional services, Walter McCarroll. According to a state spokesman, McCarroll can then do one of two things: require the district to put together their own "corrective action plan," or issue

an administrative order that specifies what the district must do to improve.

Hoboken will have one year to implement corrective procedures and show "significant progress" or the system could face a state takeover.

State Education Commissioner Saul Cooperman has called for powers that would allow the state to disband local school boards, replace local administrators and assume daily management of the system. The state Assembly is considering legislation that would grant these powers.

The state inspection has been hailed by school administrators and critics of the system alike.

Hoboken's basic skills scores have been on the rise over the last three years, although they are still well below state averages. Most school administrators are confident that the system will continue improve and a state takeover will be avoided.

Fine said he "welcomes" suggestions from the state that will help improve the quality of

education in Hoboken. "It is possible that they will come in and point out things that we haven't been seeing," he said. "If it is something that is going to help improve the schools, then I accept it in that context."

The superintendent added that he will "continue to assist the state team however possible. As far as I'm concerned, they can go anywhere and talk to anyone they want. I'll help them set up the appointments."

Meanwhile, school critics, including the Committee for Quality Education, say the inspectors will find a legacy of political patronage, nepotism and poor educational practices. "I believe they're going to find a lot of the things that we've been yelling about for years," said CQE leader Steve Block.

"I'm looking forward to being interviewed by the state inspectors," Mayor Thomas Vezzetti added. "I want to tell them that the schools are being run by the same old political machine."

"The majority of the board members don't care about edu-

cation, only about giving out jobs, and they're going to bankrupt Hoboken."

Once the state teams complete their inspections and present their report to McCarroll, it will be turned over to Fine and other school administrators who will have 45 days to review it before making the findings public, according to the state spokesman.

Hoboken votes for six council seats May 5th

By Jim DeRogatis

In several weeks, there'll be a poster on every telephone pole, a button on every lapel and a candidate on every street corner.

In several weeks, it will be impossible to avoid the fact that there's an election on in Hoboken.

The spring race for six Hoboken ward City Council seats officially began yesterday as the first candidate filed his nominating petitions with City Clerk James Farina. Hobokenites enjoy nothing more than a down-and-dirty political wrestling match, and the May 5 election will be the city's biggest since the 1984 mayoral run-off.

Orlando Adeo, a 67-year-old Housing Authority commissioner and former auto worker, filed petitions for the Fourth Ward City Council seat yesterday afternoon. He is the first candidate to file for any of the six ward council seats.

Located in Hoboken's southwest corner, the Fourth Ward is considered to be a key barometer in the coming election on the political strength of newcomers. Although the ward is the least gentrified in the city, containing the Housing Authority projects and a strong Italian population, there are also a number of new developments and condominium projects.

The Francone family has held the Fourth Ward council seat for 32 years. Louis Francone served seven consecutive four-year terms. His wife, Mary, has held the post for the past four years.

"I'm running because for 32 years, nothing has been done in the Fourth Ward," Adeo said. "It's been a no-man's land, and I'd like to make it a somebody's land."

A lifelong Hoboken resident, Adeo lives with his wife, Rosalie, and has three grown sons. He retired in 1985 after working for the Ford Motor Company for 24 years in the auto parts division in Wayne. The candidate currently works as an employment resources specialist with the Senior Community Services Programs of HOPEs, Inc., and has served as a Housing Authority commissioner for the last six years.

"I'm a political independent. I don't owe anybody and I won't be obligated to anyone if I'm elected," Adeo said. "I just want to do what I can to help the people of the 4th Ward and the whole community."

Louis Francone said yesterday that he is considering running for his wife's seat. "I'm pretty sure I'll run," he said. "I'd like to make it 36 years, but

I'm not deciding for sure until a few weeks."

Other likely candidates in the ward include Edwin Duroy, principal of the Connors School and an unsuccessful candidate on former Mayor Steve Cappelletto's 1984 council ticket, and Florence Amato, a Fourth Ward neighborhood activist.

The ballot is expected to be crowded with candidates by the March 19 deadline for filing petitions. In the other wards, the candidates include:

• First Ward. Councilman Thomas Newman, the victor in a special election in November to fill the remainder of Anthony Romano's term, is expected to seek reelection. Aaron Miranda-Forman, a perennial candidate, is also considering running.

• Second Ward. Councilman Joseph Della Fave is expected to seek reelection and will likely be opposed by Michael Schaeffer, another perennial candidate and commissioner on the Hudson County Utilities Authority, and Donald Pellicano, a member of Mayor Thomas Vezzetti's Waterfront Advisory Committee and a Parking Authority commissioner.

• Third Ward. Councilman Steve Cappelletto will fight to hold his seat against Frank "Pupie" Raia, a Hoboken developer or active with many of the city's sports leagues, and Anthony Russo, a former HCUA commissioner and a special education teacher at Hoboken High School.

• Fifth Ward. Incumbent Council President Edgar Norman Wilson will be involved in a difficult fight with Helen Manogue, a banker and president of the Hoboken Environment Committee. Manogue had a strong showing as an independent at-large council candidate in the 1984 elections.

• Sixth Ward. Councilman David Roberts is expected to be opposed by Aldo DePinto, active in the movement to recall Mayor Thomas Vezzetti. Former Councilman and mayoral candidate Nunzie Malfetti has been considering running.

Most of the candidates in the race say they will run as "independents," and they are trying to avoid turning the election into a referendum on Vezzetti and the "reform" movement. However, Newman, Della Fave, Roberts and Manogue are expected to run as a slate with the mayor's backing, and a number of other candidates are running with strong anti-administration support. Cappelletto has been a leader of the recall movement and anti-administration groups are reportedly trying to talk the councilman into leading a slate.

Vezzetti's 1984 victory was a surprising upset that ended a 12-year stranglehold by the Cappelletto forces over Hoboken politics. Vezzetti won the support of a coalition of newcomers, Hispanics hurt by the city's rampant development and longtime residents dissatisfied with the old regime.

Many political observers believe the election signalled a new era in Hoboken politics, one that centers more on issues and less on the traditions of political patronage and "back-room deals." But the means of fighting elections in the Mile Square City remain the same: door-to-door campaigning, posters, soundtrucks blaring candidates' names and messages and talk, talk, talk.

Which means that in several weeks, it will be impossible to avoid the fact that there's an election on in Hoboken.

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WAC criticizes P.A. settlement

Continued from Page 1

iators are not up to it," Jurkat said. "This is a bad precedent to set. The P.A. is holding on to our money and making it look like we're snatching it back."

Six of nine council members said they favor a settlement of the lawsuit, many of them citing expense and time involved in pursuing a court decision. But Jurkat said the city could seek a summary judgment on the issue and ask the court to expedite the matter "instead of settling for a settlement that leaves the city a good deal short."

Richard Seltzer, attorney for People Advocating Safe Solutions, the citizens group which instituted the suit against the P.A., said the settlement is "a good starting point which has room for improvement," although PASS is opposed to the settlement in its current form.

Hudson County Superior Court Judge Robert Tarleton is scheduled to hear a motion by Seltzer for summary judgment on March 13. The city must respond to the motion by March 5. If the council votes to accept the settlement, it is subject to approval by Tarleton.

Seltzer said PASS will continue the lawsuit if the group is not satisfied with the settlement between the P.A. and the city. Tarleton would have to decide whether it is in the city's interest to accept the settlement or allow PASS to press its claim for the funds, Seltzer said.

Both PASS and WAC are strongly opposed to the P.A.'s waterfront plans, and many members see the insurance lawsuit as a means of preventing the city from resuming negotiations. Both groups have argued that the city should seek private developers because they believe the powerful bi-state agency could not adequately be controlled.

Seltzer describes PASS as "an organization of concerned citizens and taxpayers of the City of Hoboken." Four members of the group's 14-member advisory board are also key leaders of Help Hoboken Housing, a vocal, pro-development group fighting to overturn the city's anti-warehousing law in state and federal court: England, Suzanne Warren, Michelle Russo and Joseph Vitullo. The group also includes former Law Director Fred Woockener and WAC member Leonard Serrano.

Superior Court Judge John McLaughlin is scheduled to hear a motion to dismiss a second PASS suit Friday. The second lawsuit attempts to evict the P.A. from the piers, claiming the authority has not fulfilled the terms of a 1952 lease.

Although WAC was appointed by Vezzetti, the group has adopted an adversarial position in recent months, opposing any city involvement with the P.A.

"I don't care what WAC

says about the settlement," Vezzetti said yesterday, adding he supports the settlement.

"They're an advisory committee and I thank them for what they've done, but I was elected to make the decisions, and I believe this is a good deal for Hoboken," he said.

See WAC — Page 20.

Is new housing sending Hoboken to the rats?

The residents of Hoboken's Fourth Ward smell a rat—a 16-inch-long dead rodent that reportedly has been lying in the street for several days, despite calls to the city Health Department to remove it.

Michael Ocello, chairman of the Fourth Ward Block Association, said yesterday that several area residents have spotted large rats lying dead in the street, and calls to the city Health Department to remove the vermin have gone unheeded.

Residents say that rats roaming the streets of the Fourth Ward have become an increasingly familiar sight in recent weeks, a phenomenon city Health Officer Patricia Mitten attributes to several large construction projects underway in

the area, including the massive Skyline Condominiums project on Observer Highway near Jefferson Street.

"This sort of thing happens whenever there is new construction on a site," Mitten said. "Not only the people are thrown out but all the other inhabitants, too."

Mitten said her office received several calls from residents about dead rats, but could not locate the vermin when they responded. However,

she said city health officials have ordered residents to secure their trash properly and have notified several construction sites to exterminate their areas.

"If they don't do it, we will hire the city exterminator to come in," Mitten said. "We're looking to correct the problem as quickly as possible."

Two years ago, the Health Department declared war on rats after receiving numerous complaints from throughout

the city. In the fall of 1985, cases were reported where rats scared senior citizens out of a local park and chased away Boy Scouts who were helping out at a local church.

Officials say the city has made headway in the fight against the rats but as one Fourth Ward resident put it, "The rats in this city are more persistent than the politicians. No matter how many times you beat them off, they still come back for more."

— DeRogatis

View from a pothole

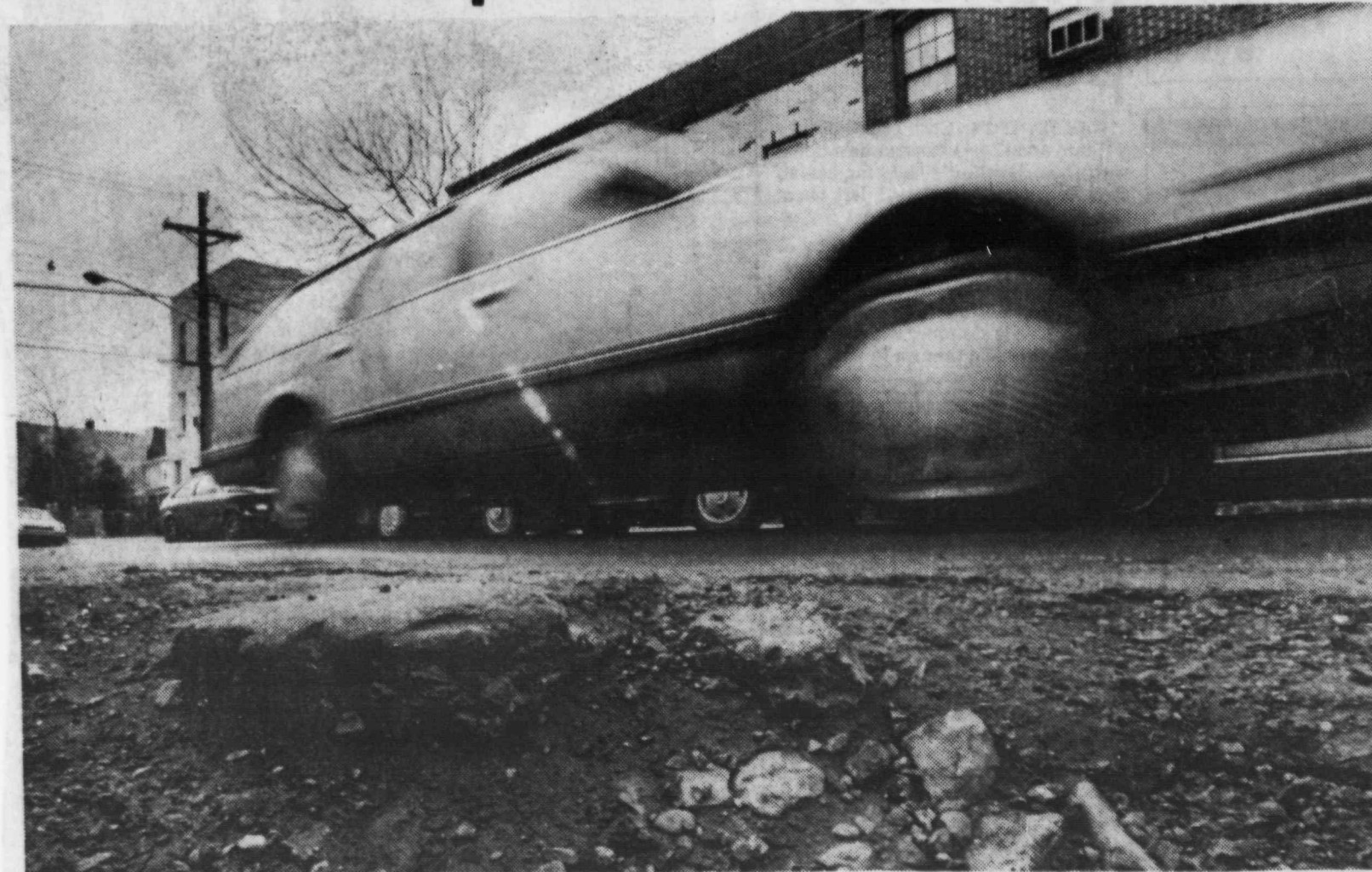


Photo by John Decker

A CAR AVOIDS a large hole on Park Avenue between Third and Fourth streets in Hoboken yesterday. The

photographer placed his camera, fitted with a wide-angle lens, into the pothole, for this unusual perspective.

Winter has left craters scattered all over Hoboken

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The days of rough riding have returned.

With the snow gone, for now, and everything from melted salt to construction crews attacking city streets, a bumper crop of potholes

has appeared. Adam Kaufman, 20, of Montville, was driving his 1987 Mitsubishi truck west on Observer Highway Wednesday when he was waylaid by a pothole. The front end of the truck got stuck in the hole, which he said measured a foot and a half deep by a foot and a half long.

In what could be called highway robbery, when Kaufman returned from phoning for a tow truck, he found the front right window broken, and an AM/FM radio/cassette player and \$200 worth of tools had been stolen.

A tour of city streets yesterday would show that while Kaufman had

been most unlucky, the pothole he hit is not the only one around.

Over the Willow Street viaduct, exposed steel ribbing grabbed car wheels every few yards. At the foot of the bridge near 16th Street, a giant square trench kept motorists.

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POTHOLE

Continued from Page 1
alert. While 14th Street was only mildly pockmarked, a right turn onto Hudson Street revealed a cratered, patched surface for blocks on end, especially between the railroad tracks.

"That's because there's not much underneath the road over the tracks," Public Works Director Roy Haack said. Because the surface over the railroad ties is not as solid as over other sections of the roadway, in other words, an eventual ride down Hudson is guaranteed.

Frank Sinatra Drive was fairly smooth, like its namesake. But side streets were enough to produce highly unmusical sounds from the throats of motorists. Bloomfield Avenue between First and Second streets and Park Avenue between Third and Fourth streets were especially interesting.

Haack said that the pothole crew is slated to be out every warm, clear day from now on, trying to fill in the ravages of the season. But because there are several cold weeks to go, he said they only would be using "winter mix," a combination of black asphalt and rock "with a little bit of sticky stuff thrown in."

Asphalt, a more durable substance, is not expected to hit the streets until the end of March.

Haack also said there is an application to the state Department of Transportation for funds to repave 25 city streets.

Unfortunately, the funds would not apply to Observer Highway or other county roads.

HHH coalition argues against 'warehousing'

By Jim DeRogatis

Hudson County's top judge heard arguments yesterday for a motion to dismiss a lawsuit against Hoboken's controversial "anti-warehousing" ordinance. Help Hoboken Housing, a coalition of landlords, developers and realtors, seeks to overturn an ordinance prohibiting landlords from holding vacant apartments for real estate speculation.

Although the law was passed in June, it did not go into effect until yesterday. Landlords with more than four units now have 60 days to rent vacant apartments or face fines of up to \$500 a day per vacant unit.

HHH is fighting the law on two levels, in federal and state court. A federal court judge dismissed a suit charging that the law was unconstitutional last November, but the group is appealing the ruling in the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia.

According to HHH's state suit, the anti-warehousing law is preempted by existing state laws, does not conform to state laws of due process and violates portions of the state constitution. The city and the Campaign for Housing Justice, a Hoboken tenants organization that has joined in defending the law, filed a motion to dismiss the suit, refuting HHH's charges and claiming that the law is valid.

Hudson County Superior Court Judge Burrell Ives Humphreys heard arguments concerning the motion yesterday. Sauer, the attorney for HHH, city attorney Maureen Schweitzer, and Ira Karasick and George Aviles, the attorneys for the Campaign for Housing Justice. Humphreys reserved decision and has 60 days to rule on the motion.

Several weeks ago, Humphreys denied a motion by HHH for an injunction that would have prevented the city from enforcing the law. The judge issued an opinion that defended the city's right to provide "affordable housing," and he called warehousing "a sin."

Sauer said HHH hopes the judge will allow the case to go to trial so the group can call witnesses to challenge the city's claims concerning the amount of warehoused apartments and the need for affordable housing. The attorneys contend that the judge should consider the merits of the law itself, although they are confident they could present a case outlining the current housing crisis and the need for an anti-warehousing law.

The fight against the Hoboken rule is being watched closely in North Bergen, Union City and West New York, where similar ordinances are in effect. The Jersey City Council is considering an ordinance modeled after the Hoboken law.

While both sides in the Hoboken battle await Humphreys' decision, Jody Manasevit, the city's newly-hired anti-warehousing enforcement officer, has taken the first steps to enforce the law. Manasevit said "the clock started ticking" yesterday for 13 landlords suspected of warehousing apartments. The landlords were subjects of complaints from tenants, many of them living in buildings with warehoused apartments, she said.

Once it is confirmed that the apartments are vacant, either by Manasevit or city housing inspectors, the landlords will be notified that they have 60 days to rent the units. If they

do not comply, Manasevit will file a complaint with the municipal court. Judge Steven Zamrin could levy fines ranging from a minimum of \$100 to a maximum of \$500 a day per unit.

The law requires landlords to register their vacant apartments with the anti-warehousing office once they have been vacant for 30 days. If a landlord intends to seek a waiver of the law, he must file a form with the Rent Levelling Office within 35 days after the apartment becomes vacant.

The Rent Levelling Board will grant waivers under three conditions: if the owner wishes to maintain a vacant unit in order to reserve it for a family member; if the owner intends to improve the condition of the unit; or if the owner must keep the unit vacant to correct municipal or state code violations. Waivers will be granted for 60 days at a time, and no more than three will be approved by the board.

Residents with questions concerning the anti-warehousing law are encouraged to call Manasevit at 420-2029. Landlords looking for vacancy report forms or waiver request forms should visit the Rent Levelling Office or the anti-warehousing office on the second floor of City Hall.

Trust fund will protect insurance settlement

By Bill Campbell

Hoboken has a plan to create a trust fund to store about \$6.5 million in capital improvement funds which may result from settlement of a suit between the city and the Port Authority.

The City Council, which last night discussed the settlement of a four-month dispute over insurance money during a two-hour closed door meeting, feels the trust account is necessary to insure that "no strings are attached to the funds," according to one member.

The council met with Mayor Thomas Vezetti, members of the mayor's Waterfront Advisory Committee, representatives of the Community Development Agency and municipal attorneys. The body is expected to take its recommendations to the P.A. later this week.

City Council President E. Norman Wilson said said it will be "unlikely" that the city and P.A. can complete the agreement in time for a council vote on the plan during its Wednesday session. The settlement must also be ratified by the P.A. Board of Commissioners.

"There's been no change in the amount of money the city is to receive, only in the way it will be divvied," said Councilwoman Helen Cunningham.

City Councilman Dave Roberts, who proposed the trust account, said the measure would protect the city's interests by "guaranteeing that the funds are in place."

The city has also decided to undertake an exhaustive rehabilitation of tide gates and regulators, rather than authorize the P.A. to do the repairs. Opponents of the settlement felt that allowing the P.A. to make the improvements might create a "loophole" which might permit the bi-state agency's proposed \$600 million Hudson Center development to discharge additional sewage, according to a source.

The council also agreed that the P.A. must provide a full accounting of insurance funds and that the P.A. leasehold on the pier property will be terminated if no agreement to develop the property is reached by Dec. 31.

Council members said that other terms of the settlement, including \$3 million in up-front money the city is to receive upon ratifying the agreement, are still in place.

Yesterday's meeting stemmed from a tentative agreement reached last Thursday between municipal officials and P.A. representatives.

The city is suing the P.A. to recover \$7.5 million in insurance funds plus \$2 million in interest the P.A. collected after the city-owned Pier B was destroyed by fire in 1980.

The P.A. refused to release the funds, claiming they were to be used in its mixed-use waterfront real estate development. Negotiations between the city and the P.A. over a restated lease to develop the pier property, which have been terminated since last November, will resume if a settlement is reached.

In another matter, Hoboken special counsel Irwin Kimmelman told the council an independent engineer will determine the value of the sewage design plans prepared by Mayo Lynch & Associates.

During a one-hour closed meeting, Kimmelman said the engineer will extract the constructible portions of the Mayo Lynch plans and set a dollar value on the work. The remaining portions will be completed by Lawler Matusky and Skelly, the firm hired by the city after a judge ruled the Mayo Lynch contract invalid.

Mayo Lynch, which lost several appeals to overturn the decision, is suing the city for \$2 million.

Before the meeting, Kimmelman said Elson Killam Associates, the independent engineer appointed last Friday, will likely be disqualified because it was once represented by a law firm which now represents Mayo Lynch.

He said the court will probably appoint a new engineer next week.

Hoboken moves for dismissal of suits against mayor, aide

By Bill Campbell

Hoboken will seek to dismiss lawsuits against Mayor Thomas Vezetti and his chief aide, claiming the civil actions contain technical deficiencies.

The suits, filed in January by former corporation counsel Salvatore D'Amelio, charge Vezetti with being mentally incapable of serving as mayor and administrative assistant Laurie Fabiano with having made libelous statements about D'Amelio.

City Attorney William Graves charged Friday that the suits were filed improperly. He said the nature of the suits require a six-month hiatus before the tort claim can be filed.

The suits were filed less than two weeks after the administration charged D'Amelio

with a "conflict of interest" concerning his past city post and his current role representing the police union.

The city's response to the suits is returnable in Superior Court on March 10.

D'Amelio, a former Vezetti ally who now represents a group attempting to recall the mayor, denied that the suits were filed improperly, arguing, "Graves' tactics will not end the suit, just stall the inevitable."

Graves' claim comes about a week after he successfully charged that D'Amelio improperly served the suit in January when he personally delivered the papers to the officials. Last Wednesday, D'Amelio complied with state statute and paid a fee to have the sheriff's office serve the papers.

Vezetti and Fabiano have characterized the suits as "political interference" but have declined comment on the specific charges. D'Amelio, fired from his law and public safety directorships by Vezetti, said he filed the suits because "the administration was out of control and I felt it was time to do something to stop it."

D'Amelio is asking the court "to deem vacant the office of mayor." He has charged Vezetti with "refusal to qualify and serve as mayor; mental incapability to serve as mayor; and failure to attend meetings of the governing body."

He charges Fabiano with having made "libelous and slanderous" statements concerning a conflict of interest between clients he has represented in the public and private sectors. He is seeking \$10 million in damages from her.

Hoboken moving to dismiss suits

Continued from Page 1

D'Amelio said he will "see the suits through to the end." He predicted that the city would again attempt to "sabotage" the suits by claiming he outlined no cause of action.

"I am prepared for whatever they try to do to me next," D'Amelio said.

Graves said the suits "are not worth commenting on" but said the city would be successful in having them dismissed. D'Amelio, who served 10

months as law director, broke from Vezetti shortly after his appointment when he challenged the mayor's ability to name members to the board of adjustment.

Vezetti succeeded in firing the flamboyant director after D'Amelio wrested control of the Police Department and attempted to alter policy.

D'Amelio, who has returned to private practice, said he sued because "the administration's continued harassment" has affected his ability to earn a living.

Cappiello reported studying hopefuls

By JANET WILSON

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Five independent Board of Education candidates are being sized up for places on a three-person slate to be backed by Councilman Steve Cappiello, according to several sources.

There are a total of seven independents registered for the April 7 election, including board President Richard England. All will run against the three candidates on the well-funded Committee for Quality Education ticket of Steve Block, Carlos Peres and Michael Rossano.

Cappiello said yesterday that England is the finest candidate running. In a separate conversation, England said he would welcome anybody's support, including Cappiello's, and that he has met with Gloria Pantoliano, Mario Mercado, Orlando Esposito, and Perry Belfiore about possibly working together to share campaign costs.

Cappiello said Pantoliano, Mercado and Belfiore are all "good candidates." Asked about Esposito, Cappiello said, "He's a great boy, a great young man." Asked if that means he is a good candidate as well, Cappiello replied, "yes."

"It will take some time to figure out who the best candidates are, and who is considering dropping out," said the former mayor and political kingpin.

Board Vice President James Monaco dropped out of the race last week, a City Hall source said, after receiving assurances that Belfiore would not be picked to run in his place on a Cappiello-backed ticket.

The source said England probably will run with Mercado and Pantoliano.

"Mercado is probably the strongest independent candidate right now," England said. Mercado, who garnered 1,700 votes in last year's race, could not be reached for comment.

England said he likes Pantoliano because she is popular in her community, and because she is the only candidate with children in the public school system. She could not be reached for comment either.

"Maybe that's what the board needs — a parent," England said.

The other two candidates running are Felix Rivera, who has vowed to remain independent, and William Strangeman, who England said also is interested in running as an independent.

Irish eyes to smile on cop chief

By Jim DeRogatis

we've tried to adapt."

Police Chief and "Irishman of the Year" George Crimmins will lead Hoboken's first annual St. Patrick's Day parade along Washington Street on Saturday.

A 28-year veteran of the Hoboken police department, Crimmins was chosen as the parade's first grand marshal because of his service to the community and his pride in his Irish heritage, according to Councilwoman Helen Cunningham, chairman of the parade's the organizing committee.

Born and raised in Hoboken, Crimmins' parents' families both immigrated to this area from Ireland. His father served as a member of the Hoboken police force and three of his brothers worked in law enforcement, so it was only natural that Crimmins became a cop after leaving the U.S. Navy in 1945.

Crimmins received an associate degree in police science and a B.A. in political science from Rutgers University, and simultaneously worked his way through the ranks of the Hoboken force. He was appointed chief in 1970, and has seen the department through a period of great change in the city as it recovered from the urban decay of the '60s and underwent the gentrification of the late '70s and early '80s.

"The city has changed tremendously since I've been here," Crimmins said. "The problems that face the department today are different from those of several years ago, and

Crimmins lives in uptown Hoboken with his wife, Phyllis, two sons, and three daughters. He said he hopes several members of his family will join him in Saturday's parade.

Among those participating in the parade will be the Hoboken High School band, the Blue Jacket Guards Band of Brooklyn and the Fife and Drum Corps of Edgewater Park.

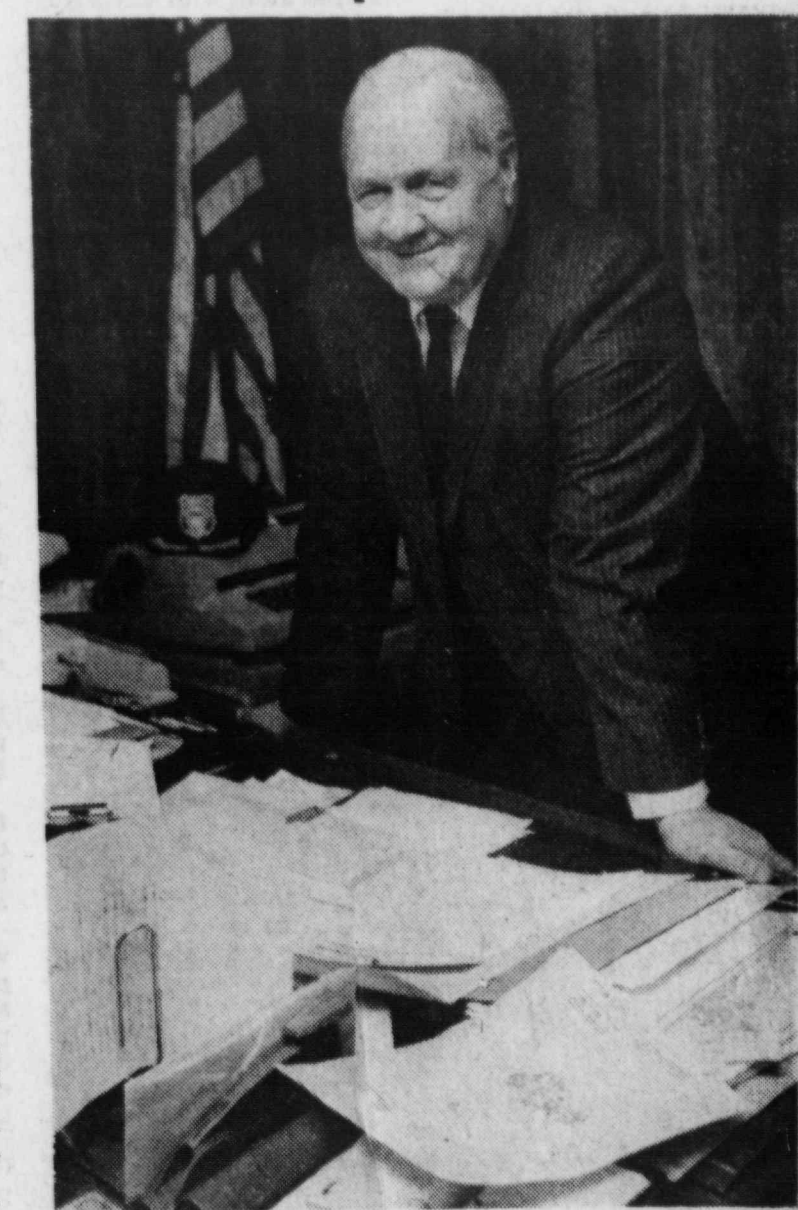
Cunning said the idea of starting a St. Patrick's Day parade in Hoboken originated when she was running for an at-large City Council seat on Mayor Thomas Vezetti's ticket in the May 1984 mayoral election. She said the candidates frequently stopped at the Shannon Lounge on First Street during the campaign and the tavern owners were also very supportive.

"We asked the people at Shannon's what they wanted if we were elected, and they said a St. Patrick's Day parade," Cunningham said. "We're finally getting it together, 18 months later."

Hoboken has historically had a very strong Irish population, and Cunningham said she believes the city has witnessed "a new influx of Irish" in recent years. "There is a strong new Irish community and they are very interested in discovering their roots," she said.

The committee hopes to organize a Hoboken branch of the Irish Cultural Society.

Marchers will assemble at noon at 14th and Washington streets and proceed south towards City Hall.



Police Chief George Crimmins at his desk.

70 PARK AVE.

NJ to zap Hoboken landlords

By JANET WILSON

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The tenants of the decrepit apartments at 70 Park Ave. here are still without electricity more than a month after it was shut off, but the state now is trying to help the city put pressure on the landlords.

An article in The Dispatch Tuesday described the plight of four families in the building, who are cooking and washing by candlelight after a massive roof leak left electrical wires wet. The tenants are coping with a faulty, scum-filled drainage system and a shrieking fire alarm that goes off whenever the hot water heaters are turned on. In addition, there are holes in the doors, walls and ceiling, and dozens of other violations of building codes.

According to Jude Fitzgibbons, the local construction code enforcement official, the state Department of Community Affairs will serve the new owners of the building with a

The list of 135 building code violations was compiled more than four years ago

list of 135 violations, compiled more than four years ago, which never were corrected by Mary-Ann Zahn and Ruth Draper, the former owners.

"The former owners are the culprits. But he bought the building without a green card, so he knew there were a lot of problems," Fitzgibbons said, referring to Philip DeAngelo, of Hurrah Properties in Lincoln Park, who bought the prop-

erty with Ken Tribona in October for \$450,000. A green card is a certificate that a facility has passed all building codes, and it customarily is obtained before a property changes hands.

If the state violations are not corrected, the owners could face stiffer fines than they do locally, and eventually could have a lien placed on their property.

Zahn and Draper, the former owners, meanwhile face court charges for 117 violations at another property they own, 81 Willow Ave. There are seven families living there, in the midst of similar deterioration.

It also was learned yesterday that Zahn and Draper have been sued in the past by the state Attorney General's Office, and paid a \$5,000 fine for violations at 68 Park Ave., now a renovated condominium where apartments are selling for \$135,000 apiece.

Francone won't be on council

By Bill Campbell

A 32-year Hoboken political tradition is coming to an end with the announcement yesterday that Louis and Mary Francone, the husband-and-wife team who have occupied the Fourth Ward City Council seat since the 1950s, will not seek reelection.

Instead, the Francones' attended the City Hall filing ceremony of Flo Amato, once an arch political foe, who they are now supporting for the council seat. "She's proven that she's a good worker," said Louis Francone, who held the Fourth Ward seat from 1955 to 1983.

"I'm going to miss this, they are all such nice people," said Mary Francone, whose term expires in July. "We all support Flo Amato, he'll be good to all of us."

Amato was selected Thursday night during a meeting at the Louis Francone Auxiliary Woman's Club. "I decided to let the ladies decide," Louis Francone said.

Tucked in the city's southwest corner, the Fourth Ward is slated for some of the city's largest real estate projects. "Up to now, we are the forgotten ward," Amato said. "Up to now we have more vacant land than any other ward. It's time that we develop that land and stand out with the rest of the city."

Amato, 43, is a civic activist, homemaker and mother. Her husband, Andrew, served briefly as an aide to former Mayor Steve Cappiello and later as Public Works director.

Amato, who picked up petitions in mid-January, submitted 100 petitions to assistant city clerk Frank Fortunata. She predicted that uniting the Amato and Francone teams would ensure her victory.

According to Louis Francone, who until recently told supporters he was considering another bid for the seat, the decision to support Amato stems from a mid-winter meeting with Flo and Andrew. He

said he was clearing a lot on First and Jefferson streets when Andrew asked if his wife could run.

"We're not retiring, we're not going anywhere," Louis Francone said. "I'm still a committeeman and our door will always be open."

Councilman Robert Ranieri, who has endorsed Amato, said she will run with the slogan "Tradition and Progress."

"Tradition" represents the Francones and "Progress" represents the Amatos, he said.

No other candidates have yet announced for the seat. All six Hoboken ward seats are up in the May election.

Couple must leave home in cemetery

By Bill Campbell 88 3/3/87

The embattled superintendent of Hoboken Cemetery and his wife must leave their cemetery home by Friday after exhausting their appeals of the superintendent's firing.

Hudson County Superior Court Appellate Judge Geoffrey Gaulkin yesterday denied a request to postpone the firing of superintendent Richard Buchta, upholding the cemetery's board of trustees' January ouster of Buchta and his wife, Roswitha, the cemetery's administrator.

Gaulkin made his decision without comment.

Buchta and his wife have exhausted their appeals and must leave the cemetery by Friday, said their attorney, Donald Rosanelli of Newark. The Buchtas live at the cemetery, which is on Tonelle Avenue in North Bergen, in a house provided by the board of trustees.

Rosanelli said he will file papers in the chancery division of Superior Court later this month seeking injunctive relief and punitive damages from the board of trustees. He said the ousted Buchta was fired because he was "a whistleblower."

Rosanelli argued that the board was sitting improperly

Couple must leave home in cemetery

Continued from Page 1

tal purchases without the knowledge or approval of the board.

The board also claimed that Buchta improperly managed employee payroll, Social Security and tax records, but no charges of wrongdoing were levied.

Ironically, Buchta was hired last summer after the cemetery became the center of a controversy. Wilson threatened to file suit against the board of trustees after receiving complaints from residents that the facility was "disgraceful and in need of immediate attention." Other city officials have complained that Fields and her daughter, Mary Elizabeth Barr, the president, were uncooperative when the city asked for financial information.

Buchta, who has since been replaced as superintendent, has remained at the cemetery pending the appeal. He said he has discussed his findings with the state Attorney General's Office and the state Cemetery Board.

Buchta charged that im-

proper interments have continued, one as recently as Feb. 25, according to court papers. In one instance, a relative of a victim of acquired immune deficiency syndrome was charged for a "double-depth" interment although the body was buried at 48 inches, the legal requirement of a single-depth interment.

Buchta and his attorney also charge that trustees have failed to hold an election of officers in more than eight years and the majority of present trustees are serving illegally.

Rosanelli said he will seek to have Buchta reinstated as superintendent.

Jersey to audit Hoboken agency

By JANET WILSON Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Inspectors from the State Bureau of Construction Code Enforcement are set to begin an audit of the city Building Department this morning, against a backdrop of political dispute.

Alfred Arezzo, the city construction code official, yesterday charged that the audit and other actions involving his office this week are part of a "conspiracy" by the Mayor's Office, the Law Department and several City Council members to have him removed.

"But I got news for them," Arezzo said yesterday. "I am here to stay."

"Anytime anybody says anything about his office, he thinks it's a conspiracy," Law Department Director William Graves said.

Fierce debate concerning the office also was expected at last night's council meeting.

Councilman Thomas Newman and Patrick Pasculli had sponsored a resolution Feb. 24 calling for the state audit. The Mayor's Office, as

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AUDIT

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part of its reorganization plan, has suggested possibly eliminating the city Building Department and contracting with an outside inspecting firm to handle the work.

Newman, who formerly served on the Board of Adjustment, has been a vocal critic of the Building Department for years. Arezzo charged yesterday that Newman and Pasculli are out to get him because of past inspections he had done of their own and relatives' properties.

Most recently, the Hudson School, whose principal is Newman's wife, Suellen, had to be moved from 506 Park Ave. because of fire code violations. Arezzo said he had nothing to do with the original complaint that brought inspectors to the building, and had not tried to slow repair work there.

On Monday, Arezzo wrote the Mayor's Office saying he could not issue permits for repair work on the school without having a fire subcode official to review plans. The former subcode official, Ray Falco, was also a fire captain who had given notice last week that he was retiring from the Fire Department. Graves returned a letter to Falco, saying that if he resigned from one job, he could not continue to work in the

other. Arezzo wrote a letter to Mayor Thomas F. Vezetti, asking him to keep Falco as subcode official, but that request was refused.

Graves said he did not understand why Arezzo had to write a letter on Falco's behalf.

"He had to pass a test to become a fire captain. I assume he knows how to speak English. And write it," Graves said. "He could have come to see me if he had any questions, or proof that I did not know something that would have been relevant to his case."

Deputy Fire Chief Richard Tremietti, who is also licensed as a fire subcode official, was sworn in late Tuesday on a provisional basis to inspect plans for the Building Department.

Yesterday, Tremietti reviewed and approved the plans for repairs to the Hudson School. DOT Electrical Corp. of Bayonne is to be paid \$6,900 to install a central alarm system.

The school's 96 students and their teachers have been continuing classes in space provided by Stevens Tech. Next week, they are due to move to the Demarest School, a public school with declining enrollment that has several extra empty rooms.

10 YEARS AGO and TODAY

HOBOKEN: TALE OF 2 CITIES

Re habs driving out Puerto Ricans

By JANET WILSON Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—This is the story of two cities: One that 10 years ago had a flourishing Puerto Rican population, and today one from which thousands of Puerto Ricans have been driven out.

This is the story of two buildings, 68 and 70 Park Ave., that are emblems of Hoboken housing. No. 68 has nine beautifully refurbished luxury condominiums. No. 70 is a wreck.

Two Puerto Rican women in No. 70, who have endured years of bullying and neglect at the hands of landlords, are determined to stay at all costs, unlike thousands of others who have been forced out of other buildings.

Sonia Almenas and her neighbor

Lydia Santos live in a building where snails crawled out of the scum in the broken drainpipes at one point; where there has been no electricity for a month; and where their children do homework by candlelight.

"The logical thing to do would be to move out, but there is no other place for me to go," said Santos. "I am not going to sleep in the park with my children."

Philip D'Angelo, the most recent landlord, has offered the two women \$10,000 each to move out of the apartments they have rented for 13 years for \$127 and \$135 per month. But he refuses to provide the major repairs needed in their apartments.

"I offered them substantial money, if they want \$10,000 they can have it. They can go back to Puerto Rico," said D'Angelo last week.

"But I'm not fixing up their apartments for \$100 rent."

The dilemma faced by the two mothers is a scenario that has been played out time and again here in the last decade. Unlike Almenas and Santos, however, thousands of other Hispanics have bailed out of deteriorating homes by grabbing the money offered by landlords eager to empty the buildings and convert them to condominiums. Within months, the families have found the money cannot buy six months' rent in another apartment in this rapidly gentrifying city.

In 1980, there were 17,000 Hispanic people living here, nearly all of them from Puerto Rico. They made up 40.2 percent of the population, more than any other ethnic

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TALE



THE SAME LANDLORD owns these buildings on Park Avenue in Hoboken. No. 68, at left, has been converted



to condominiums. Its neighbor, No. 70, an official charged, is being warehoused.

Continued from Page 1

At least 5,000 Hispanics have left the Mile Square City in just seven years, according to city officials, who base their estimates on declining school enrollments and swollen waiting lists for subsidized housing.

Many of the Hispanics have resettled in Camden, Elizabeth, Philadelphia and Bridgeport, Conn., according to Tom Olivieri, a tenant advocate for the city Community Development Agency. Others have returned to the South Bronx where they moved in search of better housing.

"The Hispanic population in Hoboken has been decimated," Olivieri said. "They take the \$5,000 in cash, that won't even last them half a year. If they're lucky enough to find an apartment that accepts children, that does not discriminate against Hispanics, it costs a minimum of \$600. Then they've got a \$600 finder's fee for the Realtor, a \$600 security deposit, and they've already spent a third of that money. Just for rent, the rest will be gone in six months."

Olivieri and others attribute the rapid decline to a loss of jobs, to the easy travel by airplane between Puerto Rico and New Jersey, but mostly to the stark facts of gentrification. The quick cash payments and warehousing of apartments that hit all of working-class Hoboken hard may have hit Hispanics hardest of all.

Thousands are still here, the lucky ones in the housing projects at the northwest edge of town, hundreds of others hanging on in apartments that have become unfit for human habitation after years of neglect by landlords and ineffectual legal action by the city.

The two buildings on Park Avenue are textbook examples of how Hispanics have been forced out to make way for developers.

In 1980, No. 68 was bought for \$456,000 and No. 70 was bought for \$50,000 by Ruth Draper and MaryAnn Zahn. The buildings were already in declining condition, after changing hands several times in the 1970s, but were habitable. In fact, 15 Hispanic families and three black

families filled all but two of the 20 apartments in the two buildings. But badly needed repairs were not made, and starting in 1982, the owners went door to door in No. 68, telling the tenants they had to leave because the building was in such bad shape it was going to be condemned.

Seven of the tenants in No. 68 were paid \$1,500 each, and were gone by 1984. There were only three families left, and they were moved next door.

Within two years, Zahn and Draper had their building rebuilt and nine condominiums on the market.

In 1987, No. 68 has been emptied of previous tenants, gutted and rebuilt. Pretty blue-stained glass fills the space above the door, and the steps are new brick and stone. A brightly painted sign advertises "Quality-Class-Charms" condominiums, and tax records show one has been sold to a couple from White Plains, N.Y., for \$135,000.

Zahn and Draper tried the same strategy in No. 70. The city's building code enforcement policies aggravated the situation. State and local housing inspections show dozens of building code violations, yet the owners were fined only \$30 in 1982, \$50 in 1983 and \$60 in 1984, and the building continued to deteriorate. In 1984, the owners told the tenants they had to leave because conditions were so bad, but only one of the five remaining families would leave, after being paid \$6,000.

The code provides for fines of up to \$100 per day per violation, meaning the owners could have been fined tens of thousands of dollars.

Last summer, they sold the building, because, according to Zahn, she and her partner no longer "want to be in the business of holding buildings where there are tenants that have to be displaced."

The door at No. 70 is boarded up with plywood. The front steps are crumbling. The building is 60 percent empty, with two black families originally from No. 68 living on the top floor. Lydia Santos on the fourth floor and Almenas on the

first floor.

The new owners, D'Angelo and Ken Tribona paid \$450,000 for this collapsing building, with an inoperable central plumbing system and scores of health, building and fire safety violations.

"It's a business proposition, we're converting it into condominiums," said D'Angelo last week. They have tried everything to get the remaining families out, including offering to buy another rundown building to which the tenants could move and payments of thousands of dollars.

"I'm not moving. I have no other apartment," said Santos. "They are not going to force me out," said Almenas.

D'Angelo replied: "Those people can stay there as long as they want, but I'm not going to fix their apartments for \$100 rent. I'll do what I have to to satisfy the city, mostly put some paint on the walls."

"Their rationale is off the wall," said the CDA's Olivieri of D'Angelo and Tribona. "They say they're business people, yet they're willing to pay \$450,000 for a bad building. They know arithmetic. A landlord's business is providing a service to tenants, he's required to do that, and he's not allowed to chase them out."

In the meantime, the deterioration continues.

A visit to the building last week was a visit to a building where children live in constant danger and hardship. There has been no electricity for a month, after the roof caved in under heavy snows. Incorrectly installed fire alarms that finally were put in during November after years of absence meant that for that month, an ear-splitting noise filled the building night and day.

Almenas had lived on one side of the first floor right side for many years, but received the last owner's permission to move across the hall after snails began crawling out of the scum backed up in the bathroom drains because of broken sewerage pipes.

It is lucky she did. The January flood from melting snow left a dirty,

5-foot-thick frozen waterfall that draped over the kitchen sink and decrepit linoleum in her old apartment.

For mothers with two school-age children, no electricity means cooking by candlelight, young eyes doing homework by candlelight, and making beds with the light provided by a crack under the door to the hallway.

Another health hazard is created by the fire alarms, which are triggered every time Almenas turns on her hot-water heater in the kitchen. Last November, after years without adequate smoke detectors, D'Angelo, who had just bought the building, had fire alarms installed. They were placed too close to the hot-water heaters.

For the first month, the fire alarms were on permanently, meaning an ear-splitting wall filled the building 24 hours a day. Almenas' 10-year-old daughter grimaces and freezes in place when her mother demonstrates how turning on the hot-water heater in the kitchen still sets off the alarm.

"It's like crying wolf," pointed out Olivieri. "How would they know it's a real fire?"

Last week, after the city electrical inspector, Pat Celino, ordered D'Angelo to do something, he had an industrial-strength yellow cable strung across the living room. To light the kitchen, Almenas has to drag the cable across the floor and hold it in one hand as she works, or try to clip it somewhere at a proper angle to free up both hands. Two days later, the electricity went off again, with no explanation.

Almenas is only a little more than 4 feet tall. She suffered from polio when she was young, and came to Hoboken from Puerto Rico for an operation at St. Mary Hospital here that saved her life.

In spite of the abuse to which she and her children have been subjected, she loves Hoboken, and never has returned to the land of her birth.

"There is good health care here, there are good friends here, my kids were born here," she says through a translator. "This is my home."



Photo by John Decker

TENANT SONIA ALMENAS looks recently at the imposing ice formation in her former apartment at 70 Park Ave. in Hoboken.

City's tax counsel may not be paid

By Bill Campbell

Hoboken's special tax counsel for the past 34 years will not be paid for future services unless the City Council ratifies a contract recognizing his employment.

Citing the landmark Mayo Lynch decision which required the city to renew all existing professional service agreements, municipal Law Director William Graves told the City Council last night that Herbert Fine cannot be paid until he is awarded a city contract.

The council unanimously agreed to table a resolution authorizing a \$2,916 payment to Fine for services rendered during January.

Graves said he conducted a search for Fine's contract at

the request of Councilwoman Helen Cunningham but found only a 1954 resolution naming him special counsel. "But as far as I can tell, in all these years he has never had a contract with the city," Graves said.

Asked if he considered Fine to be the city's tax consultant, Graves said, "No, not legally, according to the information available in the City Clerk's office."

Fine, who did not attend the session, is currently involved in the city's efforts to recover back taxes from the bankrupt Braswell Shipyards on 14th and Hudson streets. He was also instrumental in the city's recapturing money in lieu of taxes on railroad prop-

See CITY — Page 9.

City's tax counsel may not be paid

Continued from Page 1

erty near the Jersey City border.

Fine also represents the city in all tax appeals.

Councilman Robert Ranieri last night defended the payment to Fine.

"Don't we have a duty or a right to pay him?" he asked. The 1954 resolution stated that Fine can serve "until this council determines that there is no longer a need for his employment," he added.

Councilman and former Mayor Steve Cappiello urged the council to reconsider payment because Fine's services will be "important" when the city revalues its property later this year. "I just hope we will not disturb that situation," he said.

However, other council members and Graves felt that Fine's services may no longer be necessary. The council in January hired an attorney in South Carolina to handle the Braswell bankruptcy proceedings, and Graves said the law department is capable of facilitating regular tax appeals "in

house." Councilman Thomas Newman said Fine and Henry Brown, the South Carolina counsel, had "a discrepancy of legal opinions which raises some questions in my mind."

The city is hoping to recover nearly \$2 million in back taxes and interest on the Braswell property which was once owned by Bethlehem Steel.

Graves said he wrote Fine last week requesting information on his employment status with the city. He said he has yet to receive a reply.

"However, as I understand it, the effect of (Superior Court Assignment) Judge Burrell Ives Humphreys' (Mayo Lynch) ruling on this city is that we are not at liberty to pay for services unless there is a valid contract," Graves said.

Humphreys last Oct. 24 found the city's \$2 million contract with sewage plant design engineers Mayo Lynch & Associates invalid because the scope of payment was not properly advertised. Other municipal professional service contracts had to be re-ratified as a result of the decision.

Almost all eyes are on condominium conversion



Washington Street rowhouses make up one form of Hoboken's housing stock.

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DeFino has said they are considering another bill that would require such set-asides in any condo or co-op conversion. Similar legislation is expected to be introduced in Hoboken when a new Master Plan is introduced there.

Mayor Anthony R. Cucci is said to be supportive of a complete moratorium on condominium conversions. Similar legislation has been struck down in Fort Lee and two other New Jersey municipalities.

On the state level, real estate investors are keeping an eye on legislation introduced by Assemblyman Charles J. Catrillo, R-Jersey City, that would prohibit conversions unless more than 50 percent of tenants in the building agree to purchase their apartments.

The bill, which was introduced in late October, faces stiff opposition from investors and has yet to be heard by the Assembly Housing Committee.

Anti-warehousing bills, which prohibit landlords from keeping apartments vacant — an act that makes resale or conversion of apartments easier and more profitable — have been passed in West New York, Hoboken, Union City, North Bergen, Weehawken and Hoboken.

Many developers say the laws are a violation of private-property rights, but a judge in U.S. District Court in Newark found the law to be constitutional. The law has many Hoboken investors concerned because it has been much more common for buildings there to be emptied of tenants before their sale for conversion.

Units without tenants bring some \$10,000 more on the market than those without. Prices for empty apartments stand about \$37,500 to \$40,000 in the more desirable neighborhoods of Hoboken, Jersey City and Boulevard East. Landlords are making payoffs between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to persuade tenants to leave.

One of the more important developments real estate agents point to over the past year is increasing willingness of buyers from out of the area to consider neighborhoods other than Hoboken.

The Jersey City Heights, the area south of Journal Square, the Van

Vorst and Hamilton Park neighborhoods, Weehawken and all of Boulevard East have condominiums selling as high as those in Hoboken. In addition, some investors are seeking to promote housing with views over the meadowlands as well as views of the Manhattan skyline.

"At one point, Hoboken was the only place for those who came from out of the area. Now people have a real choice," said Neima Grandela of Riverside Realty, which this month opened a new branch in Jersey City to add to its Hoboken office.

Grandela said 1986 was "a mixed year for Hoboken" with sales slowing down and prices stabilizing in the second half.

However, "Prices have been going up in Jersey City without any question," she adds.

Barry Segall of Gold Coast Realty explained, "I think what you have in Hoboken is a market two years ahead of everything else (in the county), and it's matured."

Segall said he expects the city's condominium prices to rise only 5 percent in the next year but said this is a healthy sign. He said he expects demand to remain strong for some time because of rising employment opportunity in the metropolitan area.

He said Hoboken, many Jersey City neighborhoods and Boulevard East are "now on a price comparable to Brooklyn and Queens," where units sell within some 6 months of being placed on the market.

Gold Coast is converting for itself or on contract to owners a few hundred condominium units.

The completion of the Newport

mail with four department stores, some 150 retail shops and a large supermarket is going to fuel the expansion, Segall added, arguing that Queens and Brooklyn cannot offer such easy access to a large shopping area.

"The county has a long way to go in its growth and has only scratched the surface," according to Leonard Turi of Century 21/Turi Realty of North Bergen. Turi said he is becoming involved in the construction of an increasing number of townhouses and condominiums in North Hudson.

"Income levels in the area are going to increase," Turi added.

Both men acknowledged that investors are attracted to New Jersey because condominium conversion laws make it quicker to remove non-buying tenants here than in New York, but Segall said he finds Hudson County buildings in greater disrepair. Both men also complained of the stiff rent control ordinances enforced in the county, and strongly supported vacancy de-control laws, which would allow landlords to raise rents to what they consider market values once a tenant leaves.

Almost all investors are buying with the intention of converting their property, according to almost all of the 10 real estate agents in the county interviewed. Only Al Pasqual of Cupo/Tag Realty said most investors he deals with are staying in the rental market and yielding returns of some 10 percent a year.

Segall said some 10,000 conversions are expected in the county each year for the next five years.

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HOUSING

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Carlos Hernandez, owner of Hernandez Realty, is taking a novel approach to the condominium market.

Hernandez said less than 25 percent of existing tenants in conversions are buying their apartments at reduced insider prices, while up to 85 percent of tenants in buildings he converts are buying. By doing condominium conversions with little rehabilitation, and providing financing with only 10 percent down, he said he is selling apartments in the interior of Union City and West New York for \$40,000-\$70,000.

Robert Heller, a New-York-based investor who is converting six to seven buildings into dwellings in West New York and Union City with Hernandez, says he can realize profits almost as high in these types of conversions.

If existing tenants do not purchase their units, they have at least three years before they can be evicted legally.

Schools try to defuse violent inter-city feud

Continued from Page 1

moved to another unit and is considered stable, said family members.

Omar said he did not know why he was singled out but said it might have been because he sat next to a girl who admonished the pair not disturb the Spanish class the two were attending. After the class, he was attacked by the trespassers.

"Those of our students who are involved will be referred to a Child Study Team for a psychological evaluation," said Fine.

Fuentes said the problems between the students from the two neighboring communities stem from hostile events at athletic events over the past two years. Since a serious injury has occurred as a result of a smoldering relationship, he said, the Union City school district is investigating the possibility of bowing out of any future athletic competition with Hoboken.

Fine said he is reluctant to take that step.

Most of the problems at athletic events were caused by "fans," he said, and urged that students not pay the penalty for the actions of others.

"If they want to sit down and discuss eliminating fans from the games then we are willing to discuss it," he said. "I'm sure it can be done."

Fuentes added that removing Hoboken from sport schedules was only being studied and would require further review by the full school board.

"I'm not about to rush into a panic or turn the school into a Leavenworth," he said, referring to the stationing of police officers and transferring a school security guard, retired Detective Bureau head Wilbur Nelson, to Emerson.

City Commissioner and

state Assemblyman Ronald Dario was annoyed that he could not get an answer from the Board of Education on whether one of the security guards hired by the school panel, a job political opponents charged was just a patronage post, was stationed at Emerson.

"I was told they couldn't give me that information because it was part of a police investigation," said Dario. "I'm upset because this could just as well have happened to my daughter who attends classes in Emerson."

He also said that as a parent he is concerned that the incident had been kept too quiet by officials and that he had to learn about it in The Jersey Journal.

School Trustee Ralph Lanni said he also learned of the attack in the paper. "They did a good job of keeping it quiet," he said of school officials.

Meanwhile, Omar has been receiving visits and telephone calls from well-wishers, including Emerson administrators.

"I also received a call from Joe Buda, the principal of Hoboken, who apologized for what happened," he said.

The youth said he appreciated all the help and support he received from fellow students and educators.

He also learned from administrators that many future dances and events at Emerson have been cancelled or suspended until better supervision has been devised.

"I did hear that some of my friends received telephone calls from Hoboken warning how they were going to kick our butts," he said.

"Unfortunately," said Omar, "I don't think this whole business is going to stop."

Schools try to defuse violent inter-city feud

By Agustin Torres 88 3/4/87

Union City and Hoboken school officials have started a dialogue in hopes of finding a solution to mounting tensions between teenagers in the two communities.

The educators' concern comes on the heels of the severe beating police say two trespassing Hoboken students inflicted on a 15-year-old Emerson High School student last Friday in a corridor of the Union City school. One of the youths charged with trespassing and assault was also charged with carrying a knife, said police and school officials.

The arrested youths are 14 and 15 years old.

On Monday, nine other Hoboken teenagers, arriving in three cars, were nabbed at Emerson High School by detec-

Tensions mounting among students

tives who were ordered to stake out the building at 318 18th St., said police.

Union City Board of Education President Jose Fuentes said Superintendent of Schools Richard Hanna is expected to contact his Hoboken counterpart, Walter Fine, to discuss growing animosity between the student bodies.

"We're approaching them on a peer level to see if they can't do something about Hoboken students who insist on com-

ing into our school," said Fuentes. "The problem is just a few punks. We are not talking about the entire Hoboken student population but just a few who are bent on looking for trouble."

Fine said he spoke with Hanna yesterday by telephone. A meeting has been arranged for this morning with Hoboken High School faculty members and Principal Joseph Buda, he said.

"We received a list of

names of students from Union City," said Fine. "Our students have already been suspended from classes."

Fine said they will first try to determine who is involved in the Union City visits during school hours. It is important, he said, first to establish that the trespassers are indeed from Hoboken.

On Friday, the victim of the attack, Omar Martin, was taken to the Christ Hospital intensive care unit, Jersey City, where his father, Aurelio, 58, suffered an apparent heart attack while visiting him, said police and hospital officials.

Listed in stable condition, Omar is now in a regular hospital room. His father, after spending several days in the cardiac care unit, was also

See SCHOOLS — Page 12.

Plot owners plan protest at cemetery today

By Bill Campbell 88 3-5-87

Several plot owners and supporters of ousted Hoboken Cemetery Superintendent Richard Buchta are scheduled to hold a demonstration at the North Bergen facility today to protest deteriorated conditions and management of the 15-acre cemetery.

Donald Rosanelli, Buchta's attorney, said the plot owners decided to hold a noon protest after a four-hour meeting yesterday with the outgoing superintendent and an assistant state attorney general.

"They were outraged, totally amazed and surprised to see what is

going on here," Rosanelli said of the 10 plot owners who attended the session. He said they became interested in the management of the cemetery after reading newspaper accounts of Buchta's firing by the cemetery's board of trustees.

Buchta was fired Jan. 6 for allegedly ignoring financial guidelines set last fall. Trustees claim Buchta spent more than \$200,000 on capital items without permission.

Buchta, in turn, has said the board is sitting improperly and charged the trustees are violating their charter by refusing to hold a proper election. He says he was fired after presenting board secretary Vir-

ginia Fields with evidence of improper interments, a "coverup" of possible theft of equipment and embezzlement of funds.

Sherrie Gible, an assistant attorney general who attended yesterday's meeting, has been investigating Buchta's charges of mismanagement by the board, Rosanelli said. He said she and the plot owners toured the facilities before the meeting.

Gible was unavailable for comment.

Rosanelli, who lost an attempt in appellate court Monday to have Buchta reinstated as superintendent, said the outspoken Buchta was

a "whistleblower." He said he will file papers in chancery division later this month seeking injunctive relief and punitive damages.

Buchta's wife, Roswitha, the cemetery's administrator, was also terminated by the board. The couple must leave their cemetery home by Friday.

Trustees have denied any wrongdoing.

The cemetery's trust account, which is held by the city, is valued at more than \$1 million, said Hoboken officials. The board became the target of municipal criticism last summer after it was discovered that Mayor Thomas Vezzetti and City Council

President E. Norman Wilson were ex-officio members.

Wilson launched an investigation into the management of the facility after receiving complaints by plot owners that gravesites were in disrepair. He later threatened to sue the trustees for refusing to disclose financial information and conduct board meetings.

Buchta was hired as superintendent in June and is credited by both supporters and critics with improving the conditions at the facility.

The cemetery is located at 5500 Tonnelle Ave. in North Bergen. Rosanelli said the demonstration will be held from noon to 2 p.m.

Arezzo accuses Vezzetti, allies of interference

By Jim DeKogatis 88 3-5-87

Hoboken's embattled construction code official, Alfred Arezzo, yesterday charged Mayor Thomas Vezzetti and members of his administration with attempting to politically interfere with his office.

The charges were unleashed at the outset of a state inspection of Arezzo's office scheduled to begin today and were the latest volley in an ongoing feud involving Arezzo, Vezzetti and several City Council members.

According to Arezzo, Vezzetti, his executive assistant, Laurie Fabiano, Councilmen Patrick Pasculli and Thomas Newman and city Law Director William Graves "are all part of a conspiracy against this department. They are politically interfering with my office by trying to gain control of this department for their own political advancement," he said.

Members of the administration attacked Arezzo on Tuesday and charged him with attempting to slow down work to repair fire code violations in the city-owned Hoboken Public Library building. The violations forced the Hudson School and the Hoboken Industrial School, which are housed in the back of the century-old structure at 506 Park Ave., to vacate until the necessary repairs are complete.

The Hudson School, a private grammar school with about 100 gifted and talented students, is run by Newman's wife, Suellen. Newman and Arezzo have a long-running feud that came to a head last summer when the construction code official brought Newman, then a member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, to court over what he said were zoning violations in Newman's Garden Street cabinet-making shop.

Newman and Pasculli requested the state audit to determine whether Arezzo's office is being run efficiently, and the mayor issued a letter supporting the move. The councilmen believe it would be more cost-effective for the city to abolish the office and hire an outside inspecting firm.

But Arezzo charged yesterday that the councilmen's motives are political. He said Pasculli's brother, Nicholas, a worker with P&P Construction, "has been stopped from working in the past without construction permits, and Newman has had zoning violations against him, and now problems with the Hudson School."

Arezzo criticized the administration's handling of the Library repairs and said City Business Administrator Edwin Chius awarded a contract for

electrical repairs to the Dot Electric Co. without having plans approved by the construction code official. He said plans weren't submitted to his office until last Thursday and he has been unable to approve them because his office no longer has a fire subcode official.

Ray Falco retired from the Fire Department March 1 but planned to stay on as fire subcode official. He was appointed to the position by former Mayor Steve Cappiello in 1980 and claims to have tenure in the job.

But Graves said "that if you're retiring from the city, you're retiring," and he advised Falco that he could no longer remain with the construction code office. Arezzo responded by sending a letter to Vezzetti and Graves saying he could not approve the plans for the library work because he no longer had a construction subcode official.

Arezzo has frequently complained that his office is drastically understaffed and ill-equipped to deal with Hoboken's construction boom. He believes the state audit will justify his claims, while his opponents say it will show a history of mismanagement and poor practices.

Vezzetti has frequently said he would like to remove Arezzo from his position, but without evidence of wrongdoing the mayor cannot fire the construction code official under state law.

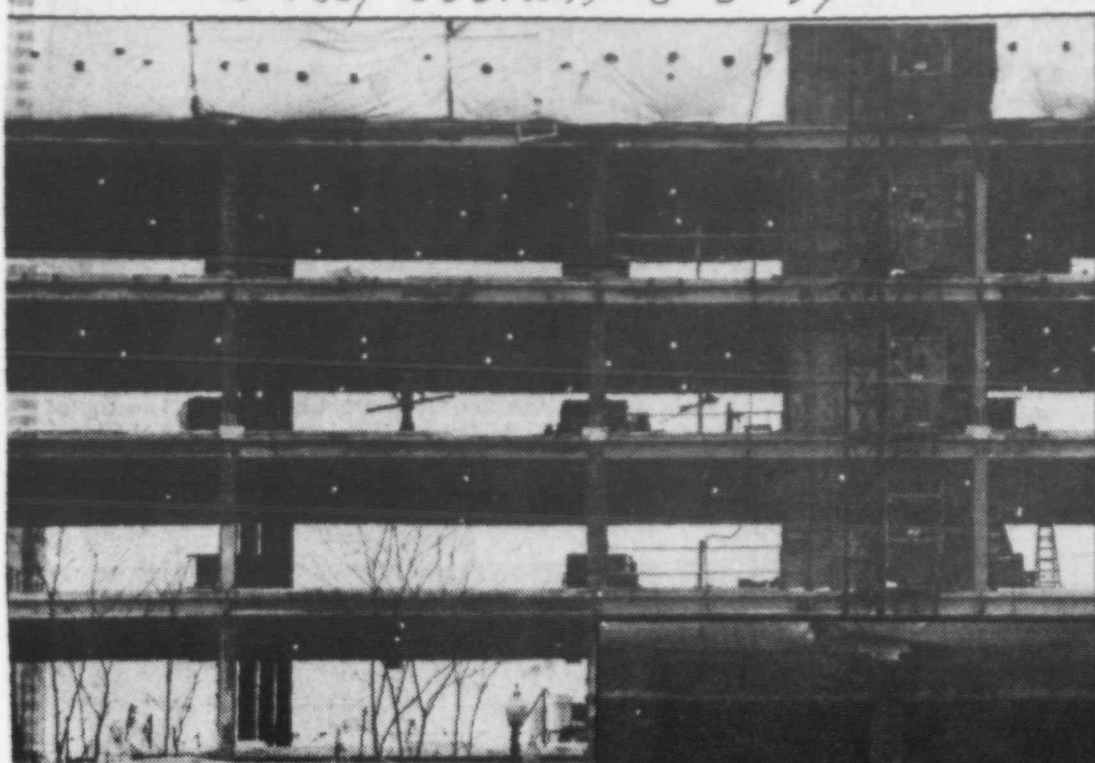
"I'm doing my job and I'm here to stay," Arezzo said. He added he is considering suing the administration on charges of "collusion and conspiracy" regarding problems with the library building once the state audit is complete.

Meanwhile, students in the Hudson School continue to have class in the Demarest School and the Industrial School classes are suspended until work is completed in the library. Deputy Fire Chief Richard Tremietied, temporary fire subcode official, reviewed the plans for the repairs yesterday and said changes must be made by the architect.

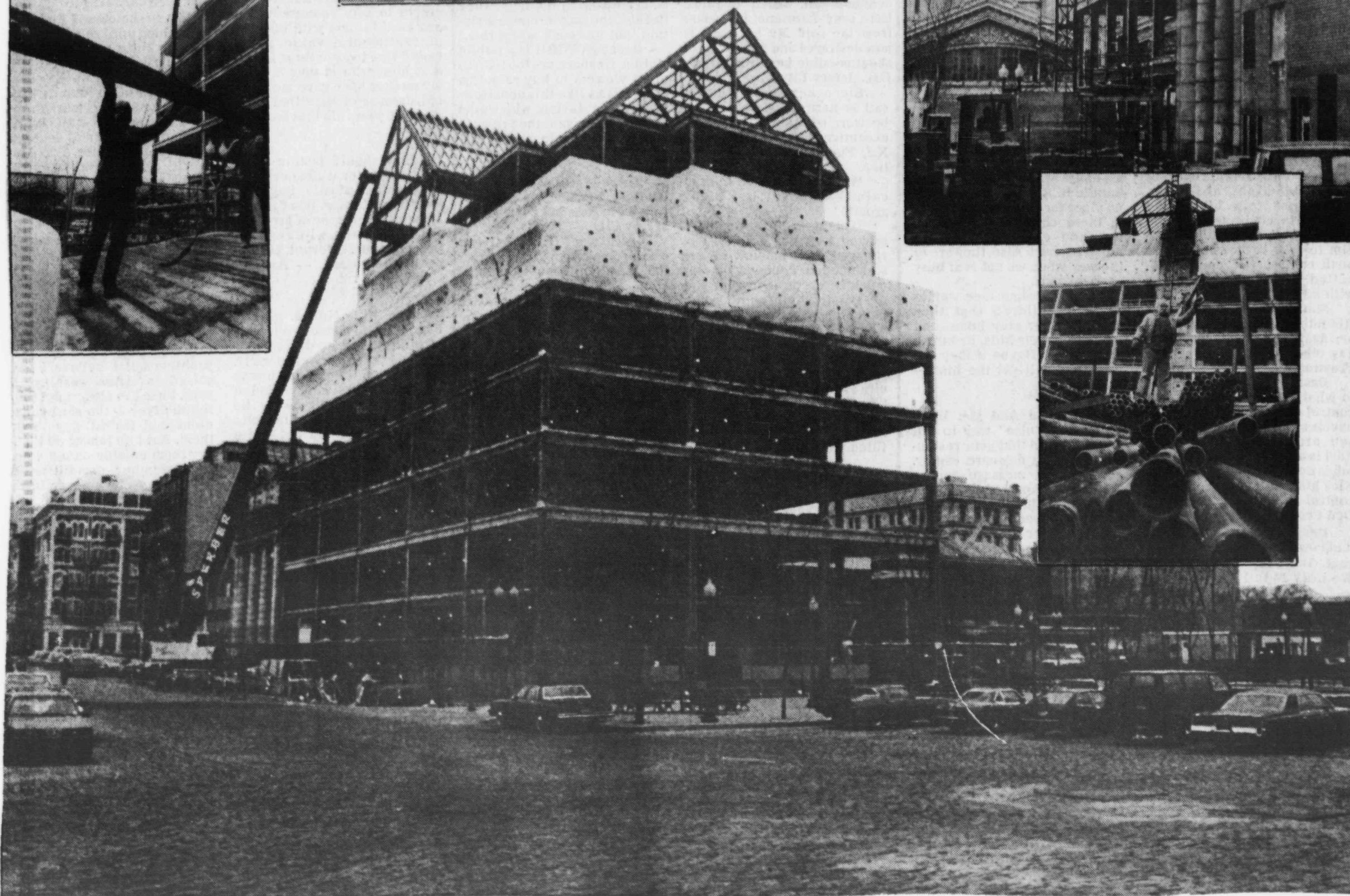
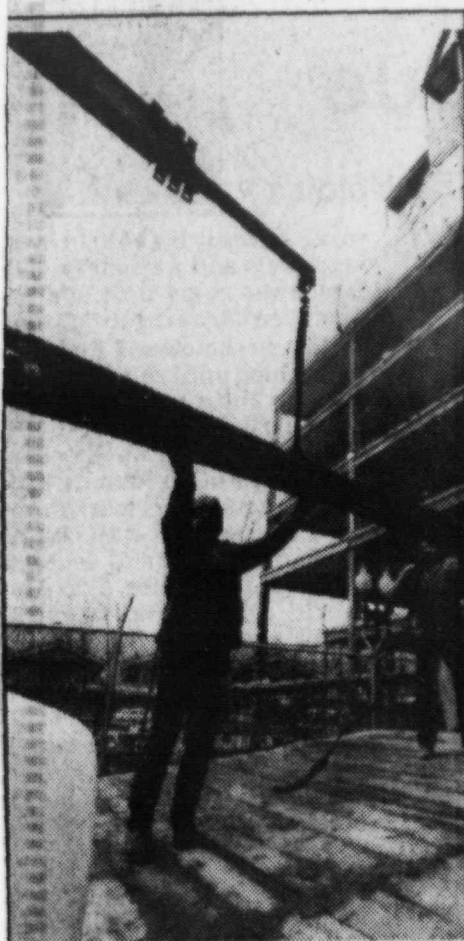
Tremietied could not say when work might be done so students can return.

Baker truly renaissance plaza

Jersey Journal 3-6-87



Photos by
Mark Wyville



Baker Waterfront Plaza, the \$10.75 million mixed-use office complex at 2 Hudson Place, represents one of the first physical signs of renaissance along the Hoboken waterfront.

Developed by Hoboken attorney Gerald Baker and his brother Robert, the building is located several hundred feet from the Erie-Lackwanna Terminal and the Hoboken PATH station. Although the Bakers are suing the city and state to obtain a sewerage hookup permit, the project is scheduled for occupancy later this year.

The project will be a 93,000-square-foot steel and concrete building with a Victorian-style facade of red brick and granite. Plans also call for an atrium facing the Manhattan skyline and a variety of shops to serve the commuter trade.

A 9,875-square-foot park and plaza is planned alongside the building to utilize the existing cobblestone streets. Gerald Baker, whose law offices are located in the old Hoboken Land Building at 1 Hudson Place, said the waterfront project was first envisioned in 1942 when his father purchased the site.

The developers last year secured federal and state funds and received an application for a wet sewer hookup after the city entered into an administrative consent order with the state Department of Environmental Protection. A groundbreaking ceremony was held last May.

Baker last month filed a lawsuit against the city and the DEP after Hoboken violated the consent agreement and the state refused to issue sewerage hookup permits. The suit is still pending in County Superior Court.

Nonetheless, Baker predicts he will receive the permit before completion.

COLLECTION CONTRACT

Hoboken plans citywide cleanup

DISPATCH 3-11-87

By JANET WILSON

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The city is cleaning up its act.

As the last ravages of winter wind sent loose bits of trash and paper dancing through the streets yesterday, city officials were indoors making plans for a spring cleaning, with the kickoff scheduled for April 1.

Part of the cleanup effort will involve keeping a careful eye on the city's new garbage collection company, Browning Ferris Industries of Texas. Other measures will include the possible hiring of a phalanx of part-time street sweepers, enlisting the aid and financial backing of local merchants to keep main shopping streets neat, and slapping summonses on negligent car owners who do not move their vehicles out of the path of the city's mechanical street cleaners.

"The city is really dirty, dirtier than it's been for a number of years," City Councilman Patrick Pasculli said. "We've got to improve the situation."

Pasculli, the rest of the council's Public Works Committee — Councilmen Joseph DellaFave and Tom Newman — and Council President E. Norman Wilson met with Public Works Director Roy Haack yesterday afternoon. A number of proposals were aired.

Assigning a city employee to follow and monitor the performance of the garbage trucks run by BFI, the company hired in December that has come under fire for blocking traffic by collecting garbage during rush hour, and skipping certain streets.

Hiring an additional 10 to 15 city street sweepers to work part-time along with the 12 full-time cleanup men already hitting the pavement.

Asking the merchants group ADVANTAGE to fund partially the hiring of an additional two street sweepers to look after Washington and First streets. Haack was expected to meet with ADVANTAGE representatives last night.

Stepping up enforcement of alternate-side-of-the-street parking laws, so city street cleaning machinery can reach the gutters, not end up blocked out by illegally parked cars.

Both Wilson and Pasculli said they had received numerous phone calls and letters and had been stopped by residents in the street complaining about the city's appearance. Pasculli also said he had been appalled by the piles of garbage in certain locations, most recently at the Fox Garden senior citizen apartments at 12th and Clinton streets.

Many of the complaints are directed towards BFI, the giant national garbage-collection company that underbid LaFera Corp. in the spring by \$240,000 and won a lucrative \$1.2 million contract to collect here six days a week. LaFera, of North Arlington, had collected garbage here for 25 years, and had bid \$1.4 million for this year.

BFI, which as a national conglomerate can afford to bid cheaper, has used the underbidding tactic in several area municipalities to clean up a sizeable piece of the garbage business. It has handled garbage collection for 24 North Jersey towns in the last three years, including Weehawken, Secaucus and North Bergen. In each town, the Texas-based company underbid the established local garbage collector by just enough to receive the job.

In both this city and Secaucus, the local contractor who lost sued BFI. LaFera lost here; Classic Collection Corp. of Saddle Brook, which had handled Secaucus, won, but BFI is appealing.

Weehawken officials said they had some scheduling problems with BFI, but not as many major complaints as this city. Another company underbid BFI this year in Weehawken, and now is doing the work. Secaucus Mayor Paul Amico said he had no complaints regarding BFI's performance.

Vezzetti's enemies back board ticket

DISPATCH 3-11-87

By JANET WILSON

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Richard England, Mario Mercado and Geraldine Pantoliano have been endorsed by Citizens Organized for Good Government, a citizens' group opposed to Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti, as candidates in the April 7 Board of Education election.

Frank Turso, head of COGG, said his organization has decided England, Mercado and Pantoliano are the most qualified, least political candidates. COGG has planned a fund-raiser for the candidates in two weeks at the Holiday Lounge on Grand Street.

England, who is now board president, said he appreciated the backing. He added that he, Mercado, and Pantoliano probably will announce their intentions to run as a ticket by the end of the week.

COGG was formed about four

months ago, according to Turso, with the aim of removing Vezzetti and his administration from City Hall. Turso criticized Vezzetti for "bringing politics to the school board" by endorsing the Committee for Quality Education slate, composed of Steve Block, Carlos Perez and Michael Rossano.

Turso said the organization had considered all of the candidates for the board before making a decision, including the CQE slate.

Other endorsements for the new slate are expected within a week, from the Recall-Vezzetti movement, and probably from The Capello Association, observers said.

Turso, a retired police lieutenant, also has picked up petitions for the 3rd Ward City Council race in May, but said if Cappello runs for reelection, he will not oppose him.

Asked if he thought he could win a council race, Turso used his political foe as an example.

Steven Zamrin, 43, judge in Hoboken

DISPATCH 3-9-87

Hoboken's municipal court judge, Steven Zamrin, was found dead in his apartment yesterday, apparently of a heart attack.

Hoboken police said Zamrin was discovered at about 6:30 a.m. by his fiancée, Carolyn Leavitt, in his apartment at the Meadowview Towers. He was pronounced dead on arrival at St. Mary Hospital. Police and hospital officials said he died apparently of a heart attack.

Zamrin, 43, had served as the municipal court judge since March of last year after being appointed by Mayor Thomas Vezzetti. Prior to that, he served as the city's prosecutor.

Vezzetti said yesterday that Zamrin's death had hurt him deeply. "He was a fine gentleman, a fine person and a fine lawyer. I will miss him very much," he said.

Recently, Zamrin was named to a state Supreme Court committee exploring the structure of family courts throughout the state.

A spokesman of the Meadowview Towers Tenants Association said Zamrin was a significant part of the group which he represented as an attorney before accepting the judge's position. "He was an extremely wonderful person," the spokesman said.



Steven Zamrin
'Fine lawyer'

Zamrin, who came to Hoboken after his early years in Philadelphia, had served as a public defender for juvenile cases with the state Attorney General's Office. A friend and fellow attorney, Geoff Beides, said his career had been marked by community service.

"He was very well-liked and worked very hard for all the people in his community," Beides said.

Funeral arrangements had not yet been completed.

PA's use of Hoboken insurance fund smells

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The Port Authority may not have put almost \$7.5 million of insurance money from a 1980 pier fire into a trust account, but instead may have used it as income, according to its own annual report and other accounting documents.

The city's Law Department and a citizens' group — PASS — are suing the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for the insurance money that was received in 1984, saying it belongs to the true land owners, the city.

City negotiators are to meet with the authority by the end of the week to present a revised offer for settling the suit out of court; one of the conditions of that offer is an accounting of what has been done with the insurance money.

The Waterfront Advisory Committee yesterday

endorsed that revised offer, and committee members gave what they said was evidence the authority had not handled the insurance monies properly.

In 1980, a fire destroyed Pier B at the authority's Hoboken Marine Terminal. Insurance proceeds totaling about \$7.5 million was received by the authority from Lloyd's of London in 1984. According to its lease with the city, the authority was to place the money in a trust fund, and had two years to use it to pay for pier repairs, after which any unused money was to be handed over to the city.

According to the authority's 1985 annual report, the \$7.5 million insurance money was included as part of net income and not put in a reserve fund.

Moody's manual on local government expenditures for 1984 shows that total capital expenditures by the authority for the terminal were about \$18.3 million. The manual for 1985 shows capital expenditures for the

terminal were about \$10.8 million, or \$7.5 million less than the \$18.3 million.

But no repairs have been made to the half-rotted pier, and it is unclear what happened to the \$7.5 million. No one from the authority could be reached for comment late yesterday.

WAC officials said they believe the authority used the \$7.5 million insurance money to write off \$7.5 million worth of development costs for the waterfront area, rather than placing it in a trust fund or rebuilding the pier as it was supposed to under the conditions of the lease.

It was WAC which originally pointed out to the City Council last fall that the insurance money had not been spent within the 2-year time limit, and possibly may belong to the city.

Yesterday, members of WAC and supporters said the reason the authority might have presented an offer

to the city to settle out of court was because authority officials knew they had not placed the money in a trust fund, and might run into trouble in court.

A motion for summary judgment is set for a March 13 hearing in Hudson County Superior Court in Jersey City, but the authority's Economic Development Office has indicated it would like to settle before then.

Meanwhile, the WAC is running into criticism from some council members, who have claimed, off the record, that the group was "sabotaging" the city's chances for a fair settlement concerning the insurance.

The authority had offered the city \$3 million in cash, forgiveness of a \$1.5 million loan and up to \$4 million for a waterfront trust fund, depending on the outcome of other negotiations concerning a massive mixed-use development project.

Buchta 'speaks for dead'

By Bill Campbell 3-6-87

Richard Buchta, the ousted superintendent of the Hoboken Cemetery, says he "speaks for the dead because no one else will."

A Vietnam veteran who was fired by the cemetery's board of trustees in January, Buchta says he is angry and his rage reflects the feelings of some 25,000 corpses.

"This is sick and no one but me seems to give a damn about what's going on here," Buchta yesterday told reporters who followed him on what was probably his last tour of the cemetery property. He shook

his head as he trudged the muddy slopes and pointed to exposed graves showing crushed pine boxes and the lids of metal caskets.

To some plot owners, Buchta is a hero. They say his efforts to landscape the property and ensure proper burials have surpassed those of any other superintendent. They say his ability to clean just a portion of the facility was a "miracle."

"There was this one woman who came up to me once with tears in her eyes and said, 'Thank you, Mr. Buchta, for all you have done here. I love you,' and gave me a big kiss," he

related. But to a majority of the cemetery's seven-member board of trustees, Buchta is eccentric and unwilling to abide by financial guidelines. They said he spent more than \$200,000 on capital improvements without board approval.

As Buchta spoke to supporters, members of his family loaded up a pickup truck with furniture and other belongings from the house they occupied on the grounds of the 15-acre cemetery in North Bergen.

"We're going out into the streets," he told one reporter. Later, though, he told another,

See BUCHTA — Page 8.

PSE&G may draw power from sewage

By Jim DeRogatis 3-10-87

Public Service Electric & Gas Co. is planning to build a \$12 million electrical substation near Hoboken's sewage treatment plant to meet the increased power needs of Hudson County's waterfront developments.

City and PSE&G officials said the substation could be linked to a "co-generation" facility in the city-owned sewerage plant. It would be able to turn refuse into energy to be used by local residents.

PSE&G is negotiating to purchase several acres of land on Grand Street between 16th and 17th streets from Dianne Pellicchia, a Union resident. The lot is now leased to the Crown Cork & Seal Company, which delivers containers to the Maxwell House Coffee Factory in Hoboken and

parking tractor-trailers at the site. The lot is across the street from Hoboken's outdated primary sewage-treatment plant, which is under state and federal mandates to upgrade to secondary capacity by July, 1988.

One of two plans for upgrading the plant involves an innovative proposal by Hoboken Wastewater Management to turn sludge into compressed pellets. The pellets would be burned to release gases that could power a generator, creating electricity.

Sludge is the solid byproduct of sewage treatment. It is now disposed of in landfills.

The plan to turn sludge into pellets, developed by Ozonics, Inc. of Freehold, has been used in Holland but never tested in this country. Local environmentalists have criticized the process, although Ozon-

ics spokesmen insist it is a safe and clean method of producing energy.

PSE&G officials met with Mayor Thomas Vezetti and other city officials last Thursday to discuss the substation. City Business Administrator Edwin Chius said the utility could pay Hoboken \$600,000 a year in "gross receipts taxes" on the completed substation. Utilities are exempt from regular real estate taxes.

In addition, the city could sell PSE&G any power it creates in the sewerage plant/co-generation plant. The new electrical substation would then distribute the energy throughout the area, said PSE&G spokesman Pete Laning.

The proposed substation is one of three planned along the Gold Coast and

See PSE&G — Page 4.

PSE&G may draw power from sewage

Continued from Page 1

necessitated by the increased power needs of the growing waterfront developments, he said. One of the substations is under construction in Jersey City near Newport at the mouth of the Holland Tunnel and another is planned near the George Washington Bridge.

The Hoboken substation would receive 230,000 volts of electricity through underground cables and reduce the power to a more manageable 13,000 volts, which could then be distributed along the waterfront.

Laning would not reveal the price PSE&G is considering paying for the 16th Street site and said negotiations for the land "are still in a somewhat delicate stage." Pellicchia could not be reached for comment, and a Crown Cork & Seal spokesman had no information on the pending sale.

But city officials were enthusiastic about the PSE&G plan.

"This falls into the scheme for the whole area," said Public Works Director Roy Haack. "We could just ship the power (created at the sewerage plant) right across the street."

"The substation would be an ideal use of that land," Chius said. "Who wants to develop something next to a sewerage treatment plant?"



Public Service Electric & Gas Co. is planning to build an electrical substation on this vacant lot beside Hoboken's sewage treatment plant.

HOBOKEN COUNCIL

4th Ward club to pick candidate

HOBOKEN—Florence Amato was expected to be selected last night as a City Council candidate from the 4th Ward by the Louis Francone Auxiliary Women's Club.

Francone was councilman from that ward for 15 years, and his wife, Mary, is its current councilwoman. She is not expected to run for re-election. The ward covers a good portion of the southwestern section of the city.

Both Francones traditionally have voted with and been strong supporters of Councilman Steve Cappiello, a former mayor. Florence Amato, a lifelong city resident, is best known through her husband, the director of public works when Cappiello was mayor, and for their "villa," a large, new, Spanish-style

house on First Street between Madison and Monroe avenues.

The 4th Ward race is expected to be a crowded and lively one.

Orlando Addeo announced his candidacy for the seat last week. Addeo is head of the tenants' selection committee for city public housing projects, the bulk of which are

in the ward. He is a volunteer job specialist for HOPES Inc., the community organization run by council President E. Norman Wilson.

Other people who are interested in running for the seat, according to several sources, are: Edwin Duroy, principal of the Connors School; and Frank Gullo.

—Janet Wilson

Sludge disposal cost may rise

By Bill Campbell 3-10-87

A state order which closed all New Jersey landfills may result in a sixfold increase in the amount Hoboken pays for sludge disposal.

The city may pay as much \$612,000 this year to ship its sludge to a Pennsylvania landfill, said Public Works Director Roy Haack. The city paid about \$108,000 last year for disposal at a site operated by the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission, he said.

"We are faced with a situation which is out of our control," Haack said. "We have to meet certain state requirements for sludge disposal and this is the best offer we've got."

The increase would ulti-

mately be passed on to sewage customers.

Sludge is the solid byproduct of sewage treatment. Fluids treated at the municipal plant are disposed in the Hudson River. Solids must be disposed of in a fill.

The city is preparing to sign a three-year letter of commitment with the Grand Central Sanitation Corp. of Penn Argy, Pa. for sludge disposal, Haack said, allowing the city to ship a maximum of two 20-yard truckloads of sludge a week for \$1,700. Hoboken sent its first truckload of sludge to Pennsylvania last week through a tentative agreement.

The city is responsible for shipping its sludge to a disposal facility until the municipal

sewage plant is upgraded to process sludge. Although state and federal environmental agencies have given municipalities until July 1988 to upgrade their plants, Haack said the Hoboken facility will not be completed until 1990.

The city was paying \$300 a week for disposal at the HMDC facility, he said. The state Department of Environmental Protection ordered that New Jersey landfills stop accepting municipal sludge shipments in March.

Haack said Hoboken requested disposal bids from several firms, including Ozonics Corp. of Freehold, which treats and disposes some of the city's sludge. He said Ozonics may have its \$40,000-a-month con-

tract with the city amended because the firm will play a lesser role in sludge disposal.

Sludge removal costs will be deducted from the Ozonics contract, said Haack.

Hoboken has been negotiating since last October with Grand Central and the Pennsylvania Department of Health for permits to dispose sludge and has filed amended applications to haul the sludge across state boundaries.

The city is preparing to go to bid with trucking firms to haul the sludge. Haack said Hoboken now has a \$7,500 sole service contract with A&B of Seawall.

He said he hopes to have bids from other haulers by tomorrow's City Council meeting.

Continued from Page 1

"My family and I are going to stay in the most expensive hotel we can find and bill it to the trustees."

Besides their home, Buchta, his wife Roswitha, the cemetery's former administrator, and five children leave behind a stable, three horses, a series of lawsuits and at least one state investigation.

The normally quiet cemetery, the final resting place for members of Hoboken's famed Stevens family, has been rocked by what the intense Buchta calls "cemeterygate."

Founded in 1855 by John Stevens, the cemetery was dedicated to public use at Seventh and Hudson streets in Hoboken. In March 1857, the mayor and council, by an act of the Legislature, were authorized to exchange the original burial ground for the current facility at 5500 Tonnelle Ave.

The Legislature in 1886 transferred control of the cemetery from the mayor and council to a board of trustees with all funds paid to the municipal treasurer.

For the past two decades the board of trustees has been headed by Virginia Fields and her daughter, Mary Elizabeth Barr. They and five other members control a trust account to maintain the facility, valued by Hoboken officials at more than \$1 million.

Donald Rosanelli, the Newark attorney representing Buchta, said the trustees have

violated their charter by not holding annual elections. Buchta maintains he has not actually been fired because the board is sitting illegally.

Fields was unavailable for comment, but her management of the cemetery and control of the finances have prompted the criticism of several Hoboken officials.

Former Mayor Steve Cappiello said recently that the cemetery has "been a constant problem for past mayors and the Law Department."

City Council President E. Norman Wilson, who along with Mayor Thomas Vezetti is an ex officio officer, launched an investigation into the management of the cemetery last summer. The probe was based on numerous complaints.

In June, after threats of lawsuits and the withholding of pay from Fields, Buchta was appointed superintendent. Buchta, a plot owner who says he was previously employed as an executor of an estate, has been credited by both his friends and foes with improving the physical condition of the cemetery.

However, Buchta soon clashed with Fields over payroll and the need for capital equipment, according to court papers. The past superintendent left behind bills for repairs to lawn mowers that did not exist, which "indicated to him that embezzlement of cemetery property had occurred," the papers said.

Buchta said he brought evidence of various "coverups" to Fields and "was told to keep quiet, don't make waves."

In September, trustees and Hoboken officials warned Buchta to curtail spending. Wilson said, Buchta ignored the requests by purchasing more than \$200,000 on capital items, he said.

"Rick Buchta was a difficult person to work with on finances," said assistant city attorney Michael Mongiello.

Buchta admits to the spending but said the board refused to accept evidence to support the purchases. He said the money was spent on a backhoe, fences and repairs.

Last week, a Hudson County Superior Court judge refused to overturn the trustees' action and ordered Buchta, his wife and children to leave their home today. An ongoing investigation by the state Attorney General's Office and the New Jersey Cemetery Board did not influence the judge's decision, Rosanelli said.

Yesterday, about 15 plot owners gathered with members of the Buchta family at the cemetery. Braving bone-chilling gusts and muddy hills, Buchta led them on a tour of the facilities.

"This man is responsible for tremendous improvement and he was rewarded for it by getting fired," said Dorothy Edens, a plot owner who was accompanied by her husband, Kenneth.

"The superintendent's house was like a fortress before Rick Buchta arrived," she said. "Either you couldn't get in or all you'd get was sympathy. I remember one time when all I could do was sit in my car and cry."

The plot owners held signs reading "Evict the Trustees" and "Hoboken Cemetery Needs Buchta."

Buchta says at least 150 improper interments have occurred at the cemetery. He said caskets which are supposed to



Kenneth and Dorothy Edens protest at the Hoboken Cemetery.

be buried at a depth of at least four feet are lying under as little as two inches of top soil. "You could see why the trustees got upset when I exposed these problems," he said.

But Buchta points to a particular headstone when explaining his motivation for protecting those buried at the

cemetery and relatives of the deceased. "There," he says, pointing to a headstone reading "Charles Buchta."

"That's my father, so you can understand why I'm not happy about this. My mother has a terminal heart condition and I certainly don't want her to join him if I'm not going to be here to protect the gravesite."

Cemetery dispute in 2nd year

Here is a chronology of recent developments that led to the hiring and firing of Hoboken Cemetery Superintendent Richard Buchta:

• May, 1986: Hoboken City Council President E. Norman Wilson launches an investigation into the management and financial practices of the Hoboken Cemetery's Board of Trustees after receiving "numerous" complaints from plot owners and relatives of deceased.

• June, 1986: Wilson instructs then-Law Director Salvatore D'Amelio Jr. to file suit against the trustees because conditions at the cemetery are "disgraceful and in need of immediate attention."

• June, 1986: Wilson drops suit and trustees hire Richard Buchta as the cemetery superintendent.

• July, 1986: City officials and trustees meet for the first time in what Wilson terms "two hours of frank discussion." He's optimistic that improvements will take place and sets a meeting for the following week to discuss finances.

• July, 1986: Hoboken suspends monthly payments to board secretary Virginia Fields and other trustees until a legal and financial analysis of the cemetery is completed. Assistant city attorney Michael Mongiello said the city "was not satisfied" with explanations of spending. Buchta begins complaining of "irregularities."

• September, 1986: Buchta is told to curtail spending, abide by state bidding laws and to keep proper payroll records. Buchta, in turn, continues attacks on the past management of the trustees.

• January, 1987: Buchta is fired for ignoring financial guidelines. He claims the board cannot fire him because, he says, it is sitting illegally since they haven't held an election in more than a decade.

• February, 1987: Appellate Judge Geoffrey Gaulkin, sitting in Jersey City, refuses to overturn the trustees' decision, saying Buchta must leave the cemetery by March 6. Donald Rosanelli, Buchta's attorney, vows to file suit for punitive damages and compensatory relief in Chancery Division.

Hope reborn for urban aid

By Joseph Albright

3-6-87

Kean offers plan to Legislature to provide funds to Hoboken

TRENTON — By the expedient of a conditional veto, Gov. Thomas H. Kean last night offered a face-saving urban aid solution to the Legislature and budget-beleaguered cities.

Kean simplified the dimensions of the cities' budget crisis and reduced the Legislature's election-year political dilemma to a simple roll-call vote in both houses on Monday, asking them to concur with his recommended changes in the tax amnesty legislation.

If adopted, the 11th-hour compromise represents a bull's eye target approach to the 30 cities "where the need is greatest."

Already qualified are Jersey City and Hoboken — designated as Distressed Cities last year — with Bayonne, West

New York and Weehawken among other possible recipients.

Although Union City isn't included in the list released by Assembly Republicans last night, it is counted in the Distressed Cities program because of a \$1.3 million appropriation last summer to protect police and firefighters from layoffs, noted Barry Skokowski, director of Local Government Services. His office would continue to administer the program.

The funds are intended to prevent massive municipal layoffs and major property tax increases.

Under the governor's conditional veto message, the cities will be able to "anticipate" in their budgets being introduced next Friday.

• \$50 million in expanded Distressed Cities aid, to be financed by the state tax amnesty legislation enacted by the Assembly yesterday.
• \$12 million in Safe and

Clean Neighborhood funds to be shared by 400 communities — two-thirds of the total to be allocated to urban areas — financed by general treasury or surplus funds.

Kean is reducing by a line item veto the \$20 million Safe and Clean legislation to \$12 million.

Besides this \$62 million assistance, Kean also proposed \$20 million to the Distressed Cities in his Jan. 31 budget message.

Thus, the Legislature will be asked to accept Monday a \$92 million program directed toward the communities "where the need is greatest."

This is the aid hallmark set by Kean and endorsed last night by Assembly Speaker Chuck Hardwick, R-Union, who promised a prompt floor vote Monday on the amnesty amendments submitted by the governor.

With Assembly concurrence or acceptance of Kean's

recommended changes, the act by Assemblyman Anthony Villane, R-Monmouth, would then be sent to the Senate. With that, the act would be sent to Kean for his signature Monday.

The Villane bill spares tax cheats from criminal prosecution. It would increase the fine for non-filing of business taxes from \$2 to \$10 each day the return is not filed. Interest penalties for late business taxes would increase from a range of 5 to 25 percent to a new level of 10 to 50 percent.

Later, criminal penalties for tax evasion and fraudulent bookkeeping would be punishable by fines of up to \$7,500 and imprisonment of up to 18 months. Also, the rate of interest paid for tax underpayment would double from 9 to 18 percent.

See HOPE — Page 8.

PSE&G power plant eyed for Hoboken

Dispatch 3-10-87

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—There probably will be a new power plant across the street from the sewage treatment plant in the north corner of this city within a year, yielding \$600,000 a year in gross receipts and a possible easy disposal site for sludge pellets.

Sludge-hauling costs skyrocket.
Story on Page 13.

According to City Hall sources who did not want to be named, PSE&G met with Public Works Director Roy Haack on Thursday, and has a contract to buy a square block of land north of 16th and Grand streets, across the street from the Trailways bus garage.

Officials praised the site's location. Haack said, if the city's sewage plant can be modernized sufficiently to produce pellets of sludge that can be burned to create electricity, the location of the power plant will be extremely beneficial.

"All you have to do then is ship your power across the street," Haack said.

"It's an out-of-the-way location, and it's great to have something going up there," said Business Administrator Edwin Chius. "I mean, who else wants to develop next to a sewage plant?"

Neither PSE&G nor the present owner of the land, Dianne Pellicchia of Union, could be reached for comment. Pellicchia has owned the

See PSE&G, Page 6

Hope reborn for urban aid

Continued from Page 1

cent annually. Criminal penalties also would be stiffened. What Kean offered the cities is a one-year solution.

What he rejected are \$87.6 million in general revenue-sharing for the cities and \$26 million for the counties, originally targeted from the tax amnesty legislation. Villane thought it would raise at least \$100 million; Kean accepted the word of his tax experts that amnesty would yield \$50 million.

Senate President John F. Russo, D-Ocean, and Senate Majority Leader John A. Lynch, D-Middlesex, last night withheld formal comment.

But they promised to contact members over the weekend and pledged to remain in session as long as necessary

Monday. Sen. Christopher J. Jackman, West New York Democrat, sponsored this measure. He and Assemblyman Jose O. Arango, West New York Republican, sponsored the original \$12 million Distressed Cities bill, already passed by the Senate and adopted in the Assembly yesterday.

"If these recommendations are enacted I am prepared to approve" the Supplemental Safe and Clean Neighborhoods program "with reduced appropriation of \$12 million from the General Fund," Kean said in his four-page message.

"Should actual experience yield an amount greater than \$50 million from tax amnesty, I would be willing to consider a supplemental appropriation."

Villane predicted amnesty revenue would be flowing into

the state treasury by June.

Kean said he had "serious reservations about the wisdom of relaxing penalties on tax evaders to accelerate collection of revenue."

He added, however, "The Legislature has made it abundantly clear that it considers tax amnesty to be the only acceptable source of revenue not anticipated in my budget for the 1988 fiscal year to provide sorely needed assistance to our municipalities."

Once again, Kean advocated repeal of the \$160 million Ford tax credit law to provide \$30 million in additional Municipal Purposes Tax Assistance. \$30 million to the Distressed Cities and \$25 million to Safe and Clean supplemental aid, repealing state gross income tax obligations for per-

sons earning under \$10,000, and a \$75 million homestead rebate relief.

"The time is late," continued Kean, and "the mayors have their backs to the fiscal wall. We can afford to wait no longer."

According to state law, cities must adopt their 1987 budgets by April 21.

Yesterday's developments were the latest in a search for ways to help municipalities ease their financial crises. At least half a dozen plans have surfaced in the past few months, each supported by a combination of Kean, Russo, Hardwick and the so-called Urban Aid Mayors, a group of mayors from major New Jersey cities. No plan, however, has won support from all four parties.

Latest Hoboken housing plan under scrutiny

By Earl Morgan

3-10-87

"We sat here for four hours to learn that the latest Hoboken housing plan will yield 23 units of affordable housing that no one will have a salary low enough to afford and another 74 units of affordable housing that no one will have a salary high enough to afford."

That was Hoboken Councilman Robert Ranieri's impression of a meeting held last night, in the city's multi-service center, to explain development plans for city-owned property on Observer Highway and newly-proposed regulations for the city's zoning ordinance.

At the end of the meeting, Robert Armstrong of the city Community Development Agency told the audience of approximately 40 people that there will be a total of 115 housing units built among various project developments.

"Twenty-three of the units will be very low income, costing about \$180 a month for one bedroom, \$212 a month for two bedrooms and \$225 a month for three bedrooms," Armstrong said. "I qualify for the units, he added, incomes can be as low as \$12,500 a year."

Armstrong said rents for the remaining 74 units will be \$685 a month for a studio, \$670 a month for a two-bedroom and \$975 a month for a three-bedroom. Salaries for a one-bedroom should start at \$28,000 a year.

Armstrong said there are options for decreasing the rent but they involve giving the developers tax abatements, a strategy the city officials have rejected for the moment because they want the developments to return tax revenues.

Armstrong and several other city officials said the city-owned parcels of land along Observer Highway and other parcels on the city's northern fringe is the only land the city still retains that can be used for housing. Armstrong said the economics of construction make it impossible to build low- and moderate-income housing profitably in any other way.

Armstrong said the city has applied to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for a \$3 million grant that can be used as a subsidy for the affordable housing. Armstrong said without the kinds of housing subsidies the cities used to receive from the federal government, like the Section 8 program, there is no other way to pay for affordable housing.

At the beginning of the meeting, David Vantor, a consultant working for the city's planning board, and Ralph Seligman, consultant to the planning board, reviewed the new regulations under consideration for the city's zoning ordinance.

Currently, the city's zoning ordinance restricts the height of new buildings to eight stories. To encourage developers to submit proposals for the Observer Highway area, that would allow buildings to go as high as 11 stories or even 17 stories depending on the type of development and the number of low and moderate housing units it would include.

The first three floors of those developments would be reserved to be used for parking

garages, but Vantor and Seligman said the first floor of parking should include shops and stores so pedestrians will not be confronted with a garage wall or the sight of parked cars.

Seligman also said he is hoping that a commercial ceiling on rents for the stores can be devised as a way of guarding against small shops and services stores such as dry cleaners and shoe shops disappearing because of escalating rents.

Vantor and Seligman also said new regulations will include a fee to the developers to help pay the cost of improvements to the city's infrastructures such as sewer and sanitation lines.

Helen Manogue said she was concerned that there are no studies to determine what effect the increased traffic, garbage removal and other services to the new residents will have. Seligman said a study is underway and new data is being fed into it to make those determinations.

Armstrong said once the city is ready to proceed with development along the Observer Highway corridor a request for proposals will be made. The requests received will be screened by a panel that will include three members of the city council and the city's community development agency director, who will decide what projects to consider.

Glory of the Auld Sod



George Crimmins, grand marshal of the parade, leads a line of friends down the green line on Washington Street.



A piper in one of the many Irish marching bands, above, concentrates on his music as he marches down Washington Street yesterday in Hoboken's first St. Patrick's Day Parade. Police Chief George Crimmins led the parade this year as grand marshal as several thousand people took advantage of the fair weather to participate in the festivities. At left, Kathleen Ortiz-Germinio holds little Jina Marie Ortiz as they watch the parade go by.



Three-year-old Marc Gillett holds on to his Irish bowler hat as the bands pass him.

Inspector gets a break

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Electrical Inspector Vincent Paul Marzocca could have been out of a job this week, but another man's woes meant a reprieve for him.

Marzocca said he had been told Wednesday at 11 p.m. during a City Council meeting by Law Director William Graves, that as of this coming Wednesday, he might be replaced by one of two men who were ahead of him on a Civil Service list.

Graves said he had no choice, and that it was the state Department of Personnel, not the city, that had caused the situation. Although Marzocca has done electrical in-

spection work for the city for 15 years as part of his Fire Department duties, he retired from that department last year.

He was reappointed in March by Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti just to work in the Buildings Department, and kept his top-of-the-range salary of \$35,000. Nevertheless, because he had just been appointed, the state personnel office, previously known as the Civil Service Department, was required to post the job and draw up a list of qualified candidates in priority order.

Marzocca had the highest score, but two veterans who scored high also received priority over him. The city Law Department has contacted both men, and asked them if they

wanted the job. Abraham Janowitz of Jersey City, the first on the list, expressed interest.

But on Wednesday, the deadline for accepting, he was in the hospital recovering from surgery. The city contacted the state and received an extension until March 27, meaning Marzocca is on the payroll at least until then.

Marzocca said he has spoken to both Janowitz and Larry Rubin of Bayonne, and that while they have not made up their minds, he feels he has a shot at keeping the job, for awhile, anyway.

The city administration is considering closing down the entire Buildings Department, of which Marzocca is a part.

Vezzetti: Ranieri stole idea

Continued from Page 1

Block," Vezzetti said. "But it's ironic now that Bob's running for the Assembly that he takes credit for this idea."

Ranieri said Tuesday that he will sponsor an ordinance to create the fund and introduce a resolution sanctioning the first contribution. He said he has received "a firm commitment" from a Hoboken real estate developer who will contribute "well over \$500,000" to the trust account.

Ranieri said he would not disclose the developer's name until the municipal law department thoroughly reviews the legislation. However, he maintained that other developers are "waiting to sign up" to contribute to the fund.

Ranieri's proposal is not expected to be introduced until at least next month. City Attorney William Graves yes-

terday said "it will take a while" to review the plan.

In 1985, Hoboken attorney and developer Gerald Baker, a partner in the Baker Waterfront Plaza at 2 Hudson Place, agreed to contribute \$2 per square foot, or \$136,000, to a proposed housing trust fund, by Vezzetti with developing the concept and negotiating the contribution with Baker.

Ranieri, the administration's chief foe on the council, called that plan "extortion." He said his plan differs from the administration's proposal in that legislation will set the guidelines for the plan and the fee.

Della Fave said Ranieri's plan was nothing more than "political shenanigans" and an attempt to "pull the rug out from everyone else."

"This is vintage Bob Ran-

ieri," he said. "To say you have a developer ready to contribute to a fund means absolutely nothing. Why doesn't he just come forward and lay all his cards on the table?"

Della Fave criticized Ranieri for taking a statewide \$2 per square foot formula for commercial development and applying it to residential development. "All this does is allow residential developers to get away with a cheaper rate."

The administration has been refining its earlier plan for generating affordable housing, but considered the Ranieri plan worthy of discussion, he said.

Ranieri, who said he will run in the June Democratic primary in an attempt to recapture the 33rd district Assembly seat, said the municipal plan should be coupled with a similar state-wide plan.

PSE&G

Continued from Page 1

land since 1981, when she paid \$154,000 for two pieces on the same block.

The site is now leased to Crown Cork and Seal Corp., which has numerous truck trailers stored there.

Utilities companies such as PSE&G are not required to pay corporate taxes, but do turn over a share of gross receipts from their billing. Hoboken officials were told by the company that the city's share would be about \$600,000.

Vezzetti: Ranieri stole idea

By Bill Campbell

Hoboken Mayor Thomas Vezzetti yesterday said he will support a plan to establish a municipal affordable housing trust fund, but lashed at the plan's sponsor for "stealing" the concept.

Vezzetti, whose administration proposed a similar housing trust nearly two years ago, called Councilman-at-large Robert Ranieri "a hypocrite" for opposing the earlier initiative.

"Doesn't it seem strange that Ranieri called this plan 'extortion' back in 1985 and now is proposing an identical plan?" Vezzetti said.

The mayor said he supports the plan, which requires developers to contribute \$2 per square foot to an affordable housing fund, and vowed to sign the ordinance if the council approves it.

"I'm not against the proposal because it was developed by Joe Della Fave and Steve

See VEZZETTI — Page 9.

3d candidate joins race for 4th Ward seat

By Bill Campbell

Edwin Duroy, the principal of Connors School and an unsuccessful City Council candidate in 1985, yesterday became the third candidate to file petitions for the Fourth Ward council seat.

Duroy, 36, will join candidates Orlando Addeo and Flo Amato for the May 12 election when all six ward seats will be up for grabs.

The candidates are vying for the council seat held for the past 32 years by Louis Francione and his wife, Mary. The Franciones announced last week that they will not seek reelection and have endorsed Amato.

Duroy, who lives in the Caparra Homes development, said his campaign will focus on the need for affordable housing and infrastructure improvements in the ward. A member of the Hoboken Housing Authority for the past 16 years, he said the city should provide a mix of housing for moderate- and low-income families.

Duroy, who ran as an at-large candidate on the ticket headed by former Mayor Steve Cappelletto in 1985, said he is running as an independent. Cappelletto yesterday said he "has no intentions" of supporting any council candidates.

A native of Puerto Rico who moved to Hoboken while

still an infant, Duroy has been the principal of the Thomas Connors Elementary School since 1984. Previously, he served eight years as a bilingual supervisor in the city's public school system.

Duroy last year was a vocal opponent of the controversial 16-story Presidential Towers project. He and a coalition of homeowners objected to the multimillion-dollar project because it exceeded the zoning codes height limit. The project

received board of adjustment approval, a move which triggered lawsuits by members of the coalition.

A Hoboken High School graduate, Duroy received a B.A. in economics at Jersey City State College and an M.A. in social studies education from Montclair State College.

The Fourth Ward, in the southwestern section of the city, is slated for major condominium development but is still considered one of the

city's least-gentrified wards. Residents often complain that they do not receive adequate city services and are not sharing in the "renaissance" of post-gentrification Hoboken.

Although nearly two dozen hopefuls have picked up filing petitions for the six ward seats, only the three Fourth Ward candidates have filed petitions with the City Clerk.

Observers said that other candidates will wait until next Thursday's deadline.

Mussara joins run for 4th Ward seat

By Bill Campbell

A fourth candidate has filed petitions in Hoboken's Fourth Ward City Council race.

Frank Mussara, a 47-year-old barber and lifelong resident of the ward, has filed nominating petitions with City Clerk James Farina. He joins Orlando Addeo, Flo Amato and Edwin Duroy as candidates in the May 12 election when all six ward seats are up.

"I've lived in the same home for 40 years and am very well aware of the problems facing Fourth Ward residents," Mussara said. "I feel this ward has gone without representation long enough and I feel I am dedicated to the people here."

The Fourth Ward is in the city's southwest region, one of the last areas to see gentrification.

A newcomer to the Hoboken political scene, Mussara said his campaign will stress development, affordable housing, sewers, parking and the

cross-town bus. "We have a lot of development planned for the ward and a lot of empty condos," he said. "Still there is displacement and the need for a program to develop affordable housing for all of the people."

Mussara said he is active in a community drive to prevent the city from allowing a private firm to operate the cross-town bus.

He said he has collected 1,700 petitions to "save the bus and keep it affordable to the city's senior citizens."

Candidates face a Thursday deadline to file petitions for the ward races. To date, only the four Fourth Ward candidates have filed petitions.

The Fourth Ward seat is now held by Mary Francione. Either she or her husband, Louis, has held the seat for 32 years but last week announced neither would seek reelection.

Nearly two dozen hopefuls have picked up petitions for the seats.

Wearing of the green starts early in Hoboken



3-9-87 Dispatch

Hoboken got a jump on the St. Patrick's day celebrations Saturday with the city's first ever parade honoring Ireland's patron saint. Marchers took off from Washington and 14th streets and proceeded downtown to the reviewing stand in front of City Hall at Washington and First streets. Police Chief George Crimmins served as grand marshal.

Isabel Lopez, far left, leads the way for the Weehawken High School Color Guard. "Erin go brrr" — everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day, including this Yorkshire terrier, left. Kilt-clad bagpipers, below left, hold up their end of the line. The real St. Patrick's Day is March 17



Photos by Don McCoy

Hoboken sewage deadline put off

By Bill Campbell and Joseph Albright

Hudson County's top judge has given Hoboken until September to revise its agreement with the state to comply with a schedule to upgrade the municipal sewerage system.

Superior Court Assignment Judge Burrell Ives Humphreys yesterday set a Sept. 16 deadline for the city and the state Department of Environmental Protection to negotiate an amended administrative consent order.

Hoboken has been fined \$10,000 a day by the DEP since last summer when the city fell

behind its timetable to repair the sewerage system. According to a March 5 letter from the DEP, the city owes the state \$410,000 in fines.

The violations have halted at least 10 projects in the Hoboken sewerage district, which includes Weehawken and Union City.

Humphreys held off a motion to grant a wet sewage hookup to the developers of Baker Waterfront Plaza at 2 Hudson Place until the city and state negotiate an agreement. Real estate developer and attorney Gerald Baker is suing the city

See HOBOKEN — Page 12.

Hoboken sewage deadline put off

Continued from Page 1

and state to issue a permit for his \$10.75 million mixed-use waterfront project.

In another development, a proposed bill to allow construction on a Union City project affected by the ban was withdrawn from the state Legislature yesterday.

Assemblyman and Union City Commissioner Ronald Dario said the legislation to help the condo conversion of St. Michael's Monastery is now "dead."

"Basically, we were told to continue negotiations with the state and Baker was told he can do whatever he wants with the building except get a wet sewage permit," said Hoboken attorney William Graves.

He said Humphreys was "pleased" with progress in negotiations to amend the consent order, but he said he was not at liberty to discuss the revised agreement until the city and DEP have completed their talks.

The so-called Assembly "monastery" bill was withdrawn from consideration after Dario was unable to obtain figures from the developers on what the new Union City sewerage rate would be, Dario said.

The bill would have expanded the boundaries of the Passaic Valley Sewerage District to include a portion of Union City. Most of Union City is located in the Jersey City Sewerage Authority service area.

The Union City area not now in the JCSA is serviced by Hoboken.

The monastery area includes the six-block vacant Roman Catholic monastery, 12.3

acres of open space and two existing homes.

After considerable debate, a final site plan was approved to construct 254 condominium units on the site.

The extension of the PVSD was endorsed by the JCSA and the Hudson County Utilities Authority.

The DEP notified Hoboken of the fines last August after plans and specifications to repair faulty tide gates and regulators and the broken Fifth Street pumping station were not presented to the state. The deadlines were established with the ultimate goal of upgrading the municipal sewerage plant to secondary capacity by 1988.

City officials estimate that the plant will not be functional until 1990, two years after the state and federal deadline, but they hope the DEP will lift the fines and the sewage hookup ban if Hoboken demonstrates it can meet intermediary deadlines.

Hoboken entered into the consent order in January 1985 to lift an existing sewage moratorium and as a means of allowing Baker to apply for an Urban Development Action Grant for his project.

Baker also posted a \$150,000 letter of credit with the city to construct an interim sewage treatment facility at the site of the city's existing 16th Street plant in the event Hoboken did not upgrade by the time the building was completed.

The DEP, though, has refused to recognize Baker's agreement with the city and maintains it will not issue the permit because the city violated the consent agreement.

Russo back again on sewer board

By Peter Weiss

Anthony Russo of Hoboken has been elected to the Hudson County Utilities Authority for the second time in two weeks as the fight for political control of the agency continues.

At yesterday's meeting of the county Board of Freeholders, Russo was named to replace Kenneth Blane of West New York on the HCUA. Blane, whose term expired Feb. 1, 1988, was HCUA chairman.

The freeholders also voted to give Walter Jones of Bayonne another term as an HCUA commissioner. But since he is also a holdover, the term was retroactive to 1984.

Two weeks ago the freeholders voted to put Russo on the HCUA, but it turned out that the person he was supposed to replace, Michael Schaffer of Hoboken, still had one year remaining on his term.

The new HCUA makeup must still be reviewed by Superior Court Assignment Judge Burrell Ives Humphreys. The judge, who reinstated Schaffer last week, said he wanted county officials to report back to him after they had straightened out disputes over HCUA membership and length of current terms.

If the judge gives approval for yesterday's vote, the HCUA will hold another reorganization meeting on Monday. Last week Blane was reelected

chairman even though he was serving on holdover status.

As now constituted, the board members are Nicholas Vallillo of North Bergen; Jones and Cornelius Boyle, both of Bayonne; Schaffer and Russo, both of Hoboken; Lawrence Cucchiara of Union City; Jeffrey Chansler, Katie Harris and Salvatore Leano, all of Jersey City.

According to county officials, the terms of Vallillo and Schaffer expire Feb. 1, 1988; the terms of Boyle and Jones expire Feb. 1, 1989; the terms of Leano and Cucchiara expire Feb. 1, 1990; the terms of Chansler and Harris expire Feb. 1, 1991 and Russo's term expires Feb. 1, 1992.

Yesterday's vote was another political victory for County Executive Edward Clark. With Russo on the HCUA and Blane off, it would appear to give Clark a 5-4 edge among the commissioners.

The vote of the freeholders for Russo's appointment was 5-

2, with two abstentions. Voting in favor were Freeholders Eluardo Webster, Ann O'Malley and Marilyn Roman of Jersey City, Octavio Alfonso of North Bergen and Samuel Kaye of Bayonne. Opposed were Freeholders Anthony DeFino of West New York and Nidia Davila-Colon of Jersey City. Freeholders Roger Dorian of Weehawken and Angelo Cifelli of Harrison abstained.

The vote for Jones was 7-0, with Dorian and Cifelli abstaining.

The vote on Russo came after Clark and Jersey City Mayor Anthony Cucci, who heads the effort to unseat the county executive, engaged in a heated political shouting match.

"Stop putting on political jobs all over the county," Cucci yelled at Clark at one point.

"What are you going to tell me, about the great job you're doing in the (Jersey City) Board of Education?" retorted Clark. Cucci then accused Clark

of depleting county surpluses for political reasons several years ago, charging that the county executive did it because he was "afraid" of then-Jersey City Mayor Gerald McCann.

"We're not afraid of McCann and we're not afraid of you, either," said Clark.

Cucci and Kaye also got into a debate about their respective cities' sewer systems. Cucci recently threatened to disallow Bayonne to link up with the Jersey City and the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission systems.

Political opponents at the time charged Cucci was retaliating against Bayonne for political reasons.

Cucci yesterday told the freeholders it was because Bayonne has failed to provide necessary information as its part of the agreement.

Kaye expressed doubt, but said he would forward Cucci's concerns to Bayonne officials. "We won't wait for the answer," replied Cucci.

Developer's offer may set trend

HOBOKEN—A \$600,000 offer for an affordable housing fund by a local developer could pave the way for local legislation requiring all developers to make such a contribution.

Site Rite Limited, a development partnership that is seeking approval for a Court Street Plaza condominium project, will contribute \$673,350 to be used for construction of affordable housing if the city sets up a fund for such contributions, according to a resolution by City Councilman Robert A. Ranieri.

The ordinance was expected to be introduced last night at the council caucus session by Ranieri to handle such contributions. Like a similar plan introduced two years ago by Mayor Thomas F. Vezetti, Ranieri's resolution would require developers to contribute \$2 per square foot of new construction. Ranieri had spoken out against that plan.

In other business, the board was expected to discuss hiring Ira Karasick, a local lawyer, to devise a plan for upgrading and modernizing the city's Law Department.

Karasick, a Harvard Law School graduate who owned and ran a computer consulting firm in New York City for three years, has most recently worked on this city's anti-housing legislation, as an attorney for the Campaign for Housing Justice.

He would be paid up to \$25,000 to develop computer systems for writing briefs to train Law Department personnel in the use of the computers, and to analyze and rework the flow of paper through the office.

"Essentially, the point is to convert this office into modern law office, capable of handling the load of work it receives," Karasick said yesterday.

The so-called Assembly "monastery" bill was withdrawn from consideration after Dario was unable to obtain figures from the developers on what the new Union City sewerage rate would be, Dario said.

The bill would have expanded the boundaries of the Passaic Valley Sewerage District to include a portion of Union City. Most of Union City is located in the Jersey City Sewerage Authority service area.

The Union City area not now in the JCSA is serviced by Hoboken.

The monastery area includes the six-block vacant Roman Catholic monastery, 12.3

Developer to give \$500G for housing

By Bill Campbell

A Hoboken real estate developer will contribute more than \$500,000 to a proposed municipal affordable housing fund, a city councilman said yesterday.

Councilman-at-large Robert Ranieri, who announced plans to sponsor legislation creating the fund, said he has already received "a firm commitment" from a Hoboken developer to contribute "well over \$500,000" to the trust.

"This commitment will set a precedent," Ranieri said. "I believe in the next few weeks we'll see other developers coming forth to sign up."

Ranieri would not disclose the names of the developer and others he has contacted. He said he will propose the ordinance to create the fund and a resolution sanctioning the contribution at tonight's City Council

council caucus. Ranieri said he will name the developer once the ordinance and accompanying resolution have been reviewed by the law department. He would neither confirm nor deny reports that it is West Bank Construction, a major developer of condominiums.

George Vallone, a partner in the firm, was not available for comment. West Bank is seeking council approval for an easement at their Court Street Plaza condominium project at Observer Highway and Washington Street.

The announcement comes nearly two years after the administration of Mayor Thomas Vezetti attempted to implement a housing trust fund. Like the earlier plan, Ranieri's proposal calls for developers to contribute \$2 per square foot of new construction. In August 1985, Hoboken attorney and developer Gerald Baker, a princi-

pal in the Baker Waterfront Plaza project at 2 Hudson Place, pledged \$186,000 to the proposed trust. The plan, which was developed by political activist Steve Block and a municipal committee on affordable housing, was praised by Vezetti but criticized by Ranieri and other anti-administration council members as "extortion."

The plan received mixed reviews during a public hearing at Hoboken High School and was abandoned after Michael Coleman was appointed director of community development. Coleman's theory was that trust funds don't work and the way to get affordable housing is to require developers to incorporate affordable units in their projects.

Ranieri said his proposal differs from the Vezetti plan because the administration never proposed legislation memorializing the trust fund. He said his plan was predicated on the Baker contribution and he said he welcomed comment from other council members and representatives of the administration.

Vezetti, who was in Philadelphia yesterday attending a memorial service for Municipal Court Judge Steven Zamrin, was not available for comment.

However, an administration source criticized Ranieri's proposal, saying the councilman was "using his council seat to campaign for the Assembly."

Ranieri, who served one term in the state Legislature, denied the charge although he acknowledged he would seek the Democratic nomination for the 33rd district seat in the June primary. The plan was a response to the administration's "pie in the sky" attempts to generate affordable housing, he said.

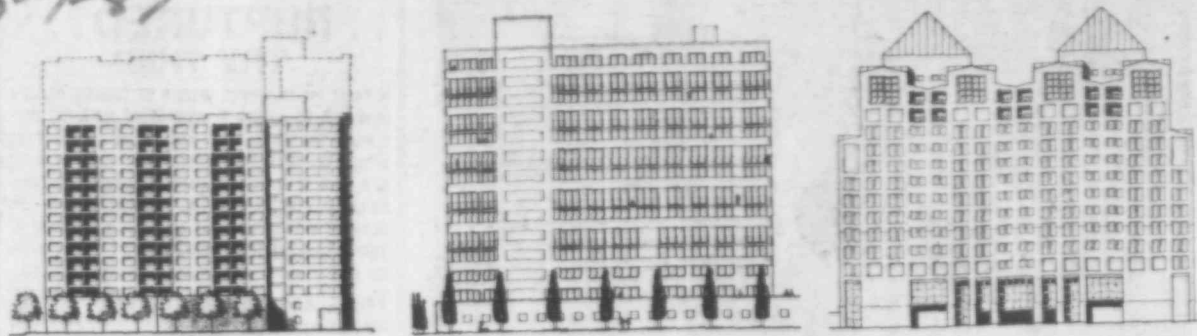
Changes will be observed on highway

By Jim DeRogatis

For more than a century, Hoboken has been known as a picturesque city of brownstone walk-ups and low-rise apartment buildings, a sharp contrast to the towering spires of midtown Manhattan just across the Hudson River.

But real estate developers want to "put Hoboken on the map," and proposed revisions in the city zoning ordinance would allow a row of 17-story highrises along the southern border — providing the Mile Square City with a skyline of its own.

City planners hope to contain such large-scale projects in a new highrise district along the four-lane Observer Highway. One highrise condominium



Among the new faces expected on Observer Highway are the River City Condominiums to the west, rendering at left, the Skyline, center, and a project slated for the present ShopRite site at the eastern end, right.

um project is already under construction in the area, variances for several others have been approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustment and a number of large projects are in the planning stages.

Those who support the

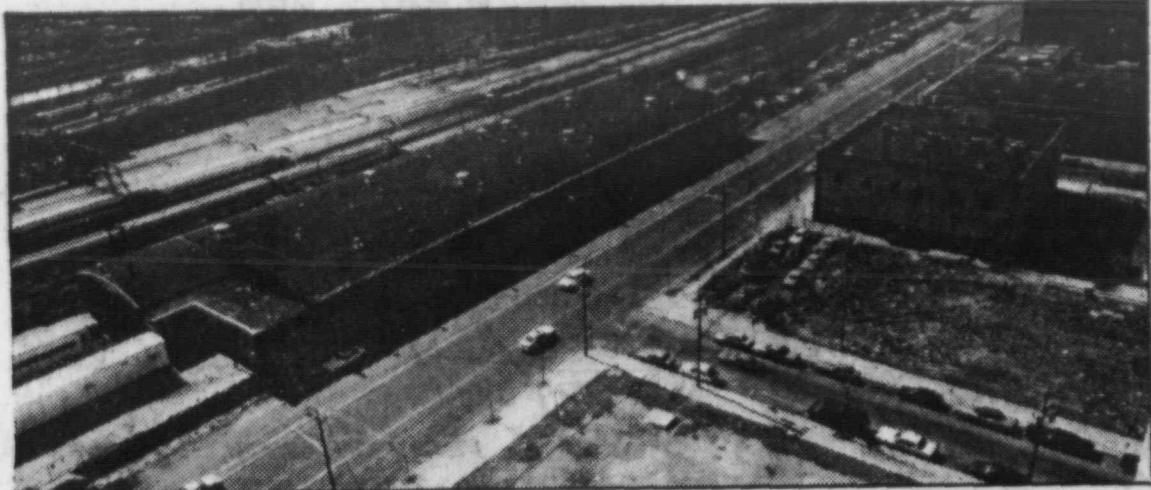
plan say it will create a "distinctive edge" that will help the city "stand out" from such large developments as Newport to the south and Lincoln Center to the north.

But some residents are wary of the zoning changes.

They say that a number of high-rise developments along the one-mile stretch could strain the city's aging infrastructure and create an oppressive "wall" that will loom over the rest of the city and block out light and air in the surrounding neighborhoods.

The proposed changes will be the subject of discussion at a meeting tonight being co-sponsored by the First and Fourth ward block associations at 7:30 p.m. at the Multi-Service Center, Second and Grand streets. Speakers will include Councilman Thomas Newman, sponsor of the zoning revisions, and City Planner Ralph Seligman, author of the current zoning ordinance as well as the Observer Highway revisions.

Under the current ordinance, Observer Highway is considered an industrial area, and it carries a height restriction of eight stories. But city officials say industries such as



The shape of Observer Highway, now home mostly to factories and vacant lots, will change drastically with the addition of several highrise condominium projects.

See OBSERVER — Page 4.

Observer Highway will have changes

Continued from Page 1

Neumann Leathers and Holiday Fashions are being priced out by the soaring real estate values. Developers view the Observer Highway corridor as a highly desirable residential location because of sightlines over the Conrail railroad tracks that allow a spectacular view of Manhattan.

Proposed revisions to the zoning revisions would allow developers to build residential 11-story residential buildings in a thin "high-rise" zone along Observer Highway and stretching approximately one block into the city. The buildings would be comprised of eight stories of residential units over three stories of parking, according to Newman and Seligman.

An incentive in the form of an additional four stories of residential space would be given to developers who provide a number of "affordable" units, according to Seligman. Developers who provide affordable units could build to a height of 17 stories, although they could not exceed 60 percent lot coverage for the residential part of the building.

Seligman said the extra height would allow developers to charge higher rents for the loftier apartments, helping to "cross-subsidize" the more affordable units. The number and cost of affordable units would be modeled after a proposal developed by the Community Development Agency for a portion of city-owned land along Observer Highway.

Even without the zoning changes in effect, highrise projects are planned or in various stages of completion for virtually every inch of Observer Highway, from a point one block from the waterfront to the Palisades and the Jersey City border. These projects include, from east to west:

• Court Street Plaza, Observer Highway between Washington and Hudson streets. The zoning board approved variances for the 12-story luxury condominium project last December, planned by developers Daniel Gans and George Vallone at the site of the Shop Rite supermarket. The \$70 million project, which features an award-winning design by Hoboken architect Dean Marchetto, is scheduled to begin construction by mid-1988.

• City-sponsored affordable housing project, Observer Highway from Bloomfield Street to Willow Avenue. The Community Development Agency has prepared a request for proposals from developers to build a series of 11- to 17-story buildings on vacant city-owned lots. The development would have a total of 480 units, with 97 being designated as "affordable" units for Hoboken residents.

The RFP was developed after Applied Housing developer Joseph Barry presented the city with a proposal for a similar project. Barry is expected to respond to the RFP along with a number of other interested developers.

• Neumann Leathers, Observer Highway from Willow Avenue to Adams Street. Gans and Vallone have a contract to purchase the factory from Richard Bernheim, whose family has owned it for more than 100 years. The developers have not unveiled plans for the site or received any city approvals. The site includes a 250,000-square-foot building and 122,000 square feet of land, but Gans and Vallone said they are considering tearing the structure down and building a high-rise condominium project once work on Court Street Plaza is underway.

• OVF Condominiums, Observer Highway between Jefferson and Madison streets. The eight-story condominium project was also designed by Marchetto, who has designed a total of five buildings on the Observer Highway corridor. Variances for the project, whose principals include Fire Subcode Official Ray Falso, were approved by the zoning board last year, although construction has not yet begun.

• 500 Observer Highway. A 10-story condominium project proposed by Fire Capt. John Cassessa, the building was designed by Marchetto to complement the OVF project. The approximately \$8.2 million development is before the zoning board in need of variances for lot coverage, rear yard area and floor area ratio.

• Skyline Condominiums, Observer Highway from Madison to Monroe streets. Designed by Marchetto, the 14-story project is due to be completed by summer.

• River City Condominiums, Observer Highway from Jackson Street to Harrison Street. Proposed for the site of the Mighty Fine/Cocoa Malt Factory and designed by Marchetto, the building features two towers of 14 and 18 stories and a ground-floor recreation center/health spa. The River City Development Group, which includes several of the same principals behind the Skyline, have presented plans for the project to the Planning Board on an informal basis, but they have received no city approvals.

Although Seligman is generally opposed to large-scale developments because of their effect on Hoboken's historic neighborhoods, he believes that allowing such developments on the city's southern edge is an agreeable compromise between developers and neighborhood preservationists, and supports several of the projects in the planning stages.

"The need for housing is out there, we're not creating that," Seligman said. "If we allow highrise construction along Observer Highway, we can accommodate the need and at the same time preserve the character of the rest of the city."

2nd Ward will offer rematch

DISPATCH 3-17-87

HOBOKEN—The May 12 City Council race is on in the 2nd Ward, with the entry of Michael Schaffer to oppose incumbent Joseph Della Fave.

Schaffer, who finished second against Della Fave in a five-way race in June, has garnered the support of the three other candidates from that election and the backing of former Councilwoman Helen Macri. He said he believes, with a strong unified front, he can carry the day. One of his former opponents, James Roarty, is serving as his campaign manager.

"Unity is the key," Schaffer said. Della Fave, who reportedly plans to file petitions by the Thursday deadline, said he would welcome a two-man race also. "No second elections that way," he said. If no candidate receives 50 percent of the vote plus one, a runoff election is held.

Schaffer is a fire adjuster with M. Miller & Sons Inc. of 1211 Liberty St. in Hillside, and a lifelong resident of the 2nd Ward here. He said he is running because Della Fave has been inaccessible to the people of the 2nd Ward. He charged that, although Della Fave is the chairman of the council's recreation committee, the ward still has no recreation facilities.

PAY

Continued from Page 1

"It's great," two of the custodians said. "We deserve it. We shop in the same stores as everybody else, we pay the same high prices."

The custodians, who have been working without a contract since January, are expected to vote Saturday on the offer. Donovan said he expected a strong "yes" vote.

Rafter said he was not against giving the custodians a raise, but

had wanted to negotiate with them over training programs and new guidelines emphasizing job performance. He said his resignation from the committee came after Farina and Monaco proposed raises for the school superintendent and assistant superintendent. Those raises are to be voted on in a special meeting Monday night.

In other business, the board accepted the retirements of 27 school district employees, including Principal Joseph F. Buda of Hoboken

High School as of July 1. The board recently enacted a retirement program that gives longtime employees who have a few years until retirement financial incentives for retiring early. Some of the personnel will not be replaced, resulting in budget savings.

One of the retirees, Ignatius F. Farinola, director of Adult Education, will go on a trip before he leaves. The board voted, 6-1, with Rafter voting no, to send Farinola to a conference next week in Astbury Park, with total expenses of \$200. The board also voted to send either trustee Ida Lugo or Raul Morales to Miami in April for a Teachers of English as a Second Language convention, with a cost of approximately \$800.

Buchta yesterday said he still intends to fight his ouster in Superior Court.

Mongiello said the receiver would be responsible for insuring that interments meet state regulations.

Hoboken candidate picked as Irishman of The Year

DISPATCH 3-14-87

HOBOKEN—Bernard Kenny is to be honored as Irishman of The Year today at noon by the Young Democrats Club at Sixth and Monroe streets, amidst 200 pounds of corned beef and "as much beer as you can drink," according to one member.

"Yup, this year I get the plaque," said Kenny, state Democratic committee member. Kenny is also hoping this will be the year he is selected as Democratic candidate for Assembly in the 33rd District.

Councilman Robert A. Ranieri, former Assemblyman for the district, also is interested in garnering a spot on the Democratic line in the June primaries. While two assembly seats are available, it is considered unlikely that two candidates from this city would be selected to run from a district that also encompasses Union City, West New York, Weehawken, Guttenberg and parts of the Jersey City Heights.

The Young Democrats club where Kenny is being honored is headed by James Farina, city clerk and

Cappiello-appointed member of the Board of Education. One floor above Farina's office in City Hall is Mayor Thomas F. Vezzeiti's office, but the two couldn't be further apart on most local issues. They both like Kenny though.

"He's the antithesis of Ranieri; that's what I love about him," Vezzeiti said yesterday.

The Young Democrats club also has a sign in front that is an indicator of who its 50-odd active members will be working for in the upcoming school board election. The names on it are: Richard England, Mario Mercado and Geraldine Pantoliano, Farina's cousin.

—Janet Wilson

HOBOKEN

Custodians' pay hike OK'd

DISPATCH 3-12-87

Dissent explodes over 25 percent increase

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The old guard on the Board of Education showed through a 25 percent raise for custodians this week, then told the workers they expect their support in the coming election.

"Put it in your pockets and take it home," board President Richard England shouted at 11 p.m. Tuesday, after a last-minute 5-1 vote that gave the 63 custodians and maintenance workers a 25 percent raise over the next three years.

"Alright, you guys gotta get your families out, your kids, your neighbors. I wanna see every one of you out for the school board election," board member James Farina yelled.

Asked if they would campaign and

vote for England and other candidates who may run with him, bargaining unit leader Dennis Donovan said, "We try not to get involved in politics, but we're gonna have to this time. Joe Rafter and his people certainly aren't doing us any good."

Rafter was the one trustee who voted against the resolution. He was elected last year as part of the reform Committee for Quality Education slate. There are three more CQE candidates running in April for three seats on the board, including England's.

"It's ludicrous," Rafter said. "It's like the midnight riders. Come in here after the public has left and give out big raises. They've spent taxpayers money like water for years, and they did it again."

The vote on the raise for the

custodians came late at night after the board had gone into executive session and then returned. The only people left in the audience were about 15 custodians and a handful of onlookers.

Farina had come down from the executive session at 10:30 p.m. and bellowed, "Joe Rafter and Raul Morales just walked out on you, they're leaving."

Ten minutes later, Rafter, Morales, England, Farina, James Monaco and Anthony DiBari filed back in.

"Hey, we got a quorum on this; let's vote right now," Monaco said.

"Fine with me," said England. Rafter said he had resigned that night as head of the negotiating committee over the matter.

See PAY, Page 8

City will ask receiver for Hoboken Cemetery

By Bill Campbell

DISPATCH 3-11-87

Amid charges of mismanagement at the Hoboken Cemetery, municipal attorneys will file papers in Superior Court today to place the 15-acre facility in receivership.

Hoboken assistant city attorney Michael Mongiello said the city will ask Judge John Tarleton to allow a state takeover of the cemetery.

"We are sorry it had to come to this but are satisfied that this is the

best course of action," Mongiello said.

The action is endorsed by Mayor Thomas Vezzeiti and City Council President E. Norman Wilson, both ex-officio members of the cemetery's board of trustees, and recommended by the state Attorney General's Office, he said.

The cemetery, on Tonnelle Avenue in North Bergen, has been the source of complaints for more than a year. Both the city and the state have

been investigating charges of financial mismanagement and improper burials.

Mongiello said the appointment of a receiver to manage the cemetery was a "temporary solution" until a new board of trustees and superintendent are appointed. Today's action would dissolve the current board of trustees, he said.

Wilson, who launched the probe into cemetery management last April, was to have requested the

resignation of board president Mary Elizabeth Barr and secretary Victoria Fields during a trustees meeting today. The meeting was cancelled late yesterday after the city agreed to place the cemetery in receivership.

"That issue is moot," Mongiello said. "On Wednesday there will be no more board of trustees."

Critics of the cemetery have charged that Barr and Fields, who have run the board for more than two

decades, have neglected to hold board elections. Richard Buchta, the cemetery superintendent fired by the board in January, has charged the board with covering up "financial irregularities."

Buchta yesterday said he still intends to fight his ouster in Superior Court.

Mongiello said the receiver would be responsible for insuring that interments meet state regulations.

'ACT NOW' Developer cautions Hoboken council

DISPATCH 3-13-87

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The battle lines between a developer on the go and some cautious City Council members were drawn clearly this week.

George Vallone of West Bank Construction, a prominent developer here, wants to pay \$675,000 into an affordable housing fund that has not even been created, and then proceed with obtaining the last approval he needs for a large condominium development project.

He said, if the council does not take his offer and give him an easement immediately, his \$2 million condominium project will be "down the tubes," and "the word will be out to developers to stay away from Hoboken."

Critics on the City Council say they have the future of the entire community to consider, not just one developer, and that they need more time. Councilmen Thomas Newman and Joseph Della Fave say they want the input of professional housing consultants who have been hired by the Community Development Agency to study the creation of guidelines for an affordable housing incentive plan.

Vallone said he has been trying to contact the CDA and those consultants for months, and his calls never have been returned. Administration sources retort that, because of delaying tactics by pro-development councilmen, the consultants have been hired only recently.

Administration officials are especially critical of the business relationship between Councilman Robert A. Ranieri and Vallone. It was Ranieri who introduced the resolution to accept West Bank's offer at the council meeting Wednesday night.

Ranieri's son is a salesman for West Bank Realty, and Vallone is acting as a construction manager for the renovation of the councilman's family business at Third and Washington streets from a furniture store to an office building.

"What the son does has absolutely nothing to do with the father," responded Vallone. "Robert Ranieri has been extremely helpful to me and many other developers in this town. He has always listened and tried to help."

DellaFave especially chided Ranieri for introducing and taking credit for the affordable housing fund plan. Ranieri had denounced an earlier commitment for \$186,000 that DellaFave negotiated with the Baker family as "extortion." DellaFave said he fears that West Bank is trying to get away with paying less than other developers may have to in the future, and he also questioned the way in which the money has been offered.

Ranieri said this offer came voluntarily from the developer, unlike the previous commitment from the Baker family for its Hudson Court project. But unlike that earlier project, a formula requiring a payment of \$2 per square foot of new construction was used to figure Vallone's contribution.

DellaFave expressed concern that Ranieri was trying to set the \$2-per-square-foot figure as a precedent, and Newman said he thinks \$10 a square foot is a better figure.

Newman also said that, while the council will proceed "with all due haste" to approve an affordable-housing fund plan, it might take until June to make a final decision.

"June is when I drop dead," said Vallone, who has a contract to buy property from Singer Properties at Washington and Newark streets by June. He said he will lose a half a million dollars deposit if he cannot close the deal before then.



Ira Karasick, left, and Richard Seltzer civilly disagree on "Hoboken Voices."

Housing lawyers' T.V. debate not the match of the century

On paper, it was the match of the century, at least by Hoboken political standards. In the left corner, Ira Karasick, the rumpled, 38-year-old post-hippie crusading lawyer. In the right, Richard Seltzer, the trim, 37-year-old real estate attorney.

Anyone familiar with the housing and development issues facing Hoboken would have expected a debate between Karasick and Seltzer to be like gasoline meeting a match. But when the bell rang and the cameras started taping Tuesday's episode of "Hoboken Voices," the two came out and shook hands.

Although there were moments of confrontation during the show, and during a talk at the bar at Helmer's afterward, the most surprising thing about the debate was the number of issues Karasick and Seltzer agreed on.

Both originally hail from Long Island and are relative newcomers to Hoboken. Both are representative of larger groups of newfangled political thinkers hoping to change the machine-styled government that has long been typical of the Mile Square City.

And both believe that what Hoboken needs is more people like themselves: smart, caring residents who are "mad as hell and not going to take it anymore."

Short and broad with a curly brown beard and wide grin, Karasick is more comfortable in jeans and a sweater than the blue suit he occasionally wears to court. He graduated cum laude from Harvard University after several years spent traveling around the country, toying with odd jobs such as organic farming and loading produce trucks.

Even before he graduated, Karasick wrote a brief for a case that eventually landed before the U.S. Supreme Court, earning a landmark decision regarding the separation of church and state. Other legal adventures have included work on former presidential candidate John Anderson's lawsuit challenging federal election laws and serving as the lawyer for the No-Nukes concerts. Karasick gave up his New York

JIM DeROGATIS REPORTER'S JOURNAL



office and secretary and began working out of his apartment near First and Jefferson streets about six years ago.

Seltzer's career has taken a more traditional path. He graduated from Hofstra Law School and worked with the Jersey City law firm of Guarini & Guarini for several years before establishing his own firm. He lives with his wife and two children in a home near 12th and Bloomfield streets, and is a landlord as part of a partnership that owns several apartment buildings.

Intense, scholarly and slightly uptight with wire-rim glasses, conservative suits and a piercing gaze, Seltzer has risen to the political forefront while displaying a fondness for acronyms and starting community organizations. He is a founder of the pro-development/pro-landlord group Help Hoboken Housing, anti-Port Authority group People Advocating Safe Solutions and anti-administration group We Advocate Voter Education.

Karasick calls Seltzer "the apostle of gentrification who's willing to sacrifice the future of the city on the altar of lower taxes." Seltzer counters that Karasick "would probably consider any guy with wire-rim glasses who looks like an urban professional part of the urban gentry."

As a member of IHHH, Seltzer helped launch federal and state court challenges attempting to overturn the city's controversial "anti-warehousing" law. Karasick wrote the brief

that led to a federal judge's dismissal of the suit and is donating his time to represent the Campaign for Housing Justice in defending the law in state court.

The law requires landlords of buildings with more than four units to rent vacant apartments within 60 days or face fines of up to \$500 a day per unit. Ten months after its passage, debate continues between tenant activists who see it as a way of providing "affordable housing" and developers, realtors and landlords who believe it amounts to government dictating what a citizen can do with his property.

Seltzer told the "Hoboken Voices" viewers that the city should work to support "the real estate economy," which he claims is Hoboken's main source of income and jobs. He said the anti-warehousing ordinance will have a negative impact upon the city's economy because it discourages development.

Karasick, meanwhile, told the audience that "the real estate economy is an elusive one that depends upon the city being built and built... and rents getting higher and higher." He claims the anti-warehousing law discourages real estate speculation and, in the process, helps "free up" units for those in need of housing, providing one method of preserving "old Hoboken."

But despite their sharply differing views on housing and the law, Karasick and Seltzer avoided fireworks Tuesday. "Basically what you had was just two Jewish boys from Long Island sitting around talking about housing," Karasick said. "I may not agree with everything Richard says, but I believe he has a right to make his opinions known. He's doing something valuable for the community."

Seltzer feels the same way about Karasick. "The biggest problem in Hoboken today is apathy," he said. "No one cares about the important issues, no one gets involved."

So much for the fight of the century. Call it a draw.

A repeat of the show will air Sunday, 7:30 p.m. on River-view Cablevision Channel 18.

City may prosecute for vacant rooms

By Jim DeRogatis

Hoboken may bring landlords to court within two weeks for violations of its "anti-warehousing" law.

City anti-warehousing enforcement officer Jodie Manasevit said yesterday that 10 landlords with vacant apartments may be prosecuted unless they file vacancy notices by April 1.

Designed as an answer to Hoboken's critical lack of "affordable" housing, the law requires landlords to rent vacant units within 60 days or face fines of up to \$500 a day per unit. Landlords must also file a notice of vacancy with either the anti-warehousing or rent leveling offices within 35 days after the apartment becomes vacant.

The law has been challenged in court.

Ten landlords were contacted and notified of their obligations under the law following city inspections two weeks ago that disclosed a number of warehoused apartments, Manasevit said. She added that none of the landlords have filed vacancy notices or rented the units yet.

Manasevit refused to release the list of violators. The information will not become public record until charges are brought against the landlords in municipal court.

The landlords may be prosecuted after April 1 if they have not filed vacancy notices, Manasevit said. However, members of the city Law Department said they may wait to bring the landlords to court until after April 26, the 60-day deadline for renting the units.

The anti-warehousing law allows landlords to apply for a waiver, but Manasevit said none have applied. Waiver requests will be decided by the Rent Leveling Board and will be granted for 60 days.

Under the terms of the ordinance, the board can grant waivers under three conditions: if the owner wishes to reserve a vacant unit for a family member; if the owner intends to improve the unit, or if the owner must keep the unit vacant to correct municipal or state code violations.

Manasevit said her office has contacted 30 landlords who are allegedly warehousing apartments. Inspections have been handled by Manasevit, Community Development Agency housing consultant Thomas Oliveri, and city housing inspectors under the direction of chief inspector Jude Fitzgibbons.

Most of the inspections have resulted from tenant complaints filed with the anti-warehousing office by tenants, Manasevit said.

"I would encourage tenants with complaints to come to this office and make them known," she said. "The law will be much easier to enforce if the tenants are the source of information about which landlords are warehousing apartments."

Schaffer files for 2nd Ward in Hoboken

By Bill Campbell

Michael Schaffer, a member of the Hudson County Utilities Authority and vocal critic of Mayor Thomas Vezetti, yesterday became the first candidate to file for the Second Ward City Council seat.

Schaffer, 35, a fire adjuster and life-long resident of the ward, is seeking the seat currently held by Councilman Joseph Della Fave, who yesterday picked up petition forms.

They are expected to be joined in the race by Donald Pellicano, a Housing Authority member, who picked up petition blanks last month. The Second Ward, in the northern section of the city, encompasses the industrial region and a stretch of vacant waterfront property.

Candidates must submit nominating petitions by Thursday to be on the ballot for the May 12 City Council election, in which all six ward seats are up for grabs.

Schaffer is the fifth candidate to file petitions with the City Clerk. Twenty-five hopefuls have picked up petition forms for the six ward races.

Schaffer, who lost a three-way contest to Della Fave in November 1985, says he blames Della Fave for the city's spiraling tax rate, lack of recreation and stalled waterfront development.

"Della Fave is responsible for these things because he is a member of the (Vezetti) administration," he said. Conse-

quently, Schaffer said, he will operate his campaign under the banner: "Reform the Reformer."

Schaffer, who managed Vezetti's successful 1983 City Council campaign, said he split from the mayor because, "He's lost control of his administration." Schaffer's campaign is being directed by James Roarty, Vezetti's mayoral campaign manager, who also split from Vezetti.

A former Public Works employee, Schaffer said he is committed to lowering taxes and choosing a developer for the portion of the waterfront leased to the Port Authority.

"We have banded together to get representation for the entire ward," he said. Schaffer attributes his 1985 unsuccessful council bid to "the Della Fave effect." He said Della Fave won with only 34 percent of the vote because Schaffer and Michael Mastapasqua, a candidate supported by former City Council President Helen Macri, split the anti-administration vote. He said he has received assurances of support this year from Macri.

In another development, First Ward Councilman Thomas Newman, following the lead of Council President E. Norman Wilson and Della Fave, yesterday became the third incumbent to pick up petition forms. Fourth Ward Councilwoman Mary Francone is the only incumbent who has decided against running for a new term.

School workers win 25% pay hikes

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Every school employee here, except the doctors and dentists, will receive a 25 percent pay hike over three years.

This city's costs per pupil are the highest in Hudson County, at \$6,607 per year, and the district's test results are the second lowest in the county.

While the raises granted by the Board of Education will not increase the \$26 million budget recently introduced, they must be included in that appropriation, whatever its final form, even if other items are cut.

Based on votes at last night's board meeting, School Superintendent Walter J. Fine's salary will rise to about \$74,000 from about \$65,000, and Assistant Superintendent Francis R. McGorty will earn about \$71,500, up from about \$65,000 also. Security officers, matrons, teacher and library aides, and office staff last night were granted 7 percent hikes for this year, retroactive to July 1.

Everyone, including teachers and custodians who won raises at earlier board meetings, will receive 10 percent hikes for the '87-88 school year, and 8 1/2 percent for the following academic year.

Most of the votes on the identical motions last night were 8-1, with Joseph Rafta the lone dissenter.

Rafta said he found it "terribly irresponsible" to vote for raises for the superintendent and assistant superintendent especially when schools here are about to face possible takeover by the state for low test scores.

Hoboken is at Level 3, the lowest on the scale of achievement, because students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 scored up to 30 points below the state averages on reading, writing and math tests. Only Jersey City students scored lower in the county.

Other board members defended Fine's record, saying the schools had begun to improve in the 1 1/2 years he has been superintendent.

But others disagreed. "That's ridiculous," said board candidate Steve Block. "What about the years he served as assistant superintendent, from 1978 on?"

"I've never seen anything so blatant, never before have raises been given out three weeks before a school board election," he said. "It's clearly designed to curry favor with the employees to gain votes."

School budget put off

By Bill Campbell

The anticipated fireworks over the Hoboken Board of Education budget fizzled last night as only a handful of residents attended a public hearing on the schools' 1987-1988 spending plan.

The meeting, which was competing with the regular session of the City Council, was held in the cavernous Hoboken

Related story on Page 21

High School auditorium and drew only about 35 spectators and five speakers. The board held ratification of the \$25 million budget until Tuesday.

The administration of Mayor Thomas Vezetti and his supporters on the school board have been calling for massive cuts in the spending plan. While the budget represents an overall decrease from last year, it will increase the amount to be raised by taxation

See SCHOOL — Page 19.

School budget vote postponed

Continued from Page 1

by \$2.6 million. The proposed school budget, which will be submitted as a public referendum on the April 7 ballot, could reflect a \$20 increase in the 1987 municipal tax rate. Hoboken's municipal budget, which also includes the school and county budgets, was the highest in the state last year at \$216 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

The budget and board President Richard England were roundly criticized last night by Steve Block, a school board candidate on the Committee for Quality Education slate, and Vezetti.

"The number one reason I'm here is to ask you to hold up the budget until after the election because, Mr. President, you are the biggest spendthrift of public funds I've seen," said Vezetti. "Dick, you people are bankrupting the people of Hoboken to the point where you should resign."

Vezetti said he will call the state Commissioner of Education, Saul Cooperman, today to ask that the school budget be held until after the April school board election.

"You're doing quite a nice number on me," England responded. He argued that the cost of educating a pupil was \$6,180 a year, up less than \$50 over last year.

"Your Honor, state aid to the schools has been cut to the bone, but you are being given Distressed Cities aid for the city budget," he said.

State and federal education cutbacks have resulted in a loss of about \$2.3 million in this year's school budget. State aid, which is based on the assessed value of city property, has steadily declined as property values soar.

Block, reading an eight-page prepared statement on behalf of running mates Carlos Perez and Michael Rossano, lashed at the board for granting across-the-board pay raises to custodians last week.

"This process of mutual self-interest support is called patronage and, historically here, as elsewhere, it is the backbone of machine politics. Nowhere was this process more obvious than your decision last week (by a 5-to-1 vote) to give the custodians a 25 percent salary increase," he said. "... all you did was publicly remind the custodians that they and their families were now expected to support and vote for Dick England's machine-backed slate."

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The board went into executive session for a half hour before England announced that the board would "take no action" on the spending plan. By state law, the board must ratify the current plan or adopt an amended budget by March 25.

The board set the next budget session for 7 p.m. Tuesday in the high school auditorium. Last year, voters rejected the 1986-1987 school spending plan by a 3-to-1 margin. The City Council trimmed \$1 million from the budget, which increased the amount to be raised by taxation by \$4 million.

Observers predict that voters again will reject the school budget, leaving cuts to the council. The board can petition the state to restore the funds.

5th entry joins 4th Ward race

By Bill Campbell

A Hoboken school teacher yesterday became the fifth candidate to submit petitions for the Fourth Ward City Council seat.

Frank Gullo, 36, a public school teacher, joins Orlando Addeo, Flo Amato, Edwin Duroy and Frank Mussaro in the bid for the seat held by Councilwoman Mary Francone.

The seat has been held by either Francone or her husband, Louis, for the past 32 years. They recently announced that neither will seek the seat in the May 12 election, in which all six ward seats are

up. The Francones have endorsed Amato.

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Gullo, a lifelong resident of the ward, said friends and supporters in the ward encouraged him to make his first bid at political office.

"As the last frontier in the city, the Fourth Ward is being faced with the kind of problems the rest of the city has already been experiencing,"

the fifth candidate said.

He said he is opposed to negotiating only with the Port Authority to develop piers they lease from the city, saying the development project "must stand up to competition. The city must combat displacement of tenants from housing units and appropriate funds to combat rodent infestation, he added.

Gullo, who is married and has two children, is a teacher at the Wallace School. He serves as Athletic Director at St. Joseph Parish.

The Fourth Ward is located in the southwestern portion of Hoboken and is considered the

least gentrified of the city's wards. Nonetheless, the ward is in the heart of the municipal Observer Highway Redevelopment District.

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Roberts is first incumbent to file for election

By Bill Campbell

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Roberts, who beat Councilman Angelo Valente in a November 1985 special election, became the first incumbent to file petitions for the May 12 municipal election.

"I believe my record on lowering the tax rate and encouraging both sensible development and affordable housing speaks for itself," Roberts said. "We have accomplished a

lot, but there is still more work to be done along the road."

Roberts, along with his campaign manager, Councilman-at-large Pat Pasculli, is a key in the council's fragile coalition. The coalition, which holds a majority on the council, formed last summer and has forged a working relationship with Mayor Thomas Vezetti.

It includes administration allies Helen Cunniff, Joe Della Fave and Tom Newman and has embraced a number of key Vezetti initiatives without giving outright support to the mayor. Observers maintain the coalition formed when anti-administration council members stepped up

a drive to recall Vezetti.

Della Fave, who represents the Second Ward, and Newman, who represents the First Ward, are expected to run as a "team" in their bids for re-election. Roberts, though, said he will run as an independent.

"I was an independent when I ran a year and a half ago and I am an independent today," said Roberts, whose ward is located in the center of the city. The ward is highly concentrated with single-family and owner-occupied dwellings.

Voters there have traditionally supported candidates who are not allied with the administration. Roberts narrowly defeated Valente, who

was appointed by Vezetti, to fill the vacancy created when Pasculli was elected to an at-large seat.

Roberts will likely be opposed by Aldo DePinto, a businessman who has support from the recall forces. Charles White, a public works employee, and Nunzio Malfetti, a former two-term councilman, have picked up petitions.

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housing" ordinance and ordinances to open up restricted streets to automobile parking.

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Six other candidates have filed petitions for other ward seats. Twenty-five residents have picked up petitions.



Ira Karasick, left, and Richard Seltzer civilly disagree on "Hoboken Voices."

Housing lawyers' T.V. debate not the match of the century

On paper, it was the match of the century, at least by Hoboken political standards.

In the left corner, Ira Karasick, the ruffled, 38-year-old post-hippie crusading lawyer. In the right, Richard Seltzer, the prim, 37-year-old real estate attorney.

Anyone familiar with the housing and development issues facing Hoboken would have expected a debate between Karasick and Seltzer to be like gasoline meeting a match. But when the bell rang and the cameras started taping Tuesday's episode of "Hoboken Voices," the two came out and shook hands.

Although there were moments of confrontation during the show, and during a talk at the bar at Helmer's afterward, the most surprising thing about the debate was the number of issues Karasick and Seltzer agreed on.

Both originally hail from Long Island and are relative newcomers to Hoboken. Both are representative of larger groups of newfangled political thinkers hoping to change the machine-styled government that has long been typical of the Mile Square City.

And both believe that what Hoboken needs is more people like themselves: smart, caring residents who are "mad as hell and not going to take it anymore."

Short and broad with a curly brown beard and wide grin, Karasick is more comfortable in jeans and a sweater than the blue suit he occasionally wears to court. He graduated cum laude from Harvard University after several years spent traveling around the country, toying with odd jobs such as organic farming and loading produce trucks.

Even before he graduated, Karasick wrote a brief for a case that eventually landed before the U.S. Supreme Court, earning a landmark decision regarding the separation of church and state. Other legal adventures have included work on former presidential candidate John Anderson's lawsuit challenging federal election laws and serving as the lawyer for the No-Nukes concert. Karasick gave up his New York

JIM DeROGATIS

REPORTER'S JOURNAL



office and secretary and began working out of his apartment near First and Jefferson streets about six years ago.

Seltzer's career has taken a more traditional path. He graduated from Hofstra Law School and worked with the Jersey City law firm of Guarini & Guarini for several years before establishing his own firm. He lives with his wife and two children in a home near 12th and Bloomfield streets, and is a landlord as part of a partnership that owns several apartment buildings.

Intense, scholarly and slightly uptight with wire-rim glasses, conservative suits and a piercing gaze, Seltzer has risen to the political forefront while displaying a fondness for acronyms and starting community organizations. He is a founder of the pro-development/pro-landlord group Help Hoboken Housing, anti-Port Authority group People Advocating Sane Solutions and anti-administration group We Advocate Voter Education. Karasick calls Seltzer "the apostle of gentrification who's willing to sacrifice the future of the city on the altar of lower taxes." Seltzer counters that Karasick "would probably consider any guy with wire-rim glasses who looks like an urban professional part of the urban gentry."

As a member of HHH, Seltzer helped launch federal and state court challenges attempting to overturn the city's controversial "anti-warehousing" law. Karasick wrote the brief

that led to a federal judge's dismissal of the suit and is donating his time to represent the Campaign for Housing Justice in defending the law in state court.

The law requires landlords of buildings with more than four units to rent vacant apartments within 60 days or face fines of up to \$500 a day per unit. Ten months after its passage, debate continues between tenant activists who see it as a way of providing "affordable housing" and developers, realtors and landlords who believe it amounts to government dictating what a citizen can do with his property.

Seltzer told the "Hoboken Voices" viewers that the city should work to support "the real estate economy," which he claims is Hoboken's main source of income and jobs. He said the anti-warehousing ordinance will have a negative impact upon the city's economy because it discourages development.

Karasick, meanwhile, told the audience that "the real estate economy is an elusive one that depends upon the city being built and built... and rents getting higher and higher." He claims the anti-warehousing law discourages real estate speculation and, in the process, helps "free up" units for those in need of housing, providing one method of preserving "old Hoboken."

But despite their sharply differing views on housing and the law, Karasick and Seltzer avoided fireworks Tuesday. "Basically what you had was just two Jewish boys from Long Island sitting around talking about housing," Karasick said. "I may not agree with everything Richard says, but I believe he has a right to make his opinions known. He's doing something valuable for the community."

Seltzer feels the same way about Karasick. "The biggest problem in Hoboken today is apathy," he said. "No one cares about the important issues, no one gets involved."

So much for the fight of the century. Call it a draw.

A repeat of the show will air Sunday, 7:30 p.m., on River-view Cablevision Channel 18.

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City may prosecute for vacant rooms

By Jim DeRogatis

Hoboken may bring landlords to court within two weeks for violations of its "anti-warehousing" law.

City anti-warehousing enforcement officer Jodie Manasevit said yesterday that 10 landlords with vacant apartments may be prosecuted unless they file vacancy notices by April 1.

Designed as an answer to Hoboken's critical lack of "affordable" housing, the law requires landlords to rent vacant units within 60 days or face fines of up to \$500 a day per unit. Landlords must also file a notice of vacancy with either the anti-warehousing or rent leveling offices within 35 days after the apartment becomes vacant.

The law has been challenged in court.

Ten landlords were contacted and notified of their obligations under the law following city inspections two weeks ago that disclosed a number of warehoused apartments, Manasevit said. She added that none of the landlords have filed vacancy notices or rented the units yet.

Manasevit refused to release the list of violators. The information will not become public record until charges are brought against the landlords in municipal court.

The landlords may be prosecuted after April 1 if they have not filed vacancy notices, Manasevit said. However, members of the city Law Department said they may wait to bring the landlords to court until after April 26, the 60-day deadline for renting the units.

The anti-warehousing law allows landlords to apply for a waiver, but Manasevit said none have applied. Waiver requests will be decided by the Rent Leveling Board and will be granted for 60 days.

Under the terms of the ordinance, the board can grant waivers under three conditions: if the owner wishes to reserve a vacant unit for a family member; if the owner intends to improve the unit, or if the owner must keep the unit vacant to correct municipal or state code violations.

Manasevit said her office has contacted 30 landlords who are allegedly warehousing apartments. Inspections have been handled by Manasevit, Community Development Agency housing consultant Thomas Oliveri, and city housing inspectors under the direction of chief inspector Jude Fitzgibbons.

Most of the inspections have resulted from tenant complaints filed with the anti-warehousing office by tenants, Manasevit said.

"I would encourage tenants with complaints to come to this office and make them known," she said. "The law will be much easier to enforce if the tenants are the source of information about which landlords are warehousing apartments."

Schaffer files for 2nd Ward in Hoboken

By Bill Campbell

Michael Schaffer, a member of the Hudson County Utilities Authority and vocal critic of Mayor Thomas Vezzetti, yesterday became the first candidate to file for the Second Ward City Council seat.

Schaffer, 35, a fire adjuster and life-long resident of the ward, is seeking the seat currently held by Councilman Joseph Della Fave, who yesterday picked up petition forms.

They are expected to be joined in the race by Donald Pellicano, a Housing Authority member, who picked up petition blanks last month. The Second Ward, in the northern section of the city, encompasses the industrial region and a stretch of vacant waterfront property.

Candidates must submit nominating petitions by Thursday to be on the ballot for the May 12 City Council election, in which all six ward seats are up for grabs.

Schaffer is the fifth candidate to file petitions with the City Clerk. Twenty-five hopefuls have picked up petition forms for the six ward races.

Schaffer, who lost a three-way contest to Della Fave in November 1985, says he blames Della Fave for the city's spiraling tax rate, lack of recreation and stalled waterfront development.

"Della Fave is responsible for these things because he is a member of the (Vezzetti) administration," he said. Conse-

quently, Schaffer said, he will operate his campaign under the banner: "Reform the Reformer."

Schaffer, who managed Vezzetti's successful 1983 City Council campaign, said he split from the mayor because, "He's lost control of his administration." Schaffer's campaign is being directed by James Roarty, Vezzetti's mayoral campaign manager, who also split from Vezzetti.

A former Public Works employee, Schaffer said he is committed to lowering taxes and choosing a developer for the portion of the waterfront leased to the Port Authority.

"We have banded together to get representation for the entire ward," he said. Schaffer attributes his 1985 unsuccessful council bid to "the Della Fave effect." He said Della Fave won with only 34 percent of the vote because Schaffer and Michael Mastapasqua, a candidate supported by former City Council President Helen Macri, split the anti-administration vote. He said he has received assurances of support this year from Macri.

In another development, First Ward Councilman Thomas Newman, following the lead of Council President E. Norman Wilson and Della Fave, yesterday became the third incumbent to pick up petition forms. Fourth Ward Councilwoman Mary Francone is the only incumbent who has decided against running for a new term.

School budget put off

By Bill Campbell

The anticipated fireworks over the Hoboken Board of Education budget fizzled last night as only a handful of residents attended a public hearing on the schools' 1987-1988 spending plan. The meeting, which was competing with the regular session of the City Council, was held in the cavernous Hoboken

Related story on Page 21

High School auditorium and drew only about 35 spectators and five speakers. The board held off ratification of the \$25 million budget until Tuesday.

The administration of Mayor Thomas Vezzetti and his supporters on the school board have been calling for massive cuts in the spending plan. While the budget represents an overall decrease from last year, it will increase the amount to be raised by taxation

See SCHOOL — Page 19.

School workers win 25% pay hikes

By JANET WILSON

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Every school employee here, except the doctors and dentists, will receive a 25 percent pay hike over three years.

This city's costs per pupil are the highest in Hudson County, at \$6,607 per year, and the district's test results are the second lowest in the county.

While the raises granted by the Board of Education will not increase the \$26 million budget recently introduced, they must be included in that appropriation, whatever its final form, even if other items are cut.

Based on votes at last night's board meeting, School Superintendent Walter J. Fine's salary will rise to about \$74,000 from about \$65,000, and Assistant Superintendent Francis R. McGorty will earn about \$71,500, up from about \$65,000 also. Security officers, matrons, teacher and library aides, and office staff last night were granted 7 percent hikes for this year, retroactive to July 1.

Everyone, including teachers and custodians who won raises at earlier board meetings, will receive 10 percent hikes for the '87-88 school year, and 8½ percent for the following academic year.

Most of the votes on the identical motions last night were 8-1, with Joseph Ratler the lone dissenter.

Ratler said he found it "terribly irresponsible" to vote for raises for the superintendent and assistant superintendent especially when schools here are about to face possible takeovers by the state for low test scores.

Hoboken is at Level 3, the lowest on the scale of achievement, because students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 scored up to 30 points below the state averages on reading, writing and math tests. Only Jersey City students scored lower in the county.

Other board members defended Fine's record, saying the schools had begun to improve in the 1½ years he has been superintendent.

But others disagreed. "That's ridiculous," said board candidate Steve Block. "What about the years he served as assistant superintendent, from 1978 on?"

"I've never seen anything so blatant, never before have raises been given out three weeks before a school board election," he said. "It's clearly designed to curry favor with the employees to gain votes."

School budget vote postponed

Continued from Page 1

by \$2.6 million. The proposed school budget, which will be submitted as a public referendum on the April 7 ballot, could reflect a \$20 increase in the 1987 municipal tax rate. Hoboken's municipal budget, which also includes the school and county budgets, was the highest in the state last year at \$216 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

The budget and board President Richard England were roundly criticized last night by Steve Block, a school board candidate on the Committee for Quality Education slate, and Vezzetti.

"The number one reason I'm here is to ask you to hold up the budget until after the election because, Mr. President, you are the biggest spendthrift of public funds I've seen," said Vezzetti. "Dick, you people are bankrupting the people of Hoboken to the point where you should resign."

Vezzetti said he will call the state Commissioner of Education, Saul Cooperman, today to ask that the school budget be held until after the April school board election.

"You're doing quite a nice number on me," England responded. He argued that the cost of educating a pupil was \$6,180 a year, up less than \$50 over last year.

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PHOTO BY KEN CLARE

Never mind that the back alley is better remembered for mob-hits than for turn-of-the-century charm, planners, developers and residents are dreaming of a future for Court Street that will make this cobblestone thoroughfare the frontispiece of Hoboken's self-image. If their dreams come true Court Street will relive a golden past it has never lived before. See "Anarchy in the Alleyway," page 3.

Anarchy in the alleyway

Back alley aesthetics and the future of Court Street

By Chris Mitchell

Stand on the southern edge of the Shop-Rite parking lot right at the break in the cyclone fence on Observer Highway, and look north: the sea of asphalt at your feet where Court Street begins.

Court Street is little more than an idea on this block—a legal right of way that cuts an imaginary 20-foot wide path across the blacktop. It is a phantom thoroughfare that enables the City Council to stall a \$70 million project planned for the site while they press the developers for a good deal on an easement.

But it's the image of a turn-of-the-century cobblestone lane, an emblem of an idealized "old world Hoboken," that these developers intend to evoke by naming their massive complex "Court Street Plaza." This same image is promoted at Sixth Street at the far end of the eight block alley, where the one-story Court Street Tavern has been transformed overnight into a four-story structure architect James McNeight calls Court Street's "northern tower."

"We paid exact attention to what we believed would be appropriate for a cobblestone street of old," says co-owner Jack Talbot in describing the building's design.

Never mind that Court Street doesn't have a single cobblestone to call its own—the cut stones that line the alley from Newark Street to Seventh Street, originally carried into Hudson harbor as ship ballast, are more properly termed "Belgian blocks." Never mind that the alley is better remembered for mob-hits than for turn-of-the-century charm — Marion Brando and Eva Marie-Saint were nearly flattened in this cozy corridor of carriage houses and tenements when *On the Waterfront's* Boss

Crusoe put a wide truck on their heels; the



Court Street, an eight block cobblestone alley between Hudson and Washington Street facing an uncertain future.

PHOTO BY KEN CLARE

gunman who tried to rub out ILA vice president Willie Murphy in 1973 is rumored to have stalked out his victim from a dark recess at Fourth Street. Never mind the reputation—planners, developers and residents are dreaming of a future for Court Street that will make this back alley the frontpiece of Hoboken's self-image. If their dreams come true, Court Street will relive a golden past it has never lived before.

Quaint and not-so-quaint

Mob-hits may make the headlines, but minor social transgressions and mundane manifestations of anarchy have made this back alley what it is today.

This is where you crept in back entrances of the great theatres that lined Washington and Hudson Streets to see the world's most popular musical comedies, where you could find a cat house masquerading as a dance studio, where you smoked after school cigarettes until the day your mother walked up and beat the stuffing out of you.

Most significantly, this is where years of haphazard building have left today's special blend of quaint carriage houses, not-so-quaint garages, unquaint bank posteriors and anti-quaint parking lots.

First Ward Councilman Tom Newman bubbles when he speaks of the street: "You walk up, you look down Court Street when

you are coming up from PATH or crossing over from Hudson Street and you kind of go 'Oooh,' you know, it's kind of nice."

An overlooked civilization

The Court Street that bounces its way over Belgian blocks from Newark Street to Seventh Street is pretty darn nice, but it's no dream.

Taxis hurdle headlong over the cobblestones to beat the traffic lights on Washington Street; zoologists let their dogs run wild; late night rabble-rousers pour out of the bars; budding urban artists assault the walls with spray paint; and street sweepers and snow plows regularly overlook Court Street civilization.

A recent surge of real estate speculation along the alley has convinced nearby pro-

"You walk up, you look down Court Street when you are coming up from PATH or crossing over from Hudson Street and you kind of go, 'Oooh,' you know, it's kind of nice."

erty owners that anarchy is one tradition they can live without. Besides Court Street Tavern and Court Street Plaza, several condo projects are planned for the narrow thoroughfare. A Condo conversion is underway at the old Union Club at Sixth Street; a four-story complex of seven residential units and a retail store is planned for 213-215 Court Street; a windowless five-

continued on next page

Contract spurs ed board fight

Dispatch 3-19-87
By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—A Board of Education candidate has demanded the ouster of the board president and another board member for allegedly arranging a sweetheart labor contract in exchange for votes.

Felix Rivera also wants board President Richard England prohibited from running for re-election, and wants the contract — which gave school custodians a 25 percent raise for three years — declared invalid.

Rivera has petitioned the State Commissioner of Education and has filed complaints with the state Attorney General's Office and the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office.

The petition states that the contract awarded March 11 to the city school's 63 custodians was a "political tool" employed by England and James Farina to gain votes for the April 7 election, and that the two men have "utilized public funds for their own political gain and have most flagrantly abused the office

A candidate wants the ouster of board President Richard England

they represent."

England is running for re-election, and Farina is backing a slate of candidates that includes England and Farina's cousin Geraldine Pantolano.

At the March 11 meeting, after the contract was approved at the last minute and late at night, England shouted "Put it in your pockets and take it home," and Farina yelled, "All right, you guys gotta get your families out, your kids, your neighbors. I wanna see every one of you out for the school board election."

Sy Weiss, head of Controversies and Disputes for the state Depart-

ment of Education, said he could not comment on the case, except to say it would be up to Rivera to prove his allegations.

Weiss said the types of charges being brought by Rivera would fall under the statute dealing with "inconsistent interest." Under that statute "no board member shall be interested directly or indirectly in any contract with or claim against the board." "Interest" means personal interest or personal gain, he said.

Weiss said he did not know if the language applied to collective bargaining contracts but that the petition would be examined by his department when it was received. Rivera mailed it on Tuesday.

If the issues fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education, a hearing would be scheduled, and an injunction to prevent England from running in April could be issued.

Weiss also said it might be up to the Public Employment Relations Commission to void the contract awarded to the custodians.



113 Court Street. Architect James McNeight's vision for new developments on an old street.



Court Street's "northern tower" at Sixth Street, formerly the one-story Court Street Tavern.

Anarchy

continued from previous page

unit project sits near completion at 61 Fifth Street and the old Ranieri Furniture building will be renovated for commercial office space and topped with a fifth story.

Over the past year, an extension of the Haven Savings Bank between Sixth and Seventh Street was completed, as was the three-story one-family home adjacent to Washington Savings' parking lot. A proposal for a two-story addition to a garage at 322 Court Street was blocked in January by the Zoning Board and a proposed five-story residential building, okayed by the zoning board, was recently blocked by the Historic District Commission.

"It's been a crashout in front of the Zoning Board to see what will go up," says Sixth Ward Councilman Dave Roberts, whose Hudson Street home abuts the alley.

An unofficial street

Never deemed an official street in the city zoning ordinance, Court Street has long suffered from development insensitive to alley aesthetics. The height and density of some of the projects that have gotten past the Board of Adjustment have Court Street connoisseurs concerned about the future.

"We'll all die of carbon monoxide if we have tall buildings," speculated one longtime resident.

She was one of about 50 from the neighborhood who gathered in the basement of Sts. Peter and Paul last month to discuss Court Street's first zoning code. They shared a common affection for the alleyway and expressed strong feelings about what should be preserved and what could be improved. They insisted that the "cobblestones" be preserved, loved the idea that the city could furnish period lighting and demanded immediate restrictions on through-traffic.

One man's suggestion that Court Street be limited to northbound vehicles drew applause.



Hoboken dentist Nat Coyne and his Court Street building.

The 'renaissance' of 1966

"I've seen the good times. I've seen the hard times. Now I want to see better times."

Back in 1966 when Hoboken dentist Nat Coyne opened an art gallery in a converted carriage house at 629 Court Street, there weren't many Hobokenites who shared his faith in an imminent cultural renaissance. Despite favorable reviews in several area newspapers and a promising turnout of approximately 1000 at the opening exhibit, the Hoboken Gallery didn't last long enough to capitalize on what Coyne called at the time "the natural organic expansion of New York City's young, dynamic art scene across the Hudson River to its west bank."

Today, the nineteenth-century carriage

house serves as a mere apartment, but it remains Coyne's most prized possession. He is quick to cite its significance to Court Street folklore as property formerly owned by the family of "Tony Mike" DiVincento—supposedly Brando's life model for Jerry Molloy in *On the Waterfront*.

Strolling down his block, Coyne protests the intrusion of Haven Savings Bank and says, "The first thing to do is stop the mentality of destruction."

A staunch defender of the avant garde works that filled his gallery for that brief time from 1966-67, Coyne now shakes his head in dismay when he sees graffiti on the carriage house door. "I don't think it's art, do you?" —Chris Mitchell

Long accustomed to living by the law of the zoning jungle, a few skeptics mistrusted the apparent dawn of reason. Told that developers are now required to replace every Belgian block they displace, one Court Streeter remarked, "If I'm gonna get my cobblestones back, there's got to be something in it for someone else—but I'll take it."

Displaced cobblestones

The crowd in general welcomed what Roberts called "the cottage theory"—a plan that would allow new construction of about two and a half stories, mix residential and commercial development and promote the alley's image as an Old World cobblestone street.

HOBOKEN

Pit bulls attack two men

Dispatch 3-19-87
By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Quiet has been restored to a neighborhood here after two men were attacked by a pair of pit bull terrier dogs let loose early Monday morning.

Hector Ortiz of 120 Adams St. was standing at a bus station on Newark Street Monday at 6:30 a.m. Suddenly, a 70-pound black pit bull and a 30-pound black-and-white one lunged at him, and began tearing at his arms in a frenzy, according to a police report.

An unidentified woman driving by came to his aid and together they fought off the dogs, owned by George Woodrow, owner of Woodies Tavern, at 460 Newark St., the report says.

She drove Ortiz to St. Francis Hospital's emergency room in Jersey City, where he was treated for a serious puncture of his left forearm, numerous bites on both arms, and severe bruises and lacerations on his legs and pelvic area, the

The dogs are now in custody to see if signs of rabies become apparent

report says.

But the nightmare was not over.

Alberto Morales, a homeless man who said he had been living in a trailer near the tavern, also was attacked at about 6:40 a.m., according to the report, which said the dogs attacked him again and again, ripping at his arms and legs.

The police report gave the following account:

Police arrived during the attack and reported seeing a bystander throw a large stick at the dogs, forcing the dogs to let go. Morales was rushed to St. Mary Hospital here by ambulance, where he was treated for a variety of severe

puncture wounds as well.

The canines, meanwhile, had run into the enclosed rear yards of several properties in the 400 block of Newark. Police cleared the area of pedestrians, and Officer Mark Auragemma began searching the alleys and yards. Within moments, the larger pit bull burst out an alleyway between 488 and 460, towards the officer.

Auragemma drew his gun and shot the dog once. It yowled and wined, then ran back into the yards.

The dogs were lost from sight, and finally were rounded up by police six hours later, with no further injuries reported.

Woodrow said he discovered the dogs missing about 4 a.m. Monday.

He said the dogs had been chained in his back yard, and somebody apparently set them free. The dogs are now in Woodrow's custody, and must be kept in custody for 10 days, to see if any signs of rabies become apparent.

HOBOKEN

Mattress fire forces 11 from their homes

Dispatch 3-19-87
By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—A man woke yesterday morning to find his bed in flames, dragged the burning mattress into the kitchen and attempted to throw it out the back window.

Instead, the entire first-floor apartment at 312 Monroe St. was destroyed, leaving the 29-year-old man, his 27-year-old sister and her six children homeless. A single man

and an older couple living on the second floor also were displaced after firefighters were forced to chop holes in the walls and floors of their apartments.

Aurea Orango ran from her burning apartment two minutes before 10 a.m. to call the Fire Department. Five companies responded under the direction of Deputy Fire Chief Edward Scharneck, and were able to contain the fire before it spread throughout the en-

tire wood-frame four-story building.

"Luckily, he shut the door behind him when he finally got out," said Deputy Chief Richard Tremietz of Orango's brother. "That kept the fire from spreading through the entire building."

Two of Orango's children learned about the fire while they were in classes at Kealey School. The principal called the Fire Department while they listened nervously in the background.

Their mother had gone across the street to a friend's house, according to fire alarm operator Dennis Huelbig, and also was trying to obtain emergency housing in the public housing projects or elsewhere. An older couple on the second floor had another place to move to, according to a Fire Department source, and the occupant of the other damaged second-floor apartment was helped by the Red Cross.

Leonard Luizzi is first to file for Fifth

By Bill Campbell 3-19-87

Leonard Luizzi, a 42-year-old businessman, yesterday became the first candidate to file petitions for Hoboken's Fifth Ward City Council seat.

He is the seventh candidate to file for the May 12 municipal election in which all six ward seats are up. More than a dozen hopefuls, including several incumbents, are expected to file before today's 4 p.m. deadline.

Luizzi will likely challenge City Council President E. Norman Wilson and activist Helen

Manogue, who are expected to file today.

Luizzi, who owns a laun-

dry, said he will focus his campaign on lowering the \$216 tax rate and improving municipal services. "There is a saying, you get what you pay for. Well, we are paying dearly and what are we getting in return? Frustration," he said.

A member of the Teamster's Union, Luizzi is married and has two children. He is a graduate of Hoboken High School and a member of the Hoboken Elks Club and the Knights of Columbus.

Luizzi said municipal services have been "flagrantly neglected" and the municipal tax

rate, the highest in the state, has forced people to move from the city.

Luizzi has served the past four years as an elected Democratic committeeman.

He was the only candidate yesterday to file. Others who have already filed include: Councilman Dave Roberts in the Sixth Ward; Michael Schaffer in the Second Ward, and Orlando Addeo, Flo Amato, Edwin Durov and Frank Mursara in the Fourth Ward.

The ballot drawing for the May election is set March 31.

HOSTS A PARTY

Vezzetti directs the greening of Hoboken

By JANET WILSON
3-19-87

HOBOKEN—Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti bent over backwards to make this St. Patrick's Day a true "wearing of the green," generously donating ample room for William Van Wie Jr. and others to celebrate with a splash.

While Van Wie, who works in the Tax Assessor's Office, was busy keeping alive the ancient custom of painting a bottom a lovely emerald green out near the flagpole, nearly 30 others were inside the mayor's chambers enjoying a midday repast of crusty soda bread, sweet whipped butter and steaming Irish coffee.

The Irish Republic's colors were hoisted to the top of City Hall's flagpole at 11 a.m. by a dedicated committee of sons and daughters of the Old Sod, headed by Joan Wall of Shannon's Tavern at 104 First St.

Other bonnie lads and lassies on hand included Eileen Clancy, with truly sparkling locks of green hair, Margaret Hennessey, Fire Chief James Houn, and Police Chief George Crummins and his loyal men, Lt. Jackie Howe and Police



MAYOR THOMAS F. VEZZETTI, lower right, joins the Cunnings clan to celebrate St. Patrick's Day yesterday at City Hall in Hoboken. With him are father Edward Cunnings, mother Joan and daughter, City Councilwoman Helen, (behind Vezzetti).

Officers Kevin Houghton and Edward Cunnings Jr.

Cunnings was but one representative of her family on hand. Mother Joan; father Edward, complete with crocheted tam o'shanter; and lovely daughter, Helen, the councilwoman, were also to be seen, dispersing good spirits to all.

Photo by Don Smith

City told it needs a finance director

By Bill Campbell
3-25-87

A proposed settlement to a multimillion-dollar lawsuit between Hoboken and the Port Authority may be a component to a state-mandated fiscal recovery plan.

A report by state Director of Local Government Services Barry Skokowski stresses that Hoboken can reduce its financial woes in 1987 by settling the suit and by creating a Department of Finance to monitor the city's financial situation.

The recommendations came after a state review of municipal operations which lasted more than six months. When the city accepted \$700,000 in Distressed Cities aid last July, it agreed to the review.

The plan, presented to the Mayor Thomas Vezzetti administration last week, was released yesterday.

Vezzetti, in a prepared statement, said the city would follow the recommendations but warned that the city is still in "dire need of immediate increased state aid."

"Without it, the consequences are not only layoffs of police and fire personnel as well as an exorbitant property tax hike," he said, "but the failure to increase state aid will severely hamper our ability to reorganize city government through better management initiatives."

Municipal officials are jockeying to avert a repeat of last year's financial crisis, which occurred when a loss of state and federal aid resulted in a 30 percent tax hike. The tax rate soared to \$216 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, the highest in the state.

City Business Administration
See CITY — Page 8.

Ad by developer called misleading

By Bill Campbell
3-16-87

An advertisement featuring Hoboken real estate developer Joseph Barry gives the false impression that Barry will develop municipally owned land on Observer Highway, a city official has charged.

"I wish to go on the record that Mr. Barry is not the selected developer, nor does he have an inside track to be the selected developer," Community Development Agency Director Michael Coleman said in a prepared statement. The CDA is responsible for selecting the project developer.

The comments stem from an advertisement for Tior Title Insurance of Hackensack

which appeared in the March 5 edition of New Jersey Law Journal. The ad pictures Barry standing behind a model of his proposed development which he calls "our latest project... a 500-unit apartment with an estimated value of \$50 million."

The CDA presented the Observer Highway redevelopment plan in February and this spring is expected to issue requests for proposals from qualified developers. Barry spurred the plan last July when he proposed a 515-unit, \$60 million development for the 2.5 acre site. He made a presentation to the City Council.

Barry, president of Ap-
See AD—Page 6.

Developer seeks funds for CUNA

By Bill Campbell
3-13-87

A fund-raising effort headed by Hoboken real estate developer Joseph Barry may prevent the anticipated closing of an embattled Hispanic services organization.

Barry, president of Applied Housing and a proposed developer of the city's Observer Highway redevelopment district, said he will meet today with Juan Garcia, organizer of CUNA, in an attempt to bail out the financially troubled organization.

Garcia, who founded the community service organization 20 years ago, said CUNA will go out of business unless it raises \$7,000 to pay back bills. The group lost nearly \$50,000 in state aid last year for allegedly not providing the services it was paid to administer.

Garcia maintains the state funds were cut because he refused to campaign for Republican candidates during state-wide elections. He defended the scope of CUNA's programs, which include youth and minority services and the distribution of free cheese from the federal government.

The City Council is expected to adopt a resolution Wednesday appropriating \$15,000 in Community Development Agency money to fund the organization until Aug. 1. The funds, though, cannot be earmarked to pay retroactive bills incurred by CUNA after the state funds were terminated.

Garcia last month said the council initiative was a "crucial joke" because his obligations to his creditors would prevent him from utilizing the funds. He said that unless the funds could be spent on retroactive bills the money would be "worthless."

Barry said he will meet with Garcia to discuss a private fund-raising effort to pay all the back bills. "I think it's for the good of the city to shoulder a program that represents the voices of the poor."

He said he offered last summer to lead a fund-raising campaign for CUNA if the organization could guarantee it would receive government funding. He said that Garcia asked him to head the funding drive earlier this month after CDA funds were appropriated for the organization.

Garcia said Barry offered to present the organization with a \$2,000 today and the remainder of the balance after the funds are raised.

Barry did not confirm the

\$2,000 commitment to the organization, saying he wanted Garcia to outline CUNA's programs before agreeing to aid the group.

Garcia said the private donations coupled with the city funding would allow CUNA to provide community services until late this summer. He said the organization also sponsors exams for state jobs and an annual summer festival which last year attracted about 20,000 spectators.

CUNA owes its creditors \$6,900, including more than \$3,000 in back rent payments, Garcia said. He said he has been forced to lay off his staff and vowed not to accept a salary under this year's proposed spending plan.

HOBOKEN

2 council hopefuls toss hats

By Bill Campbell
3-19-87

HOBOKEN—With the deadline nearing, two more candidates turned in petitions for the City Council elections.

Helen Manogue will run in the 5th Ward against Councilman E. Norman Wilson, and Cesidio "Joe" Del Boccio is slated to run in the 3rd Ward for the seat held by Steve Cappello.

The deadline for filing petitions for the six ward seats is 4 p.m. today. While several of the incumbents are being coy about whether or not they will file, none have indicated they will not.

Manogue, who filed yesterday, is an active member of local and regional environmental and planning groups, and a vice president at City Federal Savings Bank. She is founded the Hoboken Environmental Commission, and belongs to the state Mortgage Finance Agency and the New Jersey Regional Planning Association. She also sits on the governor's Liberty State Park Development Corp.

Manogue ran against Wilson unsuccessfully in the last election.

Del Boccio could not be reached for comment yesterday. City Clerk James Farina said Del Boccio filed his petition Tuesday, on his birthday.

Barry did not confirm the

Gans, Valone agree to give \$2.2M to fund

By Bill Campbell
3-15-87

Real estate developers Daniel Gans and George Valone have agreed to contribute \$2.2 million to a proposed Hoboken affordable housing fund in exchange for a modified parking arrangement at their \$70 million Court Street Plaza project.

The agreement, subject to Planning Board and Parking Authority approval, requires that the developers increase their affordable housing contribution nearly three-fold if the city agrees its garages can accommodate a yet-to-be-determined number of on-site parking spaces.

The agreement was announced yesterday by City Councilman Robert Ranieri, who last week announced that the developers would contribute \$650,000, or \$2.01 a square foot, to the fund.

Ranieri said the developers agreed to the plan during a four-hour meeting Monday with an ad hoc committee of the City Council and representatives of the Community Development Agency.

Other council representatives who attended the meeting declined to discuss details, but each said they were optimistic that a satisfactory accord could be reached. CDA Director Michael Coleman was not available for comment.

Neither Gans nor Valone responded to requests to comment.

"What we've attempted is to reach a compromise with the developers on a dollar amount for the housing trust, and it looks as if we've found a figure that is satisfactory to all," Ranieri said.

Mayor Thomas Vezzetti and his supporters on the City Council criticized Ranieri's initial proposal of a \$2.01 per square foot contribution as too low. Councilman Tom Newman told the council last week that the city should require \$10 per square foot from all residential developers.

The proposed agreement with Gans and Valone amounts to about \$6 per square foot, Ranieri said the developers have also pledged to contribute \$4 per square foot to a municipal infrastructure fund. Newman yesterday said it

was "too early" to discuss details of the meeting. "In the future, I'd say, it's a realistic demand which should be factored into the whole development equation," he said. "Developers are reaping big windfalls in Hoboken and if we can get \$10 then the city wins."

Vezzetti, who last week criticized the original contribution, said he was "pleased" at the \$2.2 million figure. He said he could not elaborate on the plan.

Vezzetti has also questioned Ranieri's involvement in soliciting contributions because West Bank Construction, owned by Gans and Vallone, is developing an office building owned by Ranieri's family. Ranieri's son, Robert Jr., is also an employee of the development firm.

Variances for the 12-story 288-unit Court Street Plaza project were granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustment last December after debate over height and density. The project will not be subject to proposed municipal laws to set dollar amounts for affordable housing and infrastructure funds.

Ranieri said the developer's latest proposal was contingent on the Parking Authority and the Planning Board agreeing to allow the developers to remove a level of underground parking. The spaces would be absorbed by the municipal garages, he said.

Zoning laws require developers to provide one parking space for each residential unit. A source who asked not to be identified said the two levels of underground parking would be costly because the bottom level would be less than a foot above sea level.

According to Ranieri, Gans and Valone would contribute to the housing fund the cost difference in constructing the second parking level. The City Council has the option of accepting the original offer or the amended agreement, he said.

"What we have is a tentative agreement stemming from a very productive agreement," said Councilman Dave Roberts. "This may be the first step in establishing a public-private relationship with Gans and Valone, and a contribution that's more workable."

City told it needs a finance director

Continued from Page 1

Edwin Chius said yesterday that the 1987 spending plan would be released Tuesday after the city receives confirmation of state aid for the 1987 fiscal year. He said he expects the budget to increase again if a projected \$2.6 million increase in the school tax levy is not cut.

Officials said they were not surprised by Skokowski's recommendations and noted that the administration's proposed reorganization of city government called for a finance department.

They said the city may soon work out a settlement to a lawsuit with the P.A. over insurance proceeds from a 1980 fire on Pier B. Under a proposed settlement, the city may recoup \$3 million in "upfront" money from the bi-state agency and another \$6.5 million in capital improvement funds.

Skokowski said the state was "very pleased" to hear of the settlement, which would add \$3 million in anticipated funds to the 1987 budget. But he warned that the lack of an agreement "bears on our ability to assist you with additional state aid."

"If you do not make a reasonable attempt to realize the benefits of a settlement like this in 1987, the Division of Local Government Services will not be able to assist you in receiving additional state aid to fill your budget gap," he said.

Skokowski said the settlement "would seem to be a component" of the city's financial recovery plan it agreed to when accepting aid last year.

Vezzetti said he was "confident" that the city and the P.A., which has proposed building a \$600 million mixed-use development on the southern waterfront, will reach an agreement "in the near future," but warned that the funds will not offset the rise in school taxes. He said the settlement money would serve as "a bridge" until a plan is implemented to realize delinquent taxes and generate new rates.

The P.A. wants to renegotiate its leasehold on the pier property to allow residential and commercial development. Negotiations broke off several months ago over questions surrounding the insurance money the agency collected after the fire.

Skokowski said a finance director and the realization of taxes and rates "should help financial operations" and further urged the city to provide the state with monthly revenue and appropriation reports as well as a monthly cash-flow analysis.

He praised the administration for proposing a reorganization plan, saying, "I fully endorse this attempt to bring a more professional structure to city government."

The City Council is expected to act shortly on ratifying elements of the plan.

Vezzetti said he has requested that Chius allocate funds for the new department and said he will work with the state in the recruitment and selection of a director.

The department, which will consist solely of a director, should be established by July 1, Vezzetti said.

Ad by developer called misleading

Continued from Page 1

plied Housing Associates, which owns 2,000 subsidized apartment units in Hoboken, said the ad was "not intended to propose a plan."

"As far as I know, we are the only developers who have presented a plan," he said. "It's ridiculous to say that the fix is in because the city has the power to simply file a development plan and designate us as the redeveloper. The fact that the city chose to solicit requests does not justify claims that we have a lock."

Coleman and the administration of Mayor Thomas Vezzetti have come under fire from critics who claim that Barry is the favored developer. Others have opposed the redevelopment plan and Barry's proposal as too large.

"While there have been rumors in this city that Mr. Barry did have an inside track, the CDA did not and does not hold to this opinion," Coleman said.

He said Vezzetti and the City Council have a "clear" policy that the city will sell the land "on the basis of a competitive request for proposals among any interested developers who could meet the standards, terms and conditions set forth in the RFP."

According to Coleman, the city's redevelopment plan must ensure:

- Maximum revenues for the sale of the municipal land to lower the municipal tax rate.
- Significant new tax rates from all the housing units developed on the site.
- Innovative construction technology that would integrate the municipal garage into the development.

- Height, density and parking consistent with the proposed new zoning ordinance.
- Quality architectural design that will promote public access and use.
- New affordable housing that will result from developer contributions and federal funding obtained by the CDA.

Real estate developers and municipal officials have speculated that the yet-to-be-offered request for proposals may spark a bidding war. City officials said that New York City real estate developers Helmsley-Spear and Starrett Housing have inquired about the site.

Barry, who stresses his "track record" in providing affordable housing, has been vocal in defending his plan. Last month, he warned the city's Planning Board that the municipality should not give in to the "super-heated speculative real estate market" and award the project to the highest bidder.

He said his development firm has "a proven commitment to the city and track record of providing affordable housing."

The city's redevelopment plan, which is under Planning Board review, calls for a total of 480 units, 20 percent of which would be designated as "affordable." The affordable units would be cross-subsidized by the market rate housing and a \$3 million federal Housing Development Action grant which the city received last fall.

The plan permits developers to build a series of 11- to 17-story towers along Observer Highway. A parking formula of one space per unit is also included in the plan.

Vezzetti issue in election

By Bill Campbell
3-23-87

Hoboken's May 12 City Council election may turn into a referendum on the popularity of Mayor Thomas Vezzetti, officials say.

Both Vezzetti and his arch foe, Councilman-at-large Robert Ranieri, acknowledge that the success of pro- and anti-

CRITICAL CHOICES

The school race
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administration candidates may hinge on the mayor's popularity.

"Clearly, this is a referendum on Vezzetti," Ranieri said. "It's impossible for a man to endorse candidates and not have the results taken as a reflection on the mayor."

Ranieri's statement came on the heels of Vezzetti's announcement Friday that he would endorse candidates in five of the six ward races.

Vezzetti, as expected, endorsed First Ward Councilman Thomas Newman, Second Ward Councilman Joe Della Fave and Sixth Ward Councilman Dave Roberts. He said he will also support Third Ward candidate Francis "Pupie" Raia and Fifth Ward hopeful Helen Manogue.

Vezzetti said there was no
See VEZZETTI — Page 8.

Vezzetti is issue in council race

Continued from Page 1

clear choice in the "hodge-podge" of hopefuls seeking the Fourth Ward seat held by outgoing Councilwoman Mary Francone.

In turn, Recall, the group bent on ousting Vezzetti, and Citizens Organization for Good Government, another anti-Vezzetti coalition, are expected to field a slate of opposition candidates, Ranieri said.

Ranieri declined to speculate on potential candidates, but observers say anti-Vezzetti organizations will likely support Joseph Lisa in the First Ward, Michael Schaffer in the Second, incumbent and former mayor Steve Cappello in the Third Ward, Flo Amato in the Fourth Ward and Aldo DePinto in the Sixth.

The recall forces, which have been dormant several months, are likely to use the tax rate as a plank in their platform. Municipal officials predict that the tax rate, already the highest in the state, may jump at least \$10 due to increased school spending.

"I believe you'll see the voters pointing to the administration, the mayor's failed policies and the runaway budget," Ranieri said. "I think that will result in a lot of new faces on the council come May."

Vezzetti, who last summer won a "working majority" of council support, said he too sees the election as a barometer of his support but feels he's riding the momentum from last November's special election in

the First Ward. Both Della Fave and Newman won special elections for their seats in 1985 and 1986 with Vezzetti's support. They, along with Councilwoman at-large Helen Cunnings, form the solid core of the mayor's support on the nine-member council.

Vezzetti won majority support on the council when Robert Pat Pasculli began supporting administration policy late last summer. The mayor's "fragile coalition" has followed key administrative initiatives without expressing outright support for Vezzetti.

Vezzetti said he doesn't mind not being openly supported by the fragile coalition because they have been "very cooperative to my policies," he said.

However, City Hall observers maintain that some coalition members are simply "keeping their distance" from Vezzetti in the event the political tide turns. Della Fave and Newman have always been seen as firmly entrenched in the Vezzetti camp and as vocal supporters of the mayor.

Council President E. Norman Wilson, who represents the Fifth Ward, appears to be the only incumbent running without support from either pro- or anti-Vezzetti forces.

"I agree that this could very well be considered a referendum," Vezzetti said. "We'll just have to wait and see and hope that the people still support me."

Rent: \$480 a month

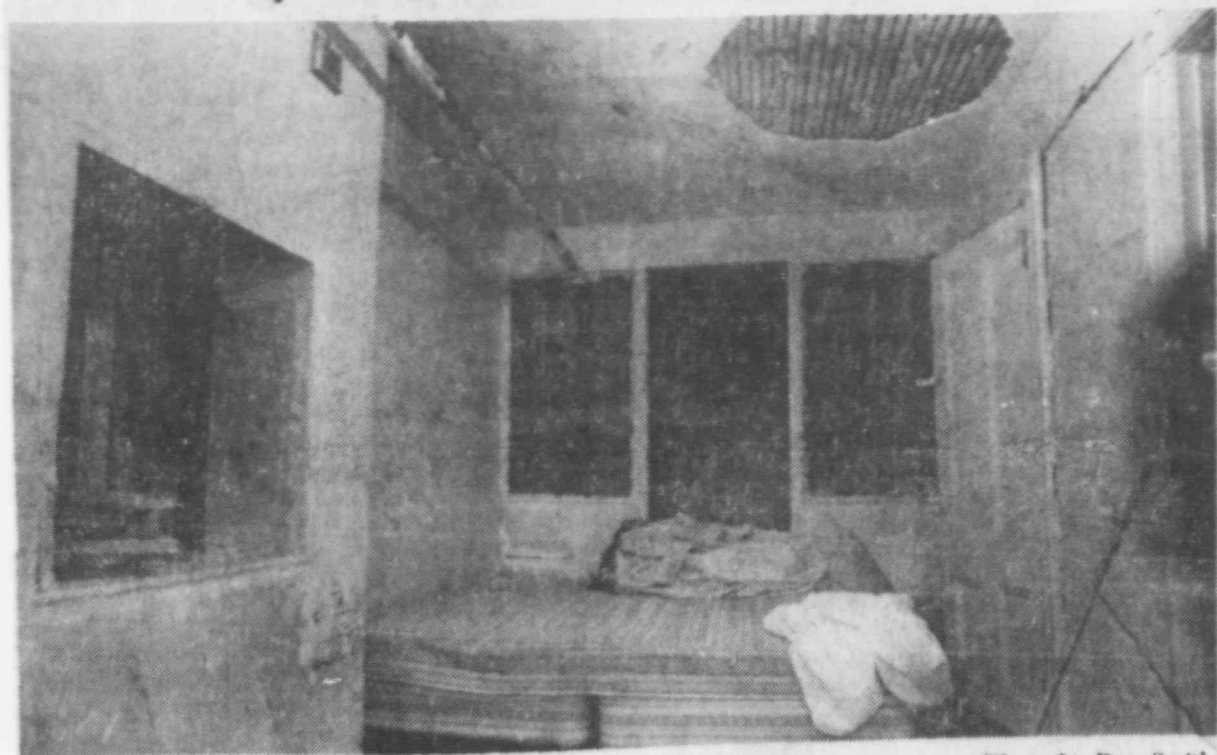


Photo by Don Smith

NIDIA CALCANO'S children have been ordered to leave this basement apartment at 1033 Washington St. in Hoboken by Monday. Their mother lives behind the doorway at center rear of the photo.

Mother, 4 kids must leave

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Just when Nidia Calcano thought she could not go any lower than the squalid cellar apartment she calls home, a judge literally pulled the concrete floor out from under her.

As of Monday, Calcano and her four children, ages 16, 13, 10, and 7, will be locked out of the hazard-filled quarters they have called home since October 1985.

The address is 1033 Washington St. The rent is \$480 a month. The rooms Calcano and her children live

in are not supposed to exist anymore in the "new" Hoboken. Giant dead waterbugs lie belly up near the back door. Rotted plaster drips off the walls and ceiling, and the floor is cold, poured concrete. Bare bulbs hang by frayed wires, within easy grasp of children's hands. Three children sleep in one bed in the back room, into which a bar of sunlight creeps each day.

In January, Calcano stopped paying rent as a protest, she said, because she was tired of trying to get the superintendent, the landlord and the local housing offices to respond to her complaints. It was

the worst possible move she could have made.

Monday, in a three-minute hearing without a lawyer to represent her, Calcano was told by Judge Samuel Scott of Hudson County Superior Court in Jersey City that she has six days to get out because of nonpayment of rent, or be locked out.

As far as the landlords, Ben and Stan Goodman are concerned, it is good riddance. The Goodmans, of Goodman's Sporting Goods at 100 Washington St., own several buildings in the 1000 block of Washington

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RENT

Continued from Page 1
St. According to both father Ben and son Stan, the tenants are to blame for the uninhabitable conditions, not them.

The elder Goodman said the Calcanos repeatedly have refused to let contractors in, and have broken and stolen plumbing, flooring, and other fixtures.

"I lay awake at night thinking of things I can do for the buildings," he said. "If the tenants were only normal, all this wouldn't happen."

Inspectors in the Housing Office and the Buildings Department refused to answer questions about the buildings or to provide documentation of their visits. They said only Housing Inspector Jude Fitzgibbons or Construction Code Official Alfred Arezzo could respond, but neither man was available in his office yesterday afternoon. Rent Leveling Officer Lourdes Arroyo was finally able to get the dates of four inspections: Sept. 9, 1985, Feb. 17 and April 25, 1986, and Aug. 26, 1985 — and a statement that the building has been in violation of the state building code for the three years since then.

In fact, the Goodmans owe \$2,250 in fines for not correcting violations of the state housing code, and have rented and re-rented the same basement apartment in spite of being told it is illegal to do so, a city source said. The apartment is registered in the Tax Assessor's Office

and is on the rent rolls, but the Buildings Department told the Goodmans, previous tenants and tenant advocates that, because of exposed pipes, the adjacent boiler, and too few windows, it is an illegal apartment.

"It's not illegal," Ben Goodman responded. "It's my building — I didn't steal anything." Since 1984, when the first inspection was made, Goodman has collected at least \$10,000 in rent on the virtually uninhabitable apartment. He angrily retorts that plumbing, water, roofing, painting and other bills have eaten away at any possible profit. His water bills have skyrocketed since 1985, but the total water bill for the building still comes to \$13,000, and he has collected rent from eight other apartments in addition to the cellar unit.

It is not clear where Calcano and her family will go on Monday. Tenant advocates and local officials said they would like to negotiate with the landlord to keep her in the building, but the Goodmans flatly rejected the idea.

"We wouldn't give her that apartment again for double the rent," said Ben Goodman. "I don't like her

type. I don't like her nastiness. I go out of my way to help a tenant, and if I don't like one, I don't give a damn."

Asked about the children, Stan Goodman said, "Why are you asking me? Let a city agency do something. You find some place for them. I don't care."

Calcano has been on the waiting list for public housing since she moved into 1033 Washington St. She had been paid \$2,000 to leave her previous apartment because the landlords were converting the building into condominiums.

A Housing Authority official said yesterday that Calcano is on the "Commissioner's List," the priority list for housing, but the one apartment available this month already has been given to another family. Calcano also is competing with another woman and her six children, who were forced out of their apartment at 312 Monroe St. by fire this weekend.

The Goodmans said they plan to do enough work on the basement apartment to satisfy the city, then rent it again.

Belfiore quitting school board race

By Jim DeRogatis

Peter Perry Belfiore said yesterday he is withdrawing from the April 7 Hoboken Board of Education election. Meanwhile, the campaign is moving into high gear as candidates are trading charges, with one candidate seeking Richard England's removal from the board. He is seeking reelection.

Belfiore, 35, a Hoboken developer, ran unsuccessfully for a seat on the board last April. He said he believed his chances would have been better in the current race but cited business and personal pressures as his reasons for withdrawing.

With Belfiore's withdrawal, nine candidates remain in the race for three three-year board terms. The field includes two full slates, one sponsored by the Committee for Quality Education and another backed by the administration of Mayor Thomas Vezetti and another backed by anti-administration forces.

The CQE candidates are Steve Block, Carlos Perez and Michael Rossano. The anti-administration slate is England, Mario Mercado and Geraldine Pantoliano. The remaining candidates, running as independents, are Orlando Esposito, Felix Rivera and William Strangeman.

Belfiore is the second candidate to drop out. Incumbent James Monaco withdrew several days after nominating petitions were filed and ballot positions drawn, but just before the official deadline. Belfiore has passed the deadline and must obtain court approval to withdraw.

Incumbent Anthony DeBari is retiring from the board. Sources said Belfiore and Monaco pulled out when they could not obtain spots on the anti-administration slate. Belfiore said he intends to back the slate and hopes the anti-administration forces will "pull together" to defeat the CQE slate.

The CQE candidates are considered frontrunners, and members of the organization have been actively campaigning for several weeks. England, the current board president, defeated CQE candidates in last January's election, however, and is also expected to be a strong force at the polls.

Rivera, meanwhile, has attacked England and is circulating a petition asking that he and trustee James Farina be removed from the board. He cited incidents that occurred at last Wednesday's board meeting.

Following several hours of heated debate in closed session, the board voted to approve a 25 percent raise for school custodians. A newspaper quoted England as telling members of the custodial staff after the meeting to "Put it in your pocket and take it home."

Farina was quoted as yelling, "You guys (have got to) get your families out, your kids, your neighbors. I want to see every one of you out for the

school board election."

In a letter to New Jersey Education Commissioner Saul Cooperman, Rivera charged that England and Farina voted to award the contract "as a premeditated political tool . . . to directly and wrongfully affect the results of the upcoming board election."

England confirmed that he made the comments but said "they were at the end of a lengthy, exciting meeting and I meant that I was glad all of it was over." He said he believes the custodians were entitled to the raise, the same amount approved by the board for the teacher's union and independent administrators.

He and Farina denied any political motivation behind voting to approve the raise. The raise was approved by a vote of 8-to-1, with trustee and CQE member Joseph Rafter casting the lone dissenting vote.

2 Hoboken board members absent, school budget fails

By Jim Kopchans

Hoboken voters may not have a budget to vote on in their school board election on April 7.

The seven members of the Board of Education present at last night's hearing voted 4 to 3 against next year's proposed budget. The two members not present, Anthony DeBari and James Monaco, are not running for reelection. One more yes vote would have resulted in passage.

Today is the deadline for placing the \$26 million budget on the ballot. The budget has been attacked by the public and several board members as being too high and causing too much of a tax increase.

Members Joseph Rafter, Raul Morales and Lourdes Arroyo voted against the budget. Board President Richard England and members James Farina, Eugene Drayton and Zelma Lugo voted for passage.

Acting Board Secretary Anthony Curko said he would speak today with Hudson County Schools Superintendent Louis Accocella about how the board should proceed. Attorney James P. Granello, who was advising the board last night,

said Accocella could possibly demand that the budget be put on the ballot anyway or he could extend the deadline to permit the board the chance to take another vote for adoption.

The vote angered England, especially after the board members were cautioned by Granello that they were virtually obligated under state law to pass this budget and put it to the people.

"What was the sense of doing this. All they have done is keep the budget out of the hands of the people. The public deserves that opportunity. If they don't like the budget, they should have the chance to vote it down."

The three members voting against the budget said they wanted to see the budget proposal cut further.

About 30 persons attended last night's hearing in the Hoboken High School auditorium. The eight speakers all upbraided the board for not searching for areas where the budget might further be cut and taxes kept to a minimum.

"Are any of you so sure that you will be coming back that you can actually stand in back of this budget?" one speaker, Kenneth Lenz, asked.

"Most of the people you ask about the budget do not know what is going on. There is no effort made to inform people about the budget. And this election that's coming up has done nothing more than confuse them about what the budget is all about," Lenz said.

"As a result, the only conclusion they can reach is that someone is lining their pockets with the money. That's the only way they can understand why they pay \$6,600 per student."

"There are many problems and there are many kinds of solutions that could cut costs," Brian Mason, a member of the Mayor's Budget Advisory Committee, said, "but the most obvious way of cutting costs immediately would be to be gutsy and take a stand to close those school buildings that are underutilized."

Carlos Perez, a member of the Committee for Quality Education, said it was not enough just to say the board has a difficult job ahead of it. "Our group has already submitted ideas that could save up to \$3 million more than already cut. There has to be a greater commitment to saving, yet maintaining the drive for more quality education."



HOBOKEN MAYOR Thomas F. Vezetti becomes an honorary Irishman yesterday at traditional St. Patrick's Day painting ceremony outside City Hall. Police Lt. Jack Howe was on hand to help the mayor celebrate. Story on Page 21.

Ranieri ready to act on affordable housing

By Bill Campbell

A Hoboken councilman said yesterday he is ready to implement "immediately" legislation to create a municipal affordable housing agency.

Councilman-at-large Robert Ranieri, who last week surprised colleagues and members of the Vezetti administration when he proposed the plan, said he has submitted an ordinance to the city law department to create the agency.

Called the Council on Affordable Apartments and Condo Housing, the agency would serve as custodian of

municipal, state and federal funds earmarked to provide affordable housing, Ranieri said.

The five-member council, he said, would report to the City Council and serve as the "planning arm" for creation of affordable housing in the city. "This is an immediate solution to one of our biggest problems and a plan that should be acceptable to all," he said.

The city suffers from the lack of housing for middle- and low-income residents as a result of escalating rents and costs for condominiums.

Ranieri said his plan, which also calls for real estate developers to

contribute \$2.01 per square foot of new construction into a housing trust fund, is a response to a plan by Mayor Thomas Vezetti and his aides to reorganize city government. The administration has proposed abolishing the Community Development Agency and creating an autonomous "Affordable Housing Corporation."

"The administration's plan will likely sit on the back shelf until the municipal elections are over in July," Ranieri said. "My reply to the administration is simply, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

Ranieri's housing proposals have drawn heavy criticism from

both the administration and council. Vezetti last week blasted Ranieri for stealing the concept of a housing trust from the administration, while others claim his motives lie in his bid for the 33rd District state Assembly seat.

Ranieri announced last Wednesday that West Bank Construction, which is developing an office complex in a building owned by the Ranieri family, has proposed a \$650,000 contribution to the fund.

West Bank, whose principals are Daniel Gans and George Vallone, is also attempting to develop a massive condominium project at the south-

ern end of Washington Street. The developers are seeking council approval for an easement for their project.

Ranieri has denied charges of conflicts of interest but acknowledges that he will be a candidate for the Democratic nomination for the Assembly.

Councilwoman Helen Cunnning, who chairs the council's CDA committee, said she was skeptical of Ranieri's proposals.

"I'm glad that Bob's running for election again because now he can get some work done on the council," See ACTION—Page 6.

Action due on affordable housing plan

Continued from Page 1
she said, Cunnning said the committee has been meeting for four months to develop an affordable housing plan and proposals for affordable housing trust funds.

Councilman Thomas Newman last week argued that developers should contribute \$10 per square foot to the fund, while other council members advocated a "compromise" amount of \$4 to \$5.

Ranieri said his proposed agency, CAACH, would consist of the municipal comptroller, the law director, the CDA director and two council members. It would be responsible for administering all affordable housing developments in the city, he added.

The ordinance is expected to be presented at the council's March 25 caucus session. Ranieri said he will call for a first reading of the bill at the April 1 meeting. If it is introduced April 1, the public would then have had an opportunity to comment on it before it came to a vote.

A resolution to sanction the \$650,000 contribution from West Bank Construction will be up for council vote during tomorrow's meeting.

Cappiello retracts charges against Block

By Jim DeRogatis

Hoboken Councilman Steve Cappiello and Steve Block, a supporter of Mayor Thomas Vezetti and candidate for the Board of Education, have settled a defamation suit stemming from the 1985 mayoral campaign.

A statement signed by attorneys for Block and Cappiello was released yesterday, retracting comments made by Cappiello during a debate with Vezetti before the June, 1985 run-off election.

The debate took place in the midst of a hotly contested election. Block, a key advisor to Vezetti and a leader in his campaign, accompanied Vezetti to the debate but did not participate. Cappiello was seeking reelection as mayor.

The debate was held in the offices of The Jersey Journal and published by the newspaper. Cappiello enjoined the newspaper as a party in the lawsuit.

According to court papers filed by both attorneys, Cappiello said Block "came from

the Newark riots where he was one of the leaders of it. He's been known to fool around with the American flag and things of that sort." Block's lawsuit charged that the remarks depicted him as "a criminal and as a person who is unpatriotic, irresponsible and lawless."

The written retraction said: "Cappiello now recognizes that Mr. Block had no involvement in the Newark riots of 1967 and further recognizes that Mr. Block is not guilty of dishonoring the American flag. Despite the political

differences between Mr. Cappiello and Mr. Block, Mr. Cappiello recognizes that Mr. Block is a patriotic and law-abiding American."

A trial before Hudson County Superior Court Judge John Ryan was scheduled to begin today. The settlement was worked out last week, said Block, but Ryan asked that it not be released until yesterday.

The judge also placed a gag order on participants in the suit, preventing them from discussing any terms to the settle-

ment other than the retraction. Block's original court complaint asked for \$1 million in compensatory damages, although his attorney, Neil Mullin of West Orange, said he was not seeking a specific amount. Cappiello and Block both praised the settlement.

"I would have liked to have settled sooner," Block said. "I'm just sorry it took more than a year and a half to get to the point where Cappiello admitted that what he said was not true."

Block, a candidate in the

April 7 election for one of three seats on the school board, said Cappiello's comments resulted in "a cloud hanging over my head" that damaged his reputation in the community and could have hurt his chances for election.

Cappiello said he chose to settle the suit because "I'd rather spend my money on campaigning than on lawyers." The councilman filed petitions yesterday in a bid to seek reelection to the Third Ward seat in the May 12 municipal election.

A TAKEOVER?

All candidates would fight state move to control schools

J.J. 3-25-87

Third in a series

By Jim DeRogatis

Most parents expect their children to leave school with at least a good knowledge of the three R's — reading, writing and arithmetic.

But a growing number of Hoboken residents are wondering whether the city's public school system is meeting that obligation.

Hoboken ranked 263 out of 270 school districts in the state on last year's standardized High School Proficiency Test. The HSPT tests ninth-grade students' reading, writing and math skills and is a necessity for graduating high school.

Of the ninth-graders tested, less than 21 percent were able to pass all three parts of the HSPT. Standardized test scores for third- and sixth-grade students were similarly below most other school districts in the state.

While school administrators point out that test scores have been increasing slowly in recent years, critics of the system say more dramatic improvements are needed. Meanwhile, the state Board of Education has denied the system certification; it is one of five districts in the state under Level 3 monitoring.

The Level 3 process involves an in-depth investigation into all aspects of the school system by an independent team of educators. At the end of the investigation, the team will either recommend an improvement plan for Hoboken or review a plan developed by the city.

The city will have a year to implement the plan and show "significant improvement," or it could be subject to a state takeover. Legislation that would allow the state to replace the school board and administrators and take charge of the system has already passed the state Assembly and is under consideration in the Senate.

All candidates for the Hoboken Board of Education in the April 7 election oppose the concept of a state takeover and believe they can help the system display the kind of improvement needed to avert such a drastic measure.

Here are the candidates' opinions on the quality of education offered in Hoboken and the concept of a state takeover:

Steve Block, CQE candidate, educator:

"I have no doubt that if the three (CQE candidates) win, the state will see enough im-

Hoboken HSPT Results for 9th Graders A 3-Year Comparison

	Reading	Math	Writing
Passing in 1984	22%	n/a	31.8%
Passing in 1985	34.5%	22.5%	31.8%
Passing in 1986	48.9%	39.8%	33.1%

provement to hold off on a takeover. We have announced some very specific proposals for improving education in Hoboken, starting with a nationwide search for a new superintendent of schools and eliminating a number of administrative positions.

"A new, qualified superintendent with a reputation for improving urban districts will set an example for the entire system and institute many of his own proposals and changes. . . we also intend to draw the parents into the educational process in a way that just hasn't been done in the past."

Richard England, anti-administration candidate, businessman, incumbent board president:

"I think we have been going forward in the past year, and I'm hopeful that the evaluations and recommendations that come out of the Level 3 monitoring will help put us a little further over the top."

"This school district has the capacity for success, and I believe it can and will succeed. . . I believe the board should step back and let the superintendent run the ship."

Orlando Esposito, independent candidate, businessman:

"Our number one priority has got to be education. I think we should look at the advice offered by the state and implement it. A state takeover would be the most embarrassing thing that ever happened to this city, and we should work to avoid it."

Mario Mercado Jr., anti-administration candidate, Hoboken police lieutenant:

"More research has to be done into the ways we can improve our children's education. I'm not saying that if I'm elected I'll be able to solve all of the problems within a year."

"The educational process doesn't begin and end with the school. We have to have the family involved in the process if we want to have any degree of success."

Geraldine Pantoliano, anti-administration candidate, secretary:

"I have no doubt that if the three (CQE candidates) win, the state will see enough im-

"I will look into the whole question of the test scores. I'd like to build up much more parent involvement. A great deal of a child's education has to be done at home."

Carlos Perez, CQE candidate, educator:

"What the state is interested in is seeing a district head and board members interested in improving the system. The state is not seeing anything now, the test scores were basically the same as last year."

"What we want is the opportunity to make the system accountable so that it provides the kind of skills our children need."

Felix Rivera, independent candidate, Port Authority police officer:

"If elected, I will immediately declare a state of emergency in the school system. I will work with the other members to institute the needed mechanism to make the system react to the abominable conditions that are pushing the system into state takeover."

"I do not intend to be part of the first board that loses the system to the state, and I will do everything to avoid it and help the system out of this big mess."

William Strangeman, independent candidate, businessman:

"In order to improve education, I'm in favor of leaving the pupils in the homeroom. Those teachers know what their needs are. Take the bright kids out and put them in special classes and let the homeroom teachers work with the others."

Michael Rossano, CQE candidate, businessman:

"I want to identify the problems within the system, the reasons the kids aren't scoring well. I believe that by supporting the teachers and helping those that do a good job, we will be able to improve the quality of education."

"I also think a new superintendent will help the board make the kind of improvements the state wants to see."

\$26 MILLION BUDGET

Voters blast high cost of educational system

By Jim DeRogatis 3-24-87

The Hoboken Board of Education is expected to spend more than \$26 million this school year, and many residents are asking why.

School enrollment has been decreasing rapidly for several years, although the number of school board personnel has remained relatively steady.

Second in a series

Hoboken students continue to rank among the lowest in the state on standardized basic skills tests, and only 20.3 percent passed the entire test last year. The school system has failed to obtain state certification and is under Level 3 monitoring, which could result in a state takeover.

Meanwhile, taxpayers have been asked to contribute an increasingly large portion of the school budget. In 1986, the schools accounted for more than \$90 of the \$216 tax rate, the highest rate in the state.

Incumbent board members attribute the increasing drain on taxpayers to the dwindling amount of state aid. They argue that Hoboken cannot afford to pay costs at a time when the city must also improve the quality of education.

Acting Board Secretary Anthony Curko attributes the problem to Hoboken being "wealthy on paper." As a result of the city's much-heralded "renaissance," the state has assessed the city at a higher rate each year, expecting an increasingly large portion of the education dollars to come from taxpayers.

Critics of the board point to school districts of a similar size and say they run more efficiently, cost taxpayers less and provide students with a better education.

Each of the nine candidates vying for a seat on the board in the April 7 election believes the budget needs to be trimmed, although opinions differ on the best method.

Closing one of the city's seven grammar schools is seen as a move that could trim

\$400,000 to \$600,000 from the budget. The board has shifted its opinion on the issue several times, twice voting to close a school, then reversing the votes. Most of the candidates believe a school closing may be necessary.

Here are the positions of the school board candidates on trimming the budget and closing a school:

Steve Block, CQE candidate, educator:

"We intend to carefully examine every job and every job description and determine if they are necessary, then eliminate those that aren't. We believe we can reduce the budget by several million dollars by cutting unnecessary personnel and still improve the quality of education."

"The savings from closing a school are not so significant to make it worth ignoring the opinions of the parents. There needs to be a lot more study and community involvement, the parents have to understand the reasons for closing a school and be behind the idea or it is not worth doing."

Richard England, anti-administration candidate, businessman, incumbent board president:

"I believe we have done a lot to pare costs, including adopting a buyout program that has reduced personnel by 51 people next year. People don't understand that we have to pay for the costs of running the schools."

"I don't want to close a school, but I still think it is necessary. By taking a school off the rolls and reducing the staff, we can save \$600,000. But

Hoboken School Board Budgets

School Year	Amount Budgeted	Amount Spent	Portion From
City Taxes			
1984-85	\$24,439,248	\$21,862,007	\$5,984,169
1985-86	24,656,948	24,049,738	5,624,091
1986-87	26,678,453	n/a	10,076,563
1987-88 (projected)	25,765,015	n/a	12,692,323

no matter what, I do not believe we should sell the building."

Orlando Esposito, independent candidate, businessman:

"The school administration has got to be streamlined, the budget is totally unmanageable. I think a school closing is something that will certainly have to happen, based on the high costs and declining enrollment."

Mario Mercado Jr., anti-administration candidate, Hoboken police lieutenant:

"We're spending an enormous amount of money to run the system and we only have half the number of children we did a number of years ago. One of my main issues is that the budget has to be cut."

"Somewhere down the line there has to be something done to reduce the number of (school) facilities. But I am against selling a school building."

Geraldine Pantoliano, anti-administration candidate, secretary:

"I have to look into the whole (budget) question. I have no answers now. I have to look at the staff."

"I'm against closing a school. We are in the education business, and our interest is in taking care of the kids."

Carlos Perez, CQE candidate, educator:

"We have to look at every-

thing very carefully and ask, 'What is it that makes this job essential to the educational process?' We need accountability in education. We want to get educational results for our money."

"Given the shifting number of students, I think it will be necessary to close a school, but we have to look at what the community wants as well. I am against closing a school and putting it up for bid."

Felix Rivera, independent candidate, Port Authority police officer:

"I will seek considerable reductions in the school budget through cutting all nonessential jobs, which include eliminating all those unnecessary positions that have been created for political patronage (as well as) consolidating services."

"I am in favor of closing one or possibly more schools if necessary."

Michael Rossano, CQE candidate, businessman:

"The budget has been a tool of political patronage, subject to overspending only because no one has been looking very closely at it. I believe that if we examine the budget item by item and eliminate the overspending, we can cut \$2.6 million."

"Closing a school is a complicated issue, and a decision should be made only after more evaluation of the enrollment and the way the population is expected to change."

William Strangeman, independent candidate, businessman:

"Nobody has taken an honest look at the needs of the system. There is a lot of fat and political patronage that can be cut."

"I'm in favor of closing a school. We should take it off the rolls and consider renting it out for other educational purposes."

Strangeman pulls out of Hoboken contest

By Jim DeRogatis J.J. 3-27-87

A third candidate has announced his intention to withdraw from the April 7 election for three seats on the Hoboken Board of Education.

William Strangeman, an independent candidate, said he is pulling out of the race because of business obligations. "I just can't devote the proper amount of time to it," he said.

Strangeman is the third candidate to withdraw from the race since nominating petitions were filed last month. Peter Perry Belfiore announced his intention to withdraw last week. Incumbent trustee James Monaco withdrew several days after filing his petitions.

Monaco withdrew before the state deadline for changing the ballot. Both Belfiore and Strangeman have passed the deadline and must seek a Hudson County Superior Court order before they can drop out.

Acting Board Secretary An-

thony Curko said neither candidate has yet obtained a court order.

Sample ballots have already been printed and the voting machines prepared for 10 candidates, Curko said. If Strangeman and Belfiore can obtain court orders to drop out of the race, the city will have to change the ballots and adjust the machines "at considerable expense."

Strangeman and Belfiore said they intend to seek court approval today before Superior Court Judge Burrell Ives Humphreys. They are both represented by Hoboken attorney Salvatore D'Amelio Jr., who is considered a leader of the anti-administration forces.

Sources say Strangeman, Belfiore and Monaco decided to drop out of the school race when they could not secure a place on the anti-administration ticket. Running on the ticket are Board President Richard England, Mario Mercado Jr. and Geraldine Pantoliano.

School budget adopted

By Bill Campbell J.J. 3-26-87

The Hoboken Board of Education, meeting at an eleventh-hour emergency session, yesterday approved a controversial \$26 million budget for the 1987-88 school year.

Facing a midnight deadline and pressure from the Hudson County superintendent of schools, the board adopted the budget in a 6-2 vote, despite charges by some board members that about \$3 million could be cut.

Hoboken voters are expected to reject the budget, which calls for a \$2.6 million increase in the amount to be raised by taxation, when it appears on the April 7 ballot. Voters traditionally reject school budgets, sending them to the City Council for cuts.

Much of the blame for Hoboken's skyrocketing tax rate, the highest in the state, has been placed on the growing school budget, and all of the nine council members have said they want to see drastic cuts in school spending. The proposed budget would increase city taxes by at least \$20 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation over the 1986 rate of \$216. Yesterday's action came less than 24 hours after the board failed to pass a budget at a special caucus Tuesday night. The vote was 4-3 in favor of the budget, but a majority vote from five members on the nine-

See SCHOOL — Page 12.

School board OKs budget

Continued from Page 1

member body is needed for passage.

County Superintendent Louis Accella sent Hoboken Superintendent Walter Fine a terse statement yesterday morning advising him that if the school board did not approve a spending plan before midnight, "I (will) recommend to the (state) commissioner the issuance of a show cause order."

Board President Richard England and trustees Eugene Drayton, James Farina, James Monaco, Anthony DeBari and Zelma Lugo voted to adopt the budget yesterday.

Joseph Rafta and Lourdes Arroyo, the self-proclaimed "reform candidates" elected last year on the Committee for Quality Education slate, voted against the plan. The two have been the most vocal critics of the budget and have voted against it at every meeting since it was introduced.

England said he believed that if the board had not passed the budget, Accella "would have made us show a reason why we could not function as a board and deliver our mandated responsibilities. I was concerned either he or the state would come in and set the numbers" and such an action could have encouraged the state to "move quicker" on a school takeover.

The Hoboken system is currently under Level 3 monitoring, which could result in a state takeover unless the system improves dramatically in the next year.

Throughout the budget process, England expressed frus-

tration with trustees who voted against the spending plan.

"The votes against the budget were political, pure and simple," he charged. "I'm tired of that CQE group. We all want to cut the budget, but the majority of the board have mandated us to keep a school open, and we have to provide the superintendent with the resources he needs to operate."

England is seeking reelection to the board as one of three candidates on an anti-Vezzetti administration slate. CQE is also fielding a slate of three candidates.

According to England, the board should have approved the budget sooner and then worked with the council to make further cuts if the voters reject the spending plan.

Rafta attacked England's logic and said the board should have made the cuts itself, although he added he is hopeful of working with the council.

"We still believe that approximately \$3 million can be cut from this budget," he said. "If (the CQE candidates) win, I believe the new board and the council will sit down, attempt to develop a reasonable approach and make some substantial cuts."

He added that "the passage of this budget was just another example of the inadequate leadership of the current board. The budget should have been ready by November so that we could hold more meetings and allow people to question each line item. That way, maybe we could garner public support for it."

"This budget was a farce," he said.

WATERFRONT FIRE

Hoboken told: Take PA offer

By JANET WILSON J.J. 3-25-87

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The state will ax aid to this city if it does not accept a \$10 million insurance settlement offer from the Port Authority, according to a stern warning from a state official.

The memo from Barry Skokowski, director of the Division of Local Government Services, also "fully endorses" the Mayor's Office reorganization plan, which has met with vocal local opposition.

The memo brought howls of criticism from local officials yesterday, who called Skokowski's memo an unprecedented intervention into home rule by a state bureaucrat. Councilman Robert A. Ranieri said he believes Skokowski might have been pressured into writing the memo by both Gov. Thomas H. Kean and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, because they are eager to proceed with a \$600 million waterfront development project.

Mayor's Office officials said they were pleased with the recommenda-

tions and were confident they would be implemented.

Skokowski's office is responsible for doling out millions of dollars to local governments in New Jersey and supervising municipal budgets. Hoboken last year received \$700,000 in distressed cities' aid. The city was required to have a state audit of its budget and finances performed, and to devise a fiscal recovery plan. Skokowski's letter to the city was sent as the first of a series of recommendations to the city as to how it could improve its fiscal operations.

On the first page, Skokowski said his office had been "very pleased" to learn of the authority's offer to the city to settle a fire insurance case over Pier B — which would include \$3 million in cash immediately, and up to \$7 million more in various loan cancellations and capital projects.

Skokowski said the "opportunity to realize \$3 million would seem to be" a component of the required fiscal recovery plan, and that if the

See HOBOKEN, Page 14

HOBOKEN

Continued from Page 1
mayor and council did not make "a reasonable attempt" to accept the settlement, the state "will not be able to assist you in receiving additional state aid to fill your budget gap."

Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti responded to Skokowski in a letter yesterday saying he was confident the city would reach an agreement with the authority, and that the "\$3 million is slated for immediate tax relief."

The insurance suit has been a continuing source of dispute among council members, the Mayor's Office, and the Mayor's Waterfront Advisory Committee, and has stymied negotiations between the city and the authority for a proposed \$600 million waterfront development.

On the second page of his letter, sent to the city on March 18, Skokowski said he fully endorses the mayoral reorganization plan for City Hall as a positive development, although "obviously, further analysis needs to be done."

"Skokowski has stepped way out of line in equating the state aid package with the insurance settlement," WAC member Annette Illing

said. "He should please explain. He's sticking his nose in Hoboken's business, and into a lawsuit."

"He can attempt to pull the purse strings, but he better step down to the local level and run for office if he's going to get involved in political re-organization," Ranieri said.

Ranieri also said if the Council chose to accept the authority's offer, it should not be forced to use the \$3 million for tax purposes. He felt the money should be used for capital expenditures, such as upgrading street sewage lines.

Ranieri said he believed both the governor's office and the authority might have pressured Skokowski into making the recommendations, to get the waterfront development project moving, and to "prop up" Vezzetti's administration because Vezzetti had campaigned for Gov. Thomas H. Kean.

"The Governor's Office is interested in the waterfront development project as its own personal jewel in its crown. I can see the links between the Governor's Office, the authority and Barry Skokowski. If I were in the Assembly I would whip Skokowski in front of my committee, and chastise him."



Hoboken's director of public works, Roy Haack, holds one of the old maps of the city and its suburbs found yesterday in a City Hall vault.

Hoboken City Hall vault yields treasure in maps

By Jim DeRogatis

In the Hoboken of 1851, Park Avenue was called Meadow Street, Observer Highway was known as the Hoboken Turnpike and the newly installed wooden sewers only ran beneath about half of the city streets, according to several antiquated maps unearthed in City Hall yesterday.

Public Works Director Roy Haack found eight maps dating back to the mid-1800s while rummaging through an old vault in the basement of City Hall. Each of the maps is hand-painted on canvas and between four and five feet wide, and local historians considered the find a boon.

Several of the maps depict Hoboken shortly after it was founded in 1849. A number are technical maps with diagrams for drainage of the "Hoboken Creek" or the installation of wooden sewers. There is also an 1860 map of Hudson County, a street map of New York City dated 1850 and a topographical map of the United States circa 1856. The maps were rolled up around wooden posts, and most are in good condition.

Hand-painted on canvas and intricately decorated and detailed, the map of the U.S. is about five feet wide and eight feet long. It predates the Civil War and still designates many of the states in the west and southwest as "Indian Territories."

One of the maps of the city is labeled "Hoboken and Suburbs," apparently referring to West Hoboken, which would eventually become Union City. Dated 1851, the map was commissioned by Edwin Stevens, founder of

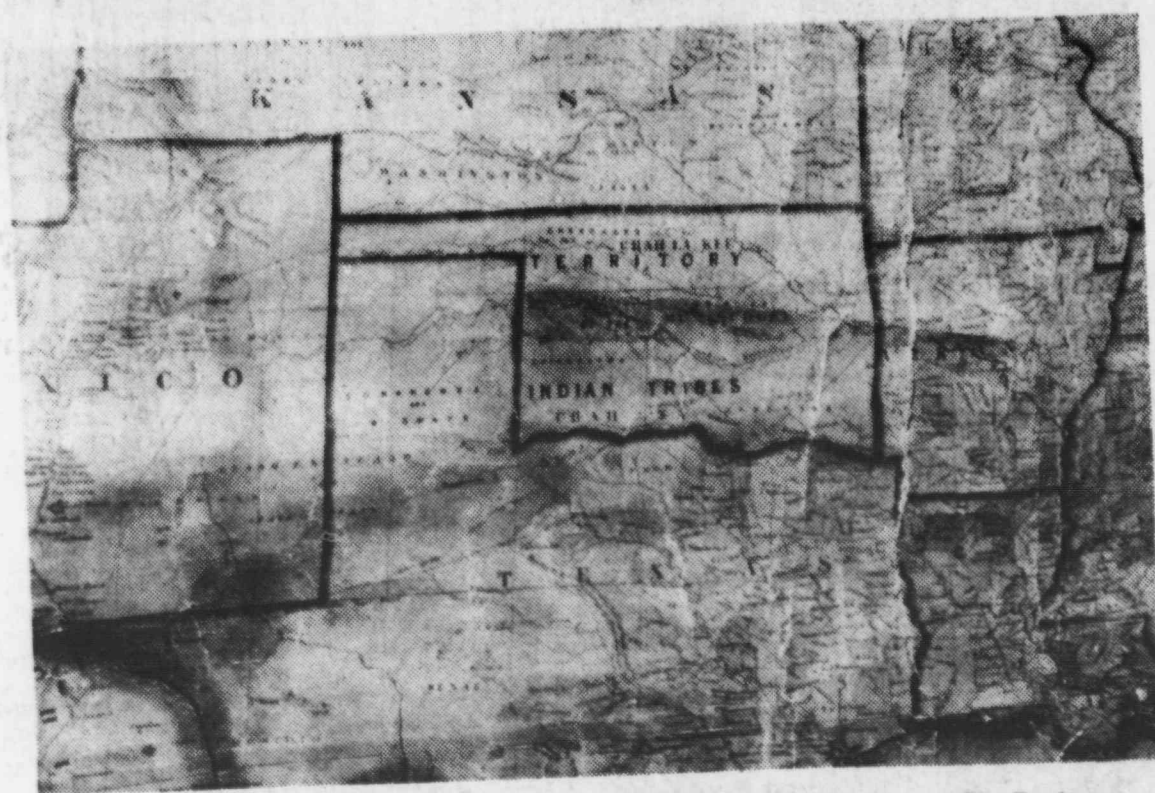


Closeup of the giant map of the United States clearly shows its proud proclamation 'Our Country' and its 1856 date.

Stevens Institute of Technology, who died in 1868.

Edwin was the son of Col. John Stevens, the famous steamship engineer and founder of Hoboken. The colonel designed Hoboken's orderly street grid pattern, virtually the same on the 1851 map as it is today.

Haack said the vault where the maps were stored "holds about a century's worth of junk" and members of the Public Works Department had been preparing to clean it out to provide storage space. Along with the maps, Haack discovered several dozen volumes of handwritten records from the turn of the 19th century.



In this 1856 map found in City Hall, Oklahoma was merely designated as Indian Territory.

EMERGENCY MEETING

Hoboken school board adopts \$24.5M budget

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Faced with the threat of a subpoena by the State Department of Education, the Board of Education here has passed its budget.

Last night, in a hurried meeting ordered by Louis C. Accolla, Hudson County superintendent of schools, the board voted 52 to adopt a \$24.5 million package. That

package would require taxpayers to kick in \$12.5 million more than last year.

Critics both on and off the board sharply condemned the budget as too costly.

"They are in the final throes of raping the city of Hoboken," Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti said.

"This is the last hold-on from the corrupt Cappiello machine," See BUDGET, Page 8

BUDGET

Continued from Page 1
Vezzetti said, referring to his predecessor, Steve Cappiello, currently on the City Council.

Incumbent board President Richard England, Selma Lugo, Eugene Drayton, James Monaco and retiring members James Monaco and Anthony DeBari voted in favor of the budget. England, Drayton, Farina, Monaco and DeBari all were initially appointed by Cappiello.

"They approved the same budget that has been approved for years, yet nothing has been delivered. It's a business for them, not an educational system," said Lourdes Arroyo, one of two dissenting board members. Trustee Joseph Rafter cast the other "no" vote. Raul Morales did not attend, he said, because he had to car-pool his children, and could not change his plans on short notice.

"I would never bring my children there," Morales said. "Besides, they don't need me, they need the 'yes' votes."

The board had tried unsuccessfully to muster a majority for the budget Tuesday night and last week. The vote Tuesday was 43, one short of a clear majority, with budget supporters DiBari and Monaco absent. Asked at yesterday's meeting where they had been the night before, both said they had been ill.

"They thought they had it (a majority) without them," said Rafter, referring to his opponents.

"They don't give a damn." After learning of the failed attempt Tuesday night, Accolla yesterday morning ordered the board to hold an emergency meeting immediately, and try again. He told the board that if they did not meet and either pass the budget or a reduced version of it, he would recommend the state Department of Education issue a subpoena to show cause.

"Their primary responsibility is to address the concerns and costs of educating children," Accolla said.

Asked why he had not proposed specific cuts in the budget before voting against it, Rafter said it was the superintendent's responsibility to recommend cuts since they knew the schools closely.

Arroyo and Morales said they felt "backed up against a wall" by the majority on the board, and that it was impossible to make meaningful, appropriate cuts in a short period of time.

Accolla said the board had "plenty of time" to consider cuts and take votes after he approved the budget and returned it to them the first week of February. The deadline was March 18.

Bernard Steinfeld, director of Finance and Management Services in the state Department of Education, said the commissioner could set Hoboken's tax levy himself if the board did not successfully come up with a dollar figure for the April 7 ballot.

The budget passed by the board yesterday still can be voted down in the April election, in which case the council would make recommendations for cuts.

City budget likely to anticipate \$3M

By Bill Campbell

Hoboken Mayor Thomas Vezzetti plans to anticipate funds from a controversial \$3 million insurance settlement in his proposed 1987 municipal budget.

Vezzetti, acting on the advice of state Local Government Services Director Barry Skokowski, said the funds will be anticipated in the spending plan due to be released tomorrow.

"Our goal is to keep expenses down and try to give the taxpayers a break," he said. "Skokowski said we could use the revenue in our budget and so we will."

Skokowski last Monday gave the city the green light to anticipate a portion of a proposed \$9.5 million insurance settlement with the Port Authority in the 1987 spending plan. The city could dedicate \$3 million of the claim toward stabilizing the municipal tax rate, he said.

The city is due to receive \$3 million in "upfront" money from the P.A. stemming from a lawsuit over insurance money after a 1980 fire destroyed Pier B. The remaining funds are earmarked for capital improvement projects.

Skokowski's statements have angered several City Council members who believe the city is being pressured into the settlement. At least one

member has said the state recommendation is a violation of home rule.

However, the Vezzetti administration believes that anticipating the \$3 million is "critical" to stabilizing the tax rate, city Business Administrator Edwin Chius said.

"The basic argument isn't whether the city will receive the money, but whether the funds should be held in a capital account or used for tax relief. The mayor simply feels that the taxpayers need a break," Chius said.

Chius and mayoral aide Laurie Fabiano met in Trenton last Thursday with Richard Turner of Local Government Services. Turner reaffirmed Skokowski's position that the state would allow the city to anticipate the funds in the 1987 budget, Fabiano said.

"They feel we've hammered out an agreement with the P.A. and all that's left is to ratify amendments and iron out the legal language," Fabiano said. "It's not that Local Government Services is pro-P.A., but the question is what to do with the money."

The P.A. has yet to respond to amendments to the settlement proposed by the council earlier this month.

Administration officials worked around the clock over the weekend to finalize the 1987 spending plan, which they

See CITY BUDGET — Page 4.

City budget likely to anticipate \$3M

Continued from Page 1
project will keep the tax rate at about \$216 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. The 1986 municipal budget was \$28 million, but city officials have declined to speculate on how much the 1987 plan will be.

Budget projections include the anticipation of at least \$700,000 in Distressed Cities Aid, the reduction of \$2.6 million in the school budget and no increase in the Hudson County tax levy.

Hoboken requested \$2.3 million in Distressed Cities Aid this year but will likely

receive \$700,000 to \$1.1 million, Chius said. He also anticipates that voters will reject the school budget at the polls April 7, sending the measure to the council for final cuts.

The council, most of whom are up for reelection in May, is expected to cut at least \$2 million from the school budget.

"Use of the \$3 million is critical because it can serve as a bridge for next year," Chius said. The plan includes settling bankruptcy proceedings at the Hoboken Shipyards and "moving" large real estate projects to generate ratables, he said.

Hoboken wants more time to mull highrise

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Fire Capt. John Cassessa's application for a 19-story highrise at 500 Observer Highway could be thrown out if he does not agree to give the Board of Adjustment an extension to consider it.

Right now, if the application is not discussed by the zoning board or the Planning Board and acted upon within 60 days, it automatically would be approved, and the 102-unit luxury housing project could begin to go up on Observer Highway near Jefferson Street.

Cassessa's attorney, Leonard Francone, had refused to accept an extension at a zoning board meeting last week. That board then threw the application into the Planning Board's court because the application contains a request for a variance the Planning Board recently eliminated.

But the Planning Board last night

told two zoning board members to take the case back again, and to "play hardball" with the developer.

"If they say 'no' to an extension, then you can say 'Application denied,'" Planning Board member James Starrett explained. "They would then have to reapply to us or to you from scratch, with not just a new application, but a whole new concept, new site plan — a new project."

Starrett said the zoning board could deny the application immediately and without prejudice because the zoning ordinances have changed, and the application does not meet the new zoning laws.

"You have that power," Starrett said.

"That's awfully nice to know," responded David Gallagher, a new zoning board member.

"You have to be willing to follow through, though," Planning Board Chairman Michael Ocello said.

"You have to be ready to go to court if necessary, and tell them you're ready to do that."

Planning Board Attorney George Pappas said court decisions have upheld a city's right to have an application meet current zoning laws, even if the application had met other zoning laws when it was submitted originally.

Cassessa's application as developer originally was heard in January 1986 and included a request for a variance from floor-area ratio requirements. That variance was eliminated last month by the Planning Board, whose members said it was being used as a loophole by developers to get around including enough parking spaces in their plans.

Gallagher and another zoning board member, Mary Perry, said there were about 10 other development applications pending before the board, which included a floor-area ratio variance request.

Many resent push to settle lawsuit

By Bill Campbell

Several members of the Hoboken City Council last night said the city is "being pressured" into settling a multi-million lawsuit between the municipality and the Port Authority.

The remarks at last night's council caucus session stem from a state report from the division of Local Government Services released Monday that links a proposed municipal fiscal recovery plan to a settlement between the city and the P.A.

"I read this as a straightforward threat for us to settle," said City Councilman Robert Ranieri. "This is a violation of home rule and a heavy handed attempt to manipulate us."

"This doesn't help our negotiating position at all," said City Council President E. Norman Wilson.

"We're engaged in hard-nosed negotiations and they are putting leverage on us, trying to pressure us into a settlement."

The report, authored by Barry Skokowski, director of the division of Local Government Services, stressed that the settlement "directly bears" on the state's ability to assist the city with additional Distressed Cities Aid.

"If you do not make a reasonable attempt to realize the benefits of a settlement like this Local Government Services will not be able to assist you in receiving additional state aid to fill your budget gap," the report said.

Hoboken received \$700,000 from the Distressed Cities Program last year and the city hopes to be granted at least that much this year to offset the loss of federal aid and other state aid.

The state stipulated that the Hoboken, which currently has the highest tax rate in the state, adopt a fiscal recovery plan in return for the 1986 aid.

Administration officials, who plan to unveil the 1987 spending plan on Tuesday, fear a repeat of last year's fiscal crisis.

Hoboken has been attempting to hammer out a settlement

to a law suit with the P.A. over insurance proceeds resulting from a 1980 fire on Pier B.

Under the plan, the city may net \$3 million in "upfront" money plus an additional \$6.5 million in capital improvement funds.

"Here is the director of Local Government Services rendering an opinion on a very complex legal issue," said City Councilman Pat Pasculli. "This whole thing kind of thing really makes me suspect."

He said the city has yet to receive a thorough auditing of the funds or other demands from the P.A.

"I don't believe (Skokowski's) letter literally means that if we don't accept the P.A.'s offer that he will cut all our state aid off," said city Business Administrator Edwin Chius. "I think he simply wants us to make a good faith attempt to settle so possibly we could allocate those funds for tax relief."

However, not all council members were as optimistic as Chius.

Ranieri, a vocal critic of Mayor Thomas Vezzetti and his administration, theorized that mayoral aide Laurie Fabiano used Chius as "an excuse" to engineer a March 5 meeting with Skokowski.

He said that Fabiano informed Skokowski of the settlement during a meeting on Distressed Cities Aid for 1987 and that she encouraged him to advocate the settlement in his report.

"If that's the scenario, it backfired," Chius said. "This (report) puts the mayor on the spot because now he'll have to issue a budget message stating his recommendations on a settlement."

Independent wins a debate

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—While President Richard England of the Board of Education and candidate Steve Block of the Committee for Quality Education engaged in verbal jousting during a 6th Ward debate last night, independent candidate Felix Rivera may have walked away a surprise winner, at least for the evening.

"I never heard the man before, but I really liked him," Bernard Kammer said. "He knows what he's talking about."

"I don't know if it has as much impact to vote for one man as for a team, but I really liked Rivera," Rebecca Nichols said.

Both Kammer, who has lived in this city for 50 years and put three children through the local public schools, and Nichols, who has lived here for three years and is expecting a child, said their children deserved more than had been available in those schools in the past, and that they thus plan to vote in the April 7 Board of Education election.

They were among more than 50 people who showed up for the debate last night, sponsored by the 6th Ward Block Association and held at the Martha Institute at Sixth Street and Park Avenue.

Rivera, a Port Authority of New York and New Jersey policeman who is running for office for the first time, also elicited some criticism as

well. When he said he wants to congratulate the parochial school teachers of the city for doing a fine job, someone booed loudly.

But in general, Rivera's views seemed to capture the audience's attention. He was the only candidate to answer a question directly about whether a school should be closed, saying it has to be done to cut the high budget.

He also pulled the rug out from under the other candidates, who had all spoken about how sensitive an issue a school closing is, by asking anyone in the audience who was against the closing of a school to raise his hand. No hand was raised. The lack of response may have had something to do with timidity, confusion or apathy, as only six people raised their hands when Rivera asked who was in favor of closing one.

Both England and his running mate, Geraldine Pantoliano, said restoring pride in the schools is a key, and said children have heard too much negative criticism. Block and his CQE running mates, Michael Rossano and Carlos Perez, continued to hammer away at the existing board's record. They said more than \$6,500 is now being spent per pupil every year, with some of the lowest reading scores in the state.

In another development, William Strangeman announced he has filed a petition to withdraw from the board race.

18 are seeking six council seats

J.J. 3-20-87

By Bill Campbell

Eighteen candidates, including five incumbents, have filed petitions to seek six ward seats in Hoboken's May 12 City Council election.

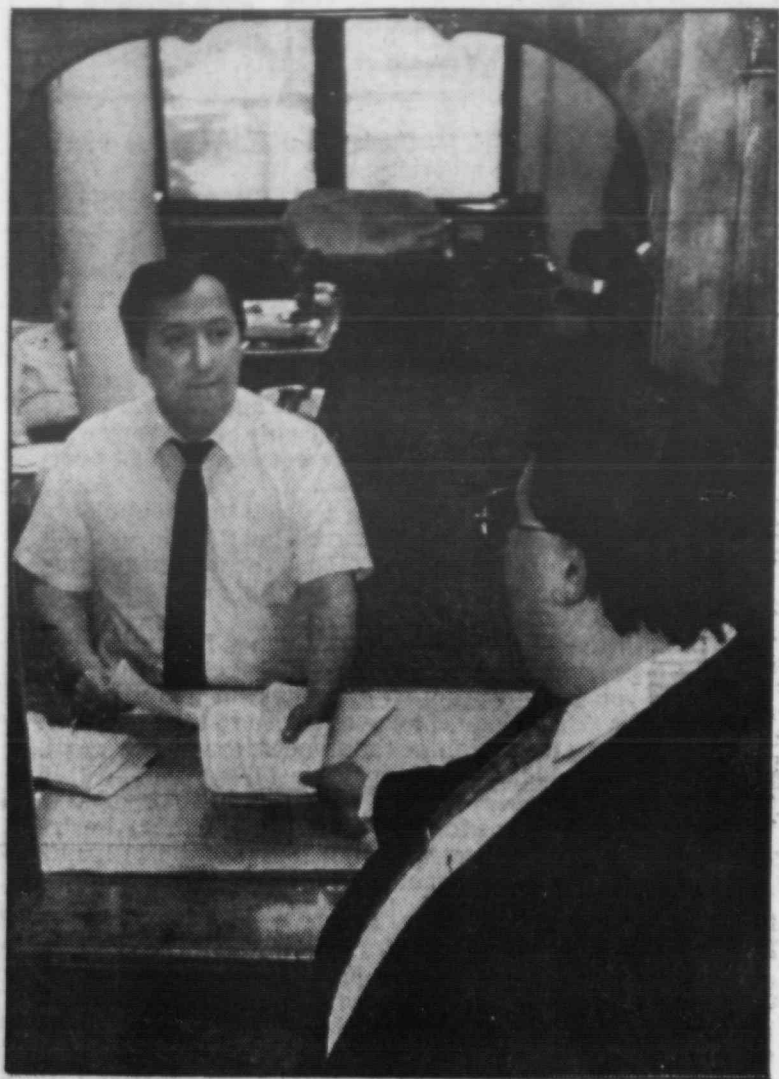
A slow stream of hopefuls trickled into the City Clerk's office throughout the day to beat yesterday's 4 p.m. filing deadline. Nine people, including incumbents Thomas Newman, Joseph Della Fave, Steve Cappiello and E. Norman Wilson, held to tradition and filed on the last day.

Hoboken political observers had predicted that as many

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as 30 candidates would vie for the seats. Instead, voters in the First, Second and Sixth wards will choose from only two candidates, while voters in the Fifth, Third and Fourth wards will select from three, four and five candidates, respectively.

The anticipated line-up of candidates rushing to file petitions before the deadline didn't materialize, and the only controversy of the day occurred when Della Fave, the Second Ward councilman, and Francis "Pupie" Raia, a Third Ward candidate, refused to have their pictures taken for a newspaper with First Ward



Hoboken City Clerk James Farina, left, accepts petitions from candidate Joseph Lisa.

challenger Joseph Lisa. Della Fave and Raia are supported by Mayor Thomas Vezetti, while Lisa has been openly critical of the administration.

Pending verification of nominating petitions, the matchups are:

- First Ward: Newman and Lisa.
- Second: Della Fave and Michael Schaffer.
- Third: Cappiello, Raia, Anthony Russo and Cesidio Del

See 18 HOPEFULS — Page 10.

18 hopefuls seek six council seats

Continued from Page 1

Bocci.

• Fourth: Orlando Addeo, Flo Amato, Edwin Duroy, Frank Mussara and Frank Gullo.

• Fifth: Wilson, Helen Manogue and Leonard Luizzi.

• Sixth: David Roberts and Aldo DePinto.

While each candidate is expected to run independently, Della Fave, Newman, Roberts, Raia and Manogue are likely to be endorsed by Vezetti. Della Fave said some members of the coalition may, in turn, support each other.

Observers point to the three head-to-head races, which include two rematches, as a test of Vezetti's popularity.

Each of the challengers is either active in the movement to recall the mayor or harshly critical of Vezetti's performance.

In the First Ward, Newman, who won a special election last November to fill the vacancy created when Anthony Romano resigned, was the first

candidate to file petitions yesterday at 11:25 a.m. His challenger, Lisa, was the last candidate to file at 3:35 p.m.

Newman, who was endorsed by Vezetti, beat Lisa by nearly 100 votes in the five-candidate race last November. A 47-year-old cabinet-maker and former member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, Newman said he will stress development, affordable housing and the municipal budget as prime issues.

"The issues are the same as before," he said. "Most importantly, we need to monitor development and continue to measure the growth of the city." Newman has sponsored legislation to amend the city's zoning code and to increase parking in the ward.

Lisa, an accountant, said he believes he will be successful in a head-to-head match with Newman. "I'm going to go all out in the election. Mr. Newman has not concerned himself with a single issue and as a result we'll have a tax rate of \$260 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation."

He called Newman a member of the "new political machine" and said he should "concentrate less on political alliances and more on reducing the tax rate."

In the Second Ward, Della Fave said he is proud of his reputation as "a leader who keeps issues on the table, not politics."

Della Fave, 35, defeated Schaffer in a four-man race in November 1985. A teacher at St. Peter's Prep in Jersey City, he is the sponsor of the city's anti-warehousing ordinance and a member of the Planning Board.

"I feel my biggest accomplishments are providing leadership in budgetary and business matters," he said. "Through competitive bidding, I promoted legislation which led to our current garbage contract which is saving the city hundreds of thousands of dollars."

In the Sixth Ward, Roberts, the incumbent, is being challenged by DePinto, who is strongly associated with the recall effort. DePinto is a lifelong ward resident who owns a contracting firm.

Other candidates who filed yesterday are:

• Cappiello, 64, the former three-term mayor, who represented the Third Ward for 1963 to 1973 and won a special election to regain the seat in November 1985.

"I am running to add some expertise to help Hoboken," he said. "I am campaigning just on the issues and pledge to do what's best for the city."

• Russo, 40, a former Third

Ward candidate, is a special education teacher in the Hoboken school system and a member of the Hudson County Utilities Authority. "I feel very confident and believe that if people look just at the issues, they will vote for me," he said.

He said he supports "proper development," cleaner streets and finding an agreement to develop the waterfront that "benefits everyone."

"I've been involved in the community for more than 11 years and I feel the people will give me a vote of confidence," he said.

• Wilson, who has served as City Council president since July 1985, is running under the banner "Experience You Can Trust." A two-term councilman, he is executive director of Hoboken Organization against Poverty and Economic Stress.

He sponsored the ordinance to create residential permit parking and launched a probe into the Hoboken Cemetery which has resulted in a state investigation.

• Manogue, 55, is making her second bid for a council seat. In the 1985 at-large election, Manogue, running independently, placed fifth.

She is a vice president of City Federal Savings Bank in Piscataway, leader of the Hoboken Environment Committee and former chair of the Mayor's Waterfront Advisory Committee.

She says Wilson has "not been active enough for people in the ward."

• Del Boccio is a lifelong resident of the Third Ward who is employed as a longshoreman.

The state sent the county board the contract March 5. Ordinarily, the county board has 14 days to object to the contract's provisions. But because Hoboken must notify the state about updating its tax maps, the county board can still raise objections about the contract.

Under the terms of the contract, Real Property Appraisers must complete all the revaluation work, besides property-owner interviews, by Oct. 1, Kosakowski said.

The company must provide a monthly progress report to the county board, and no more than 90 percent of the contract price will be paid until the revaluation is finished, he said.

Also, Real Property Appraisers is to defend its assessments in county board actions for the 1988 and 1989 tax years. To defend assessments beyond the county level, the company will charge Hoboken \$50 an hour.

The company will have to study 5,345 property line items in Hoboken. Last year, there were 4,765 lines items.

That increase, Kosakowski said, "is because of condominium conversions. And more are coming."

Hoboken last underwent revaluation in 1970. The city in 1981 hired Landmark Associates of Perth Amboy to assess 4,257 line items for \$181,500.

But the City Council refused to pay the fee.

After the failed Landmark effort, the state Legislature in February, 1984, postponed the deadline one year.

CRITICAL CHOICES

Nine offering solutions for school woes

J.J. 3-23-87

First of a series

By Jim DeRogatis

The April 7 election for three seats on the Board of Education comes at a critical time for the Hoboken school system.

Enrollment has declined over the last five years while the budget has increased, contributing to the highest tax rate in the state. Meanwhile, critics insist that educators, administrators and board members are obsessed with politics to the detriment of students, who continue to score among the lowest in the state on standardized basic skills tests.

Compounding problems, the system has lost its certification and is under Level 3 monitoring by the New Jersey Board of Education. The process could result in a state takeover unless the Hoboken schools improve dramatically.

Despite difficulties, each of the nine candidates vying for three three-year board terms is optimistic he can meet the challenge of improving public education while cutting costs.

The field includes three independent candidates and two full slates. The pro-administration Committee for Quality Education slate is expected to be a strong favorite, followed closely by a slate backed by several anti-administration groups.

The candidates are competing for seats held by trustees Richard England, James Monaco and Anthony DeBari. DeBari is retiring from the board and Monaco dropped out of the race several days after ballot positions were drawn. England is seeking re-election on the anti-administration slate.

Peter Perry Belfiore hopes to drop out of the race but must first receive a court order because he made his decision past state deadline. The remaining candidates are:

• Steve Block, 44, a critic of the Hoboken Board of Education for more than eight years, a founding member of CQE. He is running on the group's slate along with Michael Rossano and Carlos Perez.

Appointed to the board in 1979 by then-Mayor Steve Cappiello, Block prides himself on being "the lone reformer on the board for six long years." He said he resigned in 1985 because he believed Cappiello would not reappoint him.

A former public school teacher, Block serves as an urban specialist in school improvement with the state Department of Education. He has also worked as a housing consultant for the city, preparing an "affordable housing" plan for Mayor Thomas Vezetti. Block continues to serve as a key political advisor to the mayor.

The father of a 10-year-old boy, he said he hopes to bring his knowledge of educational methods to Hoboken.

"Across the country there are success stories about schools which teach low-income and minority children as well as the children of the more privileged," he said. "What has been lacking here is the political determination to insist that what is known about education be applied in Hoboken."

• Richard England, 44, seeking re-election on a slate with Geraldine Pantoliano and Mario Mercado Jr. The slate has received the backing of the Citizens Organization for Good Government and the Hoboken Young Democrats, among other anti-administration political groups.

Elected along with trustee Eugene Drayton last January on an anti-administration slate, England replaced John Pope as board president in

April. England served on the board after he was elected in 1978, but he lost his seat a year and a half later when the board was changed to an appointed one and its size was reduced.

A manager with the Maxwell House division of General Foods, England also serves as a member of the Parking Authority. He and his wife, Dolores, a teacher in the Hoboken system, have four children.

England believes his record as a board member is strong enough to warrant re-election. "Students' test scores are up, costs are down, and we're working hard to improve things, despite what my opponents say," he said.

"The most crucial goal the board faces today is to determine educational problems in the city and find solutions. I think we have accomplished some of these things and as long as we can bury the political hatchet, we can accomplish more."

• Orlando Esposito, 22, an independent. It is his first attempt to seek public office.

A trust administrator with Bankers Trust at the Harbor-side office in Jersey City, Esposito also helps his parents at their delicatessen near Washington and 13th streets. A graduate of parochial grammar and high schools, he said he is running for the board because he is concerned about the quality of education in the public schools and the cost to taxpayers.

Esposito has no children of his own yet but hopes "the school system will improve enough in the next few years so that I will be able to send my kids to public school. I believe that improving the education should be our number one priority, and we should accept any advice that we help us be able to do that," he said.

• Mario Mercado Jr., 43, running on the anti-administration slate, although he originally sought a spot with CQE. A longtime supporter of Cappiello, he was narrowly defeated in his independent bid for a seat on the board last April.

A Hoboken police lieutenant, Mercado serves as the superintendent of the municipal garage. He and his wife, Lucille, have an 11-year-old daughter.

Mercado said he was originally prompted to run for the board because of his concern for the plight of Hispanic children in the school system. "I am running again because I still have a strong commitment to improving the schools," he said.

If elected, he said he would "take a long, hard look at paring down the system and making it economically feasible," in addition to working to institute a "more professional and caring" approach toward educating the students.

• Geraldine Pantoliano, running with Mercado and England on the anti-administration slate in her first attempt for public office. She is the first cousin of trustee and City Clerk

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James Farina and the second cousin of Vezetti, whom she politically opposes.

Pantoliano and her husband, Pat, the head custodian at the Calabro School, have three children, including a 12-year-old son in Calabro. She is the only candidate with a child in the system.

A secretary with the Hoboken Organization against Poverty and Economic Stress, Pantoliano is a graduate of the Hoboken schools and believes "one of the major problems with the system today is that students no longer have a sense of pride in their schools. I'd like to try to get some of that back."

• Carlos Perez, 42, running on the CQE slate. He was one of nine people Vezetti intended to appoint to the board in 1985 before voters approved a referendum switching to an elected board. This is his first attempt to win an elected office.

The director of the educational opportunities program at William Paterson, Perez holds a doctorate in education and has held teaching and counseling positions at Hudson County College, Kean College, Trenton State and the City University of New York. He is the father of a 16-year-old boy.

"Committed and creative leadership in our schools, hand in hand with effective, caring teachers and involved parents are the keys to our future success," Perez said. "Our human and financial resources must be reorganized to provide effective public schools with full public accountability."

• Felix Rivera, 39, an independent candidate.

A Port Authority police officer, Rivera is the father of three children. He is campaigning under the slogan, "Excellence in Education at a Reasonable Cost" and has stressed his intentions to work to reduce the school board budget.

sonable Cost" and has stressed his intentions to work to reduce the school board budget.

Rivera said he would declare a "state of emergency" in the schools if elected and would work to avoid a state takeover. He also said he would introduce the concept of "phasing in a school uniform" for public school students.

• Michael Rossano, 26, a CQE candidate for the second time. He ran with successful candidates Joseph Raifer and Lourdes Arroyo last April and was narrowly defeated by James Farina.

A foreign securities coordinator with a Wall Street firm, Rossano hopes to bring his business experience and a "common sense approach" to the board. He is the father of twin 5-year-old girls.

"I am a candidate for two reasons," Rossano said. "I have two daughters who deserve a decent education, which at this point cannot be provided by the present public school system."

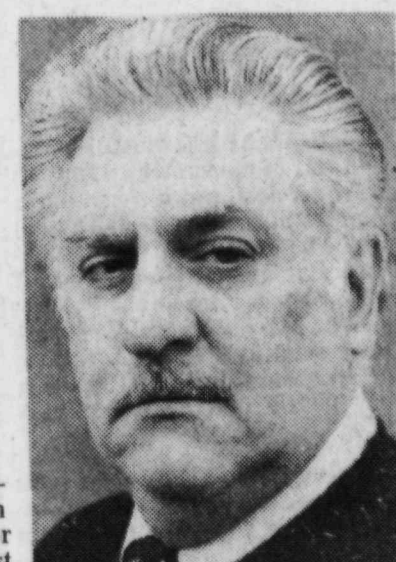
"And I am committed to a dynamic change in our school system, known more for low test scores, political patronage and over-expenditures than hope for the future."

• William Strangeman, 56, an independent, although he is politically active in several anti-administration groups. This is his first attempt to win public office.

A former fleet manager with the Seatrain shipping line, Strangeman is the father of three grown children. He said he would bring his experience as a businessman and parent to the board.

He said he is in favor of consolidating the school system, closing a school and upgrading the quality of education. "There has to be some positive steps taken or the state is going to be running our system," he said.

The Hoboken Calendar, which regularly runs on this page on Mondays, will appear tomorrow because of today's election coverage.



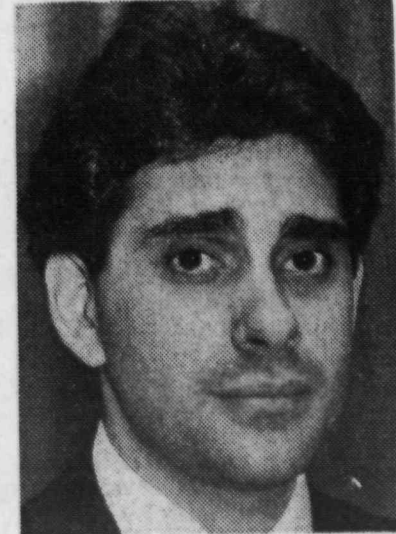
William Strangeman

Closes a school



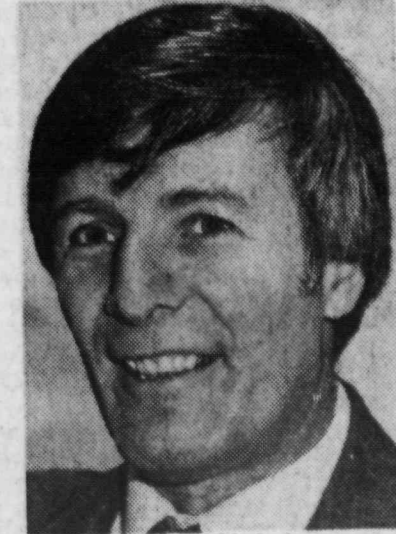
Felix Rivera

Trim school budget



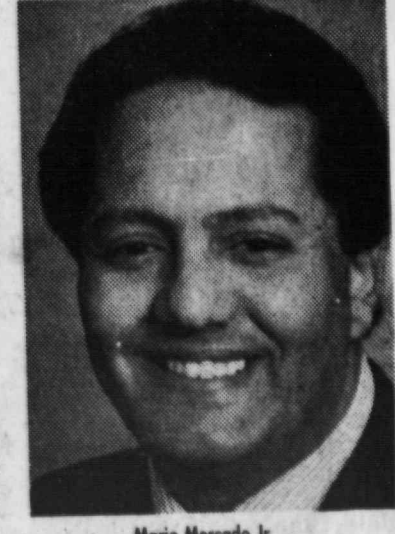
Michael Rossano

Second try



Richard England

Incumbent



Mario Mercado Jr.

Sees Hispanics' plight



Geraldine Pantoliano

Students need pride



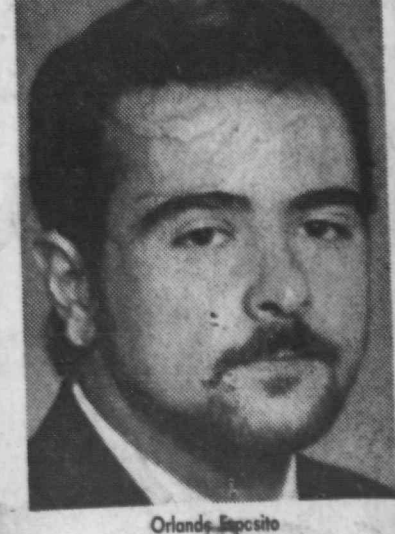
Carlos Perez

College official



Steve Block

Determination



Orlando Esposito

Education a priority

Way clear for Hoboken revaluation

By Anthony Baldo

Once Hoboken notifies the state that its tax maps have been updated, the contract between the city and the company undertaking its revaluation will be approved.

Stanley Kosakowski, county tax administrator, said that once Hoboken takes that step, John Baldwin, the director of the state Division of Taxation, will likely approve the revaluation contract because the Hudson County Board of Taxation has no objections.

Hoboken, which was ordered by the county board in 1981 to reevaluate, has entered into a contract with Real Property Appraisers, the firm now doing revaluation work for Jersey City. Under the terms of the

contract, Hoboken will pay Real Property Appraisers \$460,000.

Real Property Appraisers has set up an office in Hoboken and is already in the process of photographing all the properties in the city. The contract, if approved, calls for the company to begin field work April 1 to evaluate the true worth of properties.

"We have no objections at all to the contract," Kosakowski said. "We've been fighting with this mayor and council for years over the revaluation. We're just happy and overjoyed that the inequalities between and among all classes of properties will be equalized and that everyone will be paying their fair share of school and municipal taxes."

The state sent the county board the contract March 5. Ordinarily, the county board has 14 days to object to the contract's provisions. But because Hoboken must notify the state about updating its tax maps, the county board can still raise objections about the contract.

Under the terms of the contract, Real Property Appraisers must complete all the revaluation work, besides property-owner interviews, by Oct. 1, Kosakowski said.

The company must provide a monthly progress report to the county board, and no more than 90 percent of the contract price will be paid until the revaluation is finished, he said.

Also, Real Property Appraisers is to defend its assessments in county board actions

HOBOKEN

Council banners go up in smoke

By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The City Council campaign caught fire yesterday, dangerously.

Three pieces of bright red, white and blue bunting were reduced to a handful of ash, and the right side of a brand-new "Dave Roberts" campaign sign was scorched and tattered yesterday morning, after someone apparently set fire to them shortly after midnight Monday.

The suspicious blaze was set outside the 6th Ward councilman's headquarters at 157 Sixth St., right next to a wooden-frame house in which four families live.

"This is beyond a prank," Deputy Fire Chief Richard Tremietti said. "This is not like putting your poster over somebody else's. This is dangerous, and it's illegal too."

"I was in shock," Roberts said. "I had just dozed off to sleep, when I got a call from a woman across the street saying 'David, David, your sign is burning.'" Roberts said he raced four arriving fire trucks to the scene, from his home less than three blocks away.

'This is politics, deeper than we've ever had it. You don't go that deep'

Roberts refused to speculate on who might have set the fire. He said he had received a call yesterday morning from Aldo DePinto, his opponent in the council race, offering his condolences and reassuring him that he will tell all of his supporters that such actions would not be tolerated.

But the owner of the building, Josephine Pasculli, who is the mother of Roberts' campaign manager and co-councilman Patrick Pasculli, said she felt differently.

"This is politics, deeper than we've ever had it," she said. "You don't go that deep."

Josephine Pasculli said she has lived on the block for 37 years. She added that she owned the building being used as headquarters for 18 years, and never had a problem.

"Now someone can just take a match, throw it in your front door—poof," she said. "It's just awful."

Tremietti said the fire could have been set with a cigarette lighter or burning cigarette, by youngsters or by someone else. The bunting had been hung low off the bottom of the sign, within reach of an raised hand.

As of 2 p.m. yesterday, the bunting had been replaced, set much higher on the building front. Sign painter Ray Guzman neatly patched and repainted the bright blue "RTS" in Roberts' name and the smaller print at the bottom. Guzman said the fire had done several hundred dollars worth of damage.

Hoboken may vote on developer

Dispatch 3-24-87
By JANET WILSON
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Voters may have a chance to state whether they would like the Port Authority to develop some of the city's prime waterfront acreage.

Councilman Robert A. Ranieri has placed an item on this week's City Council caucus agenda to discuss whether a non-binding referendum on the question should be on the May 12 election ballot.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey has leased the property through 2002, and has proposed a \$600 million commercial-residential and transportation-hub development project on Piers A, B and C, for which it lent the city money to buy from the federal government in 1984.

Ranieri, who favors the project, said he would abide by the outcome of the referendum if voters do not favor working with the authority.

Negotiations with the city concerning the project have been halted, pending the outcome of litigation by the city and a citizens group against the authority for about \$7 million worth of insurance money from a 1980 fire on Pier B.

The authority has made a settlement offer in that case of up to \$10 million, cancellation of the loans, payment of cleanup costs at the burned pier and funds for sewerage projects.

The council has accepted most of the tenets, but has added a clause asking the authority to cancel its

See VOTE, Page 12

Hoboken may buy up condos by the dozens

By Bill Campbell

J.J. 3-24-87

Hoboken may purchase dozens of condominium units as part of a limited equity program to provide affordable housing for moderate- and middle-income families.

A plan drafted by City Council members will be presented at tomorrow's City Council caucus and is the latest volley in continuing pre-election debate on affordable housing. It has support from the five-member "fragile coalition," which holds a majority on the governing body.

The eight-point plan is aimed at creating "affordable" housing units in privately developed condominium projects for moderate- and middle-income families who now reside in subsidized Housing Authority and Applied Housing units.

For affordable housing units

The move would open up the subsidized units for low-income residents who otherwise could not afford to live in Hoboken.

Councilman Dave Roberts, an author of the plan, called the program "the first of its kind, something that could be made a national pilot program."

Mayor Thomas Vezetti, whose administration is formulating an affordable housing program, said he "fully supports" the initiative. The plan is a response to reduced federal housing subsidies and the city's need to "provide opportunities for moderate- and lower-income families who can no longer afford the high cost of living in Hoboken," according to the three-page document.

The program was drafted last weekend by council members Roberts, Thomas Newman, Joseph Della Fave, Pat Pasculli and Helen Cunningham and issued to the public yesterday. Roberts, Newman and Della Fave are seeking reelection in the May 12 municipal race for ward seats.

The authors urged the city to explore the "immediate purchase" of condominium units now on the market.

The present oversupply of such units could be advantageous to us, and a city initiative could help solve some problems in the development community," the plan said. "Developers may be encouraged to build more family-sized apartments in their projects if the city had an active program for family housing."

The city may become a bulk buyer of condominiums, purchasing as many as 20 or more units at a time, Roberts said.

"Instead of the city constructing a costly and time-consuming 30-unit project, we could buy existing units immediately," he said.

Pasculli called the concept "realistic," given the steady reductions in federal housing subsidies in the Reagan Administration.

The plan states that a family should be given the opportunity to buy a limited share—25 to 33 percent—of the equity in the unit with a down payment of \$10,000 to \$20,000. In time, if the owner wants to sell the unit, a non-profit housing corporation would allow equity and appreciation to be returned providing property values increased.

The corporation would then make a policy decision on how best to deploy the equity that remains in the unit to ensure that the subsidy money

See HOBOKEN — Page 11.

Hoboken may buy condo units

Continued from Page 1

remains as a public resource. Earlier this month, Councilman Robert Ranieri issued his own affordable housing plan which advocates the creation of an affordable housing corporation and the requirement of funds from real estate developers based on their projects' square footage.

The latest plan also calls for development "give-backs" as a major source of funding. The city is considering requiring developers to contribute \$6 to \$10 a square foot of new construction to the housing trust fund. The plan also recommends that the city seek funding from the public and private sector to "supplement" revenue generated internally.

The money would be funneled through the non-profit housing corporation which would be a majority owner of all property purchased.

The corporation would then make a policy decision on how best to deploy the equity that remains in the unit to ensure that the subsidy money

The corporation would then make a policy decision on how best to deploy the equity that remains in the unit to ensure that the subsidy money

Ranieri wants referendum on P.A. as developer

By Jim DeRogatis

J.J. 3-24-87

Hoboken residents may get a chance to vote on whether the city should develop its waterfront with the Port Authority.

Councilman Robert Ranieri is to discuss a resolution at tomorrow's caucus to put a referendum on the Nov. 3 ballot asking residents to decide whether the city should continue negotiating with the P.A. on its proposed \$600 million Hudson Center development.

Under terms of a 1952 lease, the P.A. retains control of the city-owned piers until 2002 for the purposes of operating a marine terminal. The piers have been dormant several decades, however, and the city and the P.A. have been negotiating since 1984 to restate the lease to allow waterfront development.

The restated lease would allow the P.A. to construct a massive project including 1,200 luxury housing units, several office towers, a hotel, a marina and a waterfront esplanade between Newark and Fifth streets east of Hudson Street.

The project has become a source of controversy in recent months, dividing the council and administration. Several city officials and a growing number of residents oppose the P.A. as developer because they believe the city cannot control the powerful bi-state agency; others say the project could provide an attractive waterfront and millions of dollars in rates to ease the tax crisis.

Negotiations have been at a stalemate for several months as the city and P.A. attempt to work out a settlement to a lawsuit over \$9.6 million in insurance funds the authority collected after Pier B was destroyed by fire in 1980.

"Negotiations are in a state of paralysis and confusion," said Ranieri, who serves on the city negotiating team along with Council President E. Norman Wilson and Community Development Agency Director Michael Coleman. "We are stymied. The time has come for the people of Hoboken to speak out."

Ranieri, a strong supporter of developing with the P.A., said city negotiators "need direction from our city."

The referendum would ask, "Should the city of Hoboken continue to negotiate with the P.A. as the primary developer for the waterfront of Hoboken?"

"I still believe the city can reach an equitable agreement on the development with the P.A.," Ranieri said. "But I believe many residents have become convinced otherwise due to mixed signals from the administration" and criticism of the project from Mayor Thomas Vezetti's Waterfront Advisory Committee.

An arch opponent of the development while he was a

councilman, Vezetti changed his position shortly after he was elected mayor. He has continued to support Coleman in his efforts to negotiate with the P.A., and he lashed out at Ranieri's proposal yesterday.

"This is nothing but a show of politics," Vezetti said. "I was elected as mayor and we have been moving ahead in negotiations to get Hoboken the best deal possible." The mayor added he "sees no reason" for a public referendum.

Coleman said a call from a reporter was "the first I've heard" of Ranieri's resolution. He has frequently said that if the negotiating team reaches an agreement with the P.A., it

will be presented to the public in detail before the City Council votes on it.

A strong supporter of negotiating with the P.A., Coleman believes the P.A. is the only developer capable of providing Hoboken with large upfront payments during the initial years of development. He denies the city would be unable to

control the P.A. "My opinion is that if we're taking the question to the people, we should wait until we have negotiated everything short of final approval, including the scale of the project, the financial aspects and its effects on taxes and the infrastructure," Coleman said. "The question of whether or not the city should negotiate with the P.A. doesn't seem to be worthy of a referendum."

WAC Chairman Mayme Jurkat praised the referendum, however. "I can't speak for all of WAC because we haven't discussed it yet, but we did say six months ago that the whole issue of negotiating with the P.A. obviously affects everyone who lives in Hoboken and shouldn't be decided by a handful of people," she said.

"I think WAC would support the referendum, but people in the city should be told all the facts on the P.A." before the vote, Jurkat added.

A spokesman for the P.A.'s Economic Development Department said he was unaware of Ranieri's proposal yesterday and declined comment.

The council would have to approve the resolution by a majority vote in order for the question to appear on the ballot in November. Ranieri said he believes there is "strong support" on the council for the move. He hopes the council will vote on it next Wednesday.

FIVE YEARS IN THE MAKING

Here is a history of negotiations between Hoboken and the Port Authority over the proposed Hudson Center development:

• **January, 1982** — The city purchases the piers from the federal government for \$1.5 million, borrowing the money from the P.A. The P.A. plans "sister projects" on the waterfront in Hoboken and Hunter's Point, Queens.

• **December, 1984** — The P.A. presents the city with a proposal for a restated lease to the piers, the key document that will determine the amount of control and revenues for the city. Mayor Steve Cappelletto postpones action until after May elections.

• **June, 1985** — Cappelletto is defeated by Thomas Vezetti in a run-off. Vezetti halts all negotiations with the P.A.

• **January, 1986** — The Waterfront Advisory Committee, a group of 18 citizens appointed by the mayor, releases a report that strongly criticizes the first restated lease and the WAC will become increasing opposed to the authority.

• **September, 1986** — The city resumes negotiations with the P.A., rejecting the first

restated lease. The city team, led by Community Development Agency Director Michael Coleman, opts to negotiate on an "issue-by-issue" basis, concentrating first on city control over the development.

• **October, 1986** — Coleman presents the council with a preliminary agreement on controls.

• **November, 1986** — Hoboken halts negotiations with the P.A. in the midst of a controversy over \$9.6 million in insurance funds the authority collected after Pier B was destroyed by fire in 1980.

• **December, 1986** — The city joins a lawsuit instituted by a citizen's group to recover the funds.

• **January, 1987** — The city and P.A. begin work on a settlement to the lawsuit.

• **March 1987** — The city and P.A. continue to move closer toward settling the insurance suit, paving the way for a return to negotiations on the development. Councilman Robert Ranieri introduces a resolution for a public referendum on the Nov. 3 ballot asking residents if the city should continue negotiating with the P.A.

Parking garages are liable for security

By Jim DeRogatis

J.J. 3-31-87

Hoboken's municipal parking garages are experiencing what some people have called a "rash" of car radio thefts, but a court decision yesterday may offer victims some relief.

Hoboken attorney Barry Sarkisian challenged a "park at your own risk" standard in court — and won.

According to Hoboken detectives, an average of four cars a month are broken into at the

three multi-level garages, between First and Third streets on Hudson Street.

Residents and commuters pay \$65 to \$85 a month to rent the spaces, but Kinney Systems Inc., which operates the facilities under contract with the Hoboken Parking Authority, maintains it is not responsible for security and refuses to compensate motorists for damages or theft.

Sarkisian sued Kinney and the Parking Authority for dam-

ages after vandals stole the radio from his BMW while it was parked in Garage D in June, 1985. A jury ruled in Sarkisian's favor yesterday and Hudson County Superior Court Judge John O'Halloran awarded him more than \$1,300 in damages.

"I was angry about it, and I got even madder when I was told there had been no security on," Sarkisian said. The attorney discovered that the three garages, which can park a total

of 1,800 cars, were patrolled by one security guard during the evening hours. On the night his car was broken into, the guard had called in sick and there was no security, he said.

Sarkisian also learned through Parking Authority records that there had been 220 acts of vandalism and theft in the garages between 1982 and 1985. In no case had Kinney compensated the car owners.

See PARKING — Page 8.

Parking garages liable for security

Continued from Page 1

"People are handing the garage money to park there and they're not even getting basic security," Sarkisian said. He decided to sue the operators of the garage after learning of a decision in state Superior Court holding garages liable for damages, even if drivers signed a contract stating the facility was not liable.

"I think this decision may set a precedent" in Hoboken, Sarkisian said. "It's important for people to know that if they want to take their case to court, they may get something."

Arnold Simon, the attorney for Kinney and the Parking Authority, and Parking Authority Director Pat Caulfield both declined comment on the decision.

Caulfield said he believed the break-in problem has become worse in recent months because thieves are trying to get money to buy crack. He could not provide statistics on break-ins in recent months, he

said. Police said the problem remains despite periodic arrests, such as one this week-end. Frederick Texidor, 29, of Hoboken, was arrested Saturday night and charged with burglary and possession of burglary tools after he broke into several cars and removed radios, police said.

Texidor was arrested by an off-duty police officer working in the garage.

Caulfield refused to specify what security measures are employed in the garages but said there are "regular patrols" consisting "of our own security people and off-duty police."

The Parking Authority employs three security guards.

"I don't want to tell you exactly what we're doing because that's only alerting (vandals)," Caulfield said.

He added that while there are flare-ups from time to time, "the problem exists in every garage and shopping mall parking lot."

Housing plan has incentive

By JANET WILSON

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—A \$7.5 million non-profit affordable housing corporation could be created by the end of the year here, with a wide range of options for keeping longtime residents in their homes, and freeing up some units for low-income families.

According to a conceptual plan unveiled yesterday by a "fragile coalition" of five incumbent councilmen, "Old Hoboken" tenants could buy a stake in their apartments. In addition, badly dilapidated units could be completely rebuilt and developers might be enticed to sell empty condominium units to the city for moderate-income families.

HOUSING

Continued from Page 1

Their contribution could be the first of many by developers in response to pressure by the city either to build affordable housing as part of any project, or contribute up to \$10 per square foot of new construction to funds for affordable housing.

\$83 million in federal funding already received for affordable housing in the Observer Highway development project.

\$32 million in state Balanced Housing funds for which the CDA is now applying.

\$350,000 already granted to the city by the federal Housing and Urban Development Agency and the state Department of Community Affairs for rehabilitation of rental units and long-term rent subsidies.

The initial funding would be used in a variety of packages for about 150 to 160 units. That funding could cover mortgages and replacing of entire plumbing and heating systems; it could be used to purchase

A unique part of the plan is the opportunity offered to longtime tenants to buy a share of their apartments.

"It's the American dream," City Councilman Dave Roberts said. "Most people would love the opportunity to own their own home."

Under the plan, the city's affordable housing corporation would pay the owner of a building most of the purchase price of an apartment, and the tenant would receive a mortgage or a grant to buy up to 33 percent ownership. The non-profit corporation would be the majority owner, but for \$10,000 to \$20,000, the tenant would become part of a condominium or cooperative program.

The initial \$7.5 million could consist of:

\$32.2 million expected to be contributed by George Vallone and Daniel Gans of West Bank Realty.

See HOUSING, Page 6

condominiums that otherwise are not selling, and provide rent subsidies to avoid displacement of low-income tenants.

City officials said a lottery might be the only way to equitably select initial participants, and that they hoped continued funds would allow aid in future years.

While moderate-income residents are the focus of the City Council plan, both the council team and the CDA said low-income families would be helped as well.

"There are a great number of people living in the city's public housing projects who have 'made it,' who can afford \$700 rent," said Councilman Thomas Newman. "By offering them the chance to own their own apartment elsewhere, we may be able to convince them to move, and free up units for truly low-income families."

Newman and others said because of severe cuts in federal funding, new housing for low-income families with largely subsidized rents

could no longer be built. CDA staff agree, and said they estimated it cost \$100,000 to create a new unit of lower affordable-income housing in the city today. They said it cost half that amount to keep a tenant in an existing apartment and to upgrade it.

Preliminary reaction from tenants and developers was hopeful but somewhat skeptical.

"We haven't heard anything yet," said Sheila Scully, a member of a tenants' association that has been negotiating for 14 months for CDA funding to buy their apartments. "Of course we would love a comprehensive plan that would address the needs of all the tenants in our buildings."

"If all the parties involved are brought in to work as a team, I think it's great," said developer Murray Connell. Scully's landlord, Connell said he did not think there was a glut in the condominium market, however, contrary to the council coalition's theory.

Hoboken board hopefuls split on budget

By Jim Kopchans

The candidates in the April 7 school board election in Hoboken disagree on almost everything, but the new school budget proposal is the most controversial of all.

Seven of the candidates at last night's school election debate took the opportunity to criticize or defend the budget proposal. The debate was held only two hours after the Board of Education finally approved a \$26 million budget under orders from Hudson County Schools Superintendent Louis Accocella.

"We have a budget now to be considered that is too high and needs further cutting," Steven Block said. "It is an area that cries out for the right kind of action."

"For some reason, someone in the state government has told Governor Kean and his officers that Hoboken is now affluent," Board President Richard England said. "As a result, over the past two years we have seen state and federal aid go down dramatically. This budget meets the goals and objectives of the board today."

The seven candidates at last night's debate, sponsored by the Sixth Ward Block Association, were Block, Carlos Perez, and Michael Rossano, the three candidates running under the Committee for Quality Education ticket, and England, Geraldine Pantoliano, and Mario Mercado, representing the anti-Vezzetti administration slate. Felix Rivera, the only independent candidate attending, completed the group.

Each candidate generally stayed within their official positions with little direct attacks on each other. England, the only incumbent member of the board seeking reelection, and his fellow candidates defended the budget while the other candidates attacked the size of the budget and the manner it was developed.

The controversial budget was finally approved 6-to-2 yesterday afternoon, one day after the had board rejected it. Yesterday was the deadline for approving a budget proposal to be placed on the April 7 ballot.



Rev. Mark Ennis, moderator of last night's Hoboken school board election debate, lays the ground rules for the program.

Accocella had ordered the board to meet in emergency session to approve the proposal by threatening to dictate a budget for the city.

"Patronage politics is the number one reason for the low quality of education and the rising costs for every taxpayer in Hoboken," Block said.

"How can Mr. Block say this when over the past 14 months we have not hired anyone nor have we had any promotions?" England asked.

Pantoliano said that it appeared that the main reason for the increase in the budget was the loss in federal and state funding. Both Rossano and Perez said they felt the school system required a much stronger leader as a superintendent than the present superintendent Walter Fine.

Mercado said it may be better if the board would introduce unit cost financing into its budget process that would break down the expenses of the board to more manageable units. Rivera said the board needed to get beyond local political concerns to reduce costs and increase the educational quality.

Meanwhile, in an answer to a question about the possibility of closing a school down to cut costs, most of the members said it required more public input

and study before the board should go forward with such a step. The exception last night was Rivera who said he was convinced that a school should be closed and more efficient use made of the remaining buildings.

In an answer to another question, the candidates all said the board needed to immediately address itself to improving basic skills scores among all the students.

"Our ability to teach kids and teach them well must go well above just improving basic skills scores. It must include an improvement in their overall quality of education," Perez said.

England said the schools are on the way to improving the test scores and will show dramatic improvement over the next two years. "All we need is the time to make it happen," he said.

ONE IN 15 Candidates' 14 other children not in system

Last in a series

By Jim DeRogatis

The eight candidates running for the Hoboken Board of Education on April 7 have a total of 15 children among them, only one of whom is enrolled in the public school system.

Geraldine Pantoliano, who is seeking election on the anti-administration slate, says with pride that she is the only candidate with a child in the system. Her 12-year-old son attends the Calabro School, where her husband is also head custodian. One of her daughters attended private school, but the other graduated from Hoboken High School.

"There is no greater concern than that of a parent," Pantoliano said. "My kid is in the school system and if I'm on the board, I don't think I'll vote for anything that's not in his best interest."

Pantoliano has questioned the motivations of some of the other candidates whose children are not enrolled in the Hoboken system. The question has been raised by many other parents and voters, as well: Why are you interested in running for the Board of Education if the schools are "not good enough" for your own children?

Here are the candidates' opinions on the issue:

Steve Block, a CQE candidate.

Block is the father of a 10-year-old son enrolled in the private Hudson School. Benjamin attended the Wallace School for three years before Block transferred him. "I had an obligation as a parent to do what I thought was right," Block said. "Ben's first year was wonderful, his second year was average and his third year was just awful."

"It is a dream of mine that we will be elected and be able to improve things enough so that I can enroll my son in Hoboken High School when the time comes."

Richard England, the incumbent board president seeking reelection on the anti-administration slate.

England has four children: a 14-year-old son enrolled in Xavier High School in New York, two children attending St. Ann's Grammar School and a 1-year-old daughter who he "hopes will be able to go to public school."

"I could have sent my son to Hoboken High School and I'm sure he would have gotten an excellent education," England said. "But I think there is an unfair stigma associated with Hoboken that would have fol-

lowed him when it comes time to choose a college, and I can't deny him that opportunity."

Orlando Esposito, an independent candidate.

Esposito, 22, is single without children. He attended private grammar and high schools. "One of the reasons I'm running is that I wouldn't send my children to the Hoboken system as it stands today," Esposito said. "My parents sent me to private school because they felt the public schools weren't adequate, and I'm sure it was difficult for them to pay tuition and taxes. I would like to help improve things so that I won't have to do the same."

Mario Mercado Jr., an anti-administration candidate.

Mercado has an 11-year-old daughter attending St. Francis Grammar School.

"My daughter is not in the system because my wife is from two generations of parochial school education, and it was a personal choice," Mercado said. "Beyond that, I don't feel she'd get the type of education I want to give her."

"My position is to make sure everyone can have an equal education. It's not impossible that in five years, I will be able to put my daughter in the public schools."

Carlos Perez, a CQE candidate.

Perez has a 16-year-old son attending St. Peter's Preparatory School in Jersey City. During his grammar school years, Carlos Jr. attended the Wallace School and the Calabro School before he was transferred to the Hudson School.

"I didn't see the kind of caring, concern or instruction quality that convinced me that this system had the parent of child as a priority," Perez said. "I would like to be able to see the schools hold their own against the parochial and private schools."

Felix Rivera, an independent candidate.

Rivera has three children, a daughter in Marist High School in Bayonne and two sons in Our Lady of Grace Grammar School.

"Any parent looks at what's best for their children," he said. "I'm interested in representing the children of this city as a whole and not just the interests of the employees of the board."

Michael Rossano, a CQE candidate.

Rossano has twin 5-year-old daughters enrolled in kindergarten at St. Francis School.

"The Hoboken school system is not offering anything to me as a father," Rossano said. "I am not going to put my children in the system for political expediency, just to obtain votes."

"I want to go in and change the system because my daughters are young enough that I might be able to send them to public school in four or five years."

POLITICS RIFE Board foes dispute claim

J.J. 3-26-87

Fourth in a series

By Jim DeRogatis

Politics is a way of life for many in Hoboken, and it often seems to be ingrained everywhere — including the school system.

As the April 7 election for three Board of Education seats draws nearer, candidates continue to charge each other with bringing politics and patronage into the school system. And many observers believe the 1985 referendum changing the board from one appointed by the mayor only made the situation worse.

The two slates in the current election are considered frontrunners. One is backed by the pro-Vezzetti administration Committee for Quality Education, a powerful new political organization. The other is supported by a diverse coalition of anti-administration groups, including the Citizens Organization for Good Government, the Hoboken Young Democrats and the remains of the unsuccessful Recall '86 movement.

The "anti" forces successfully elected two candidates, Richard England and Eugene Drayton, last January, defeating CQE contenders Joseph Rafter and Lourdes Arroyo. However, Rafter and Arroyo bounced back and were elected in April, along with anti-administration candidate James Farina.

CQE has frequently blamed many of the school system's problems on the "old political machine," which they say their opponents represent. They consider themselves "reform candidates" and have pledged to eliminate patronage and rid the board of politics.

Members of the anti-administration slate have countered that CQE is "nothing more than a new political machine" that will only institute its own brand of patronage if elected.

The board is now split 5-to-4 between England, Drayton, Farina, James Monaco and Anthony DeBari and CQE members Rafter and Arroyo and sympathetic trustees Raul Morales and Zelma Lugo. Monaco and DeBari, whose terms are up, are not seeking reelection.

In order for the anti-administration forces to retain their majority, the entire slate would have to win. If one or more CQE candidates is elected, the balance is expected to tip in favor of the "reformers."

Here are the opinions of the candidates on politics in the school system and the current board race:

Steve Block, CQE candidate, educator.

"Politics will always be a part of the board in the sense that it influences public policy. The difference between CQE and the machine decisions based on their merits, and not on how much somebody worked on the campaign."

Richard England, anti-administration candidate, businessman, incumbent board president.

"Politics in the system hurts everybody. It takes new board members six months to establish a rapport because nobody trusts anybody else."

"Patronage may exist in the system. But if two people come for the same job, and you know one of the people because they were born and raised in Hoboken, you'd give the job to the person you knew. It's the same in business."

Orlando Esposito, independent candidate, businessman.

"I have to assume there is politics in the system. I don't see any other way the board could have sat down in the past and made the sort of decisions it has unless they were motivated by politics."

Mario Mercado Jr., anti-administration candidate, Hoboken police lieutenant.

"Patronage is part of the American political system, and that is a fact that has to be dealt with. When it becomes disruptive and not in the interest of the children, it is a problem. Until it does those things, there is no problem."

"When I become a board member, I will do my own evaluation and decide whether or not it has become disruptive. I think a lot of this is political rhetoric."

Geraldine Pantoliano, anti-administration candidate, secretary.

"I can't speak for what happened in the past, but I don't think there has been patronage. If I'm elected I will take a hard look at everything."

"All I see is the mayor wearing CQE buttons. That's political."

Carlos Perez, CQE candidate, educator.

"Politics is there and has been there. I don't think the ex-mayor (Steve Capriello) looked at education as an important issue. He overloaded the board with people who handed out jobs that were at



Photo by Roy Groething

How much does politics affect Hoboken's schoolchildren?

best superfluous. Because of the patronage system, a good number of dedicated professionals have become very discouraged because they believe they are unable to get ahead."

Felix Rivera, independent candidate, Port Authority police officer.

"Politics is deeply embedded in the school system... the children suffer because the board members are subject to political pressure. The new politics are different from the old politics, but the fact is you have CQE supported by the present administration, and that's political."

Michael Rossano, CQE candidate, businessman.

"The patronage system in Hoboken has existed for years to create jobs for people affiliated with the old political machine. We've seen evidence of this recently as the board has handed out 25 percent raises with no dialogue or concern for the budget. This typifies the whole problem."

William Strangeman, independent candidate, businessman.

"Whether the board is elected or appointed, there will always be politics involved."

No fine, no fund, DEP informs city

By Bill Campbell

The state Department of Environmental Protection may not fund Hoboken's \$52 million secondary sewage treatment project until the city pays more than \$400,000 in state fines.

The DEP notified the city of its position during a March 5 meeting in Trenton, according to a memo obtained by The Jersey Journal. Representatives of the state Attorney's General Office were also at the meeting.

The DEP also said it would not agree to amend Hoboken's administrative consent order with the state which commits the city to a timetable for sewerage repairs.

The Hoboken sewage project, which was bypassed for federal and state funds last year, may be eligible for \$20 million in grants in fiscal 1987. Loss of grant money would severely set back the project, which is already two years behind.

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No fine, no fund, DEP informs city

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hind schedule. "At the meeting the DEP took the position which I believe to be entirely unreasonable and contradictory to the public interest," said Hoboken special counsel Irwin Kimmelman in a confidential memo to members of the City Council.

He said he is seeking support from federal officials and a county judge to have the funding application processed by the May deadline.

Representatives of the DEP were not available to comment on the memo. Kimmelman and associates of his firm, Kimmelman, Wolff and Samson, have a standing policy of not discussing attorney-client communications.

Kimmelman, a former state attorney general, is representing Hoboken in litigation over the city's efforts to upgrade its sewage plant to a level mandated by the federal Clean Water Act. The city is facing lawsuits from the DEP, the federal Environmental Protection Agency and Mayo Lynch & Associates, a local engineering firm.

The DEP has been fining Hoboken since last summer when the city violated its consent agreement by missing the deadline for repairing tide gates and regulators and the Fifth Street Pump station. The fines amount to \$410,000.

The state has also refused to grant real estate developers permits to hook their projects into the municipal sewage system.

At least 11 projects in the sewage district, which also includes Union City and Weehawken, have been stalled by the sewage ban.

Kimmelman called the DEP's position "absolutely indefensible" in the memo but added, "I would very much like to avoid creating an adversarial relationship with the state."

He said he has sought the support of the EPA's regional office to process the grant application expeditiously regardless of the fines.

Kimmelman said Hudson County Assignment Judge Burrell Ives Humphreys recommended March 12 that the city pay 10 percent of the fines rather than lose the opportunity to receive fiscal 1987 funding. The suggestion was conveyed to the DEP by a deputy attorney general, he said.

Humphreys has been mediating the dispute to amend the consent agreement since February when Hoboken developer Gerald Baker sued the city and the DEP to obtain a wet sewage permit.

penalties would cease should the city hammer out an amended agreement with the DEP, he said.

Hoboken hopes to repair tide gates and regulators, which prevent river water from entering the sewage system, and the pumping station, which directs sewage to the treatment plant, by the initial target date of July.

The city, which has filed a counterclaim against Mayo Lynch, is seeking damages from the engineering firm in the amount of the penalties incurred from the DEP. The firm's failure to "timely pro-

vide" biddable plans and specifications prevented the city from complying with the state timetable, the city has argued.

Mayo Lynch's \$2 million engineering contract was found invalid by Humphreys last October because the scope of payments was not properly advertised.

Mayo Lynch, which has lost appeals, is seeking payment for work it performed and to have the city's new engineering contract overturned.

Mayo Lynch's motions are returnable in Superior Court on April 10.