

# Hoboken faces big tax hike

## Owner, tenants trade charges in condo fight

By Janet Wilson

A Hoboken landlord and his tenants traded bitter charges about each other's finances yesterday, the day after a rally on the tenants' behalf.

Murray Connell, the landlord of 90 apartments at 805 through 821 Park Ave. accused many of the tenants of being landlords themselves who did not need or deserve low-income housing.

The tenants' attorney, meanwhile, said Connell had milked funds from the dilapidated buildings, and that the tenants' homes had been used to finance his other extensive development projects in Hoboken.

The 60 Asian and Hispanic families may receive eviction notices in less than two weeks, because Connell has filed for condominium conversion. On Sunday, state and local politicians joined nearly 200 community activists and tenants in front of the buildings to protest Connell's actions.

Both sides had been negotiating to establish a purchase price for the units but talks broke off last week.

On Friday, Connell mailed out a long letter and copies of six property deeds to City Council president Patrick Pasculli. The deeds show that five families in Connell's buildings own five buildings and a condominium in Jersey City.

"Religious leaders, housing activists, and other quite noble people are being duped by these people," said Connell late Friday.

In his letter he said, "These tenants are not in need of affordable housing! I applaud their business acumen. But by claiming poverty and hardship, they are preventing the truly needy from receiving the attention and support they deserve."

Connell also charged some of his tenants who are landlords had rented out rooms in illegal conditions, had evicted low income tenants and warehoused apartments themselves.

Tenant union leader Vasudev Trevedi said he was not surprised by Connell's statements. He said some of the five families who had bought properties had done so because they had large families, and were worried about being kicked out when Connell filed overcrowding charges in 1986.

Tenant attorney Peter Van Schiack said he had performed a survey of all the tenants' income in 1985, using tax returns, W-2 forms, and other certified statements of income.

"The vast majority of the Park Avenue tenants are below the Hudson County median for low-income families," said Van Schiack.

Sharon Mark, another attorney for the tenants, said it was Connell, not the tenants, who was using the buildings. Connell garnered between \$900,000 and \$1.5 million in cash from the dilapidated buildings the first year he owned them, by selling off shares to a limited partnership.

Connell also has obtained at least \$3.9 million worth of mortgages on the buildings, most of them from Citizens First National Bank of New Jersey. He bought the property for \$1.35 million in November 1984.

Connell said Friday that some of the mortgage money was being used for construction work and rehabilitation, including work on the Park Avenue buildings. There are currently 248 state code violations in the buildings, although housing inspector Jude Fitzgibbons said he was satisfied that Connell's workmen had been trying to fix them.

The tenants' attorneys said they felt the tenants were being "punished" by Connell's banking practices, and that their homes had been used to finance other development projects Connell has undertaken in Hoboken in the last few years.

The tenants have offered Connell and his partners \$45,000 each for up to 50 apartments. An independent appraiser hired by both the tenants and Connell's holding company said that \$45,000 would be a fair price for the units if plumbing and other basic systems were replaced. But even if the tenants bought all 50 of those apartments, that would bring in only \$2.25 million, far less than the \$3.9 million in mortgages and the limited share option obligations he must meet.

Connell's lowest offer to the tenants has been for \$62,500 per unit, which they say is way too high considering the appraised value.

Connell denied that he could not accept the \$45,000 price because of the heavy debts, and said not all the mortgage money had actually been borrowed and used. He also said he was willing to continue negotiations with city officials and "reasonable, decent tenants" who have an income problem and could qualify for federal subsidies to purchase the apartments.

## Fifth Ward goes to polls

Hoboken's Fifth Ward residents return to the polls today to vote in their ward's third election in just 11 months.

Polling sites open at 7 a.m. today and close at 8 p.m. Voters can cast ballots at Wallace School, at the Elks Club at 1005 Washington St. and at Joseph F. Brandt School on Garden Street.

Voting irregularities that occurred at the Elks Club in the last election, when the Elks polling site opened 20 minutes late, led to the eventual judicial determination to hold today's special election.

Incumbent E. Norman Wilson, a nine-year veteran of the City Council and a former council president, is fighting to retain his office. The challenger is Helen Manogue, vice president of a New York City bank and a 17-year veteran of the Hoboken Environmental Committee.

Wilson, a frequent critic of Mayor Thomas Vezzeiti's "reform" administration, is being backed by Councilman Dave Roberts, who with Councilman Pat Pasculli often represents a voting bloc against the mayor.

Manogue labels herself an independent, but has been supportive of many of Vezzeiti's policies and is being actively supported by the mayor.

## Hoboken valuation data due

By Jim DeRogatis

Hoboken residents can expect to hear the results of the court-ordered revaluation starting tomorrow.

Real Property Appraisers, which recently conducted a court-ordered revaluation of property throughout the city, will present their findings to the City Council today, and residents will begin receiving notices in the mail tomorrow.

Real Property is also conducting a revaluation in Jersey City, and residents there have started receiving notices.

Property values in Hoboken have increased on the average of 15 times since the last revaluation in 1970 as a result of the Gold Coast real estate boom, according to Laurie Fabiano, executive assistant to Mayor Thomas Vezzeiti.

Homes are currently valued at only 13 percent of their market worth. The revaluation is designed to bring properties up to 100 percent of true value.

The revaluation is expected to hurt longtime property owners, who will likely experience a sharp tax increase.

City Tax Assessor Woodrow Monte said yesterday that he anticipates a tax rate of about \$20 this year, although it will not become official until the municipal, school board, county and county vocational school budgets are adopted.

A Hoboken home that has been valued at \$15,000 paid \$3,150 in taxes last year based on the tax rate of \$210 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. The assessed value of the home may increase to \$225,000 or more after the revaluation, and if a tax rate of \$20 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation is adopted, it will pay \$4,500 in taxes.

## City's revaluation is first in 18 years

By CHRISTOPHER AVE Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Most owners of non-condominium housing will face a sharp increase in their tax bill next year under the city's first revaluation in 18 years, The Hudson Dispatch has learned.

The tax assessor will be mailing new tax assessments to property owners next week.

The owner of a house worth \$150,000 will now pay between \$500 and \$700 more per year in taxes than under the old system. The owner of a condominium worth that amount, in contrast, will pay about \$1,000 less than he would have under the old system.

EXCLUSIVE

The revaluation means property will now be assessed at its full market value — up from the current average level of 14 percent. The tax rate, which is now the state's highest at \$210 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, will fall to between \$18 and \$20, according to city Tax Assessor Woodrow Monte.

"Nobody had any dreams of it coming down that much," Monte said of the rate yesterday.

The city has not been revalued since 1970.

Non-condominium housing

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## Wilson wins in Hoboken

By CHRISTOPHER AVE Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Councilman E. Norman Wilson decisively beat challenger Helen Manogue in a race for the 5th Ward City Council seat yesterday, robbing the Vezzeiti administration of a chance to build its support on the nine-member council.

Unofficial returns showed Wilson winning by a 155-vote margin, 937-782.

The wide margin was unexpected because only one vote separated the candidates in the ward last election, a runoff on June 9. A judge ordered yesterday's election because a polling place opened 20 minutes late in the June 9 race.

Wilson, seated in his wheelchair outside of his campaign headquarters on 12th Street,



E. NORMAN WILSON Defeats Manogue handily

credited his large margin of victory to a "broad cross section" of support from the community. "Everybody came together in

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## WILSON

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the ward," he said. "They realized who really represented them."

Wilson also benefitted from some political heavy-hitters, including council President Patrick Pasculli, who actively campaigned for the soft-spoken councilman. Pasculli, an undeclared mayoral candidate in next year's race, has increasingly opposed Vezzeiti's initiatives in recent months.

Moments after the results became known, Manogue, her son Steve, and Councilmen Thomas Newman and Joseph Della Fave walked four blocks through the cold night air to Wilson's headquarters to congratulate him.

"Hopefully, we can get everybody together," Manogue told Wilson in clear tones. "Congratulations."

Manogue told a reporter she had no regrets about the campaign, and said she would continue to be active in the community.

"I have been for 17 years, and I have no intentions of giving up now," she said.

Pasculli spent the last few minutes before the vote was complete sitting in the back room of the headquarters, taking the results over the telephone and shouting them to fellow Wilson supporters. Pasculli



At the Hoboken Elks Lodge yesterday, voter Johanna McNamara signs in under the direction of Margaret Smith as Geraldine Bocco, far right, looks on in the 5th Ward's 2nd District.

DON MCCOY THE HUDSON DISPATCH

later said his role had been to "organize" Wilson's campaign message.

"I'm elated," Pasculli said after hugging and kissing campaign workers crammed inside the headquarters. "The 5th Ward elected the hardest work-

ing, most sincere person to the post."

Pasculli said it was "much too premature" to speculate on his own mayoral ambitions, saying he would concentrate on assuming his role "as a leader on the council."

The election had been viewed as an indicator of Vezzeiti's strength. After the vote, Vezzeiti was visibly shaken.

"The people of the 5th Ward have voted for ineptitude," Vezzeiti said. "They want ineptitude, they got ineptitude."

## City Council approves Barry-Hartz proposal

By Janet Wilson

With a bit of grumbling, the Hoboken City Council followed the advice of the professionals yesterday and selected Joseph Barry and Hartz Mountain Industries to develop a mammoth housing complex on the southern edge of the city.

"We'll do the city proud," Barry promised, moments after the unanimous selection in City Hall yesterday evening.

But there is already one suit by a neighborhood group against the city over the redevelopment plan, and unsuccessful bidder Frank Raia would not rule out his own legal challenge either.

The winning affordable-luxury housing project is called Observer Park and was recommended to the council over Raia's proposal by Vantor and Vantor, a New York planning and urban design firm.

Barring successful challenges, three gleaming 16-story spires with a park tucked among them will be built on largely city-owned land on Observer Highway between Park Avenue and Bloomfield Street. The project includes 332 luxury apartments which will begin as rental units and convert to condominiums.

The city will be paid \$4.7 million for land, and will gain 118 affordable apartments, 30 of them low income rentals. The \$50 million project will also include 332 market price apartments, which would be rented for two years, then converted to condominiums.

But much remains to be hammered out. Barry's proposal does not retain an on-site municipal garage, but would construct a new garage in the northwestern edge of town. The

proposal could require the city to condemn land as well as pay up to \$175,000 a year in leasing fees.

"This is a major concern which must be addressed," said Councilman Joseph Della Fave.

After the vote, one councilman could be overheard in the City Clerk's office muttering "He ain't getting that ... garage."

Outside in the hall, Raia and his attorney, Paul S. Werther of Whipple, Ross & Hirsh in Madison, held an impromptu press conference.

"Frank Raia is here to stay," said Werther, asked if his client would apply for possible future projects.

But Werther also said Raia and his project partners, Alba Properties, had lost money "in the six figures" applying for this project, and could have legal grounds to challenge the Council's decision.

"If I had known I could move the garage off-site and have the city pay me for it, I could have made my project a lot more attractive, too," he said.

Planners Vantor & Vantor reported that Barry's project was superior partially because of the way the parking was incorporated. But council members pointed out that the request for a proposal said that

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## Wilson has a margin of 135 votes

By Patricia Scott

Hoboken's incumbent Fifth Ward Councilman E. Norman Wilson swept to victory last night in a special election that garnered a 135-vote margin for the nine-year City Council veteran.

Wilson captured 889 votes and 48 absentee ballots, comfortably knocking out independent challenger Helen Manogue, who received 754 votes and 28 absentee ballots. In total, Wilson received 917 votes to Manogue's 782.

Support for the incumbent, a former City Council president and executive director of the city's HOPES organization, was particularly strong in the Fifth Ward's heavily Hispanic Third and Fifth Districts.

In the Fifth District, Wilson received 233 votes compared to Manogue's 144. In the Third District, he received 200 compared to 151 for Manogue.

Rick Shaftan, a Wilson campaign organizer, said a "special push" was made in the last 10 days in the ward.

## Hoboken Council picks Barry-Hartz plan

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the municipal parking garage could be kept at the site as part of the project or moved elsewhere.

On March 18, a neighborhood group suing the city over the redevelopment project will seek a summary judgement in court to have the entire project thrown out, no matter who the

developer is. Ron Hine, the leader of the group, said they were not against redeveloping the land, but wanted it done at a lower scale of five or six stories that would match the heights of most of Hoboken's buildings.

The suit alleges that the "blighted" status of the city-owned land is out of date, and

that Councilman Steve Cappiello shouldn't have voted on the original proposal to develop the city-owned land because he owns property within a 250-foot radius of the project.

Cappiello owns two lots at 163-165 Newark St., less than a block away from a municipal parking lot on Bloomfield Street that is part of the intend-

ed project. Cappiello said he had consulted with the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, and was told there was no conflict since he had not acquired the land recently and would not sell it as part of the project.

Construction on the Observer Park project is slated to begin in September.

## TAXES

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had been assessed at only 6 or 7 percent of true value, according to Monte. Under that formula, the owner of the \$150,000 home paid about \$2,205. Next year, that bill will be between \$2,700 and \$3,000.

Under the old system, condominiums have been assessed at 12 percent. Commercial properties have been assessed at between 14 and 18 percent, Monte said, and industrial properties were assessed at 45 percent.

Monte said in a statement that the long-awaited revaluation will spread the tax burden more fairly.

"My intention has always been to have all properties assessed as closely as possible to 100 percent of true value," Monte said. "This will result in greater uniformity, with everyone paying his or her fair share."

Monte brushed aside the suggestion that older homeowners will be upset by the news. "Should I wish that the value of their property is nothing?" Monte said. "Everyone should pay their fair share — no more, no less."

Monte said any taxpayer who has no idea of value of their property should get a professional opinion from an appraiser or real estate firm to find out if the assessment is equitable. He added that taxpayers should contact Real Property Appraisers, the revaluation firm, if they feel there are extenuating circumstances that might lessen their tax bill.



# MAYOR VEZZETTI DEAD

By Dominick Calicchio  
and Jim Kopchans

## Medics work hour to save heart attack victim

Hoboken Mayor Thomas Vezzetti died at 12:03 this morning of a massive heart attack.

City Police Chief George Crimmins announced the death of the popular 59-year-old mayor to the small crowd of friends at the emergency room at St. Mary Hospital. The death followed almost an hour of resuscitation attempts by emergency crews after Vezzetti collapsed in his apartment at 109 14th St.

Neighbors and Vezzetti's roommate, Harry Sgardelis, called police at about 11 p.m. after hearing Vezzetti's collapse, said police. Emergency medical crews were immediately on the scene trying to revive the mayor.

The Hoboken Volunteer Ambulance Corps was called and responded by sending the Jersey City paramedics.

The mayor was brought to

the hospital by 11:30 p.m. "He was worked on from the minute he dropped to the minute he was brought in," said Dr. Angelo Caprio, who headed the efforts at St. Mary. "But all attempts to resuscitate the mayor failed."

Councilman Joseph Della Fave was with Vezzetti when he died. Upon Vezzetti's death, Della Fave came out of the emergency room and asked the

mayor's chief aide and spokeswoman Laurie Fabiano to come in. Fabiano was shaking and crying when she went in, said observers.

Friends and city officials said Vezzetti showed no signs of illness last night when he attended the party for Fifth Ward Council candidate Helen Manogue at the Trilogy Cafe on 11th Street.

Manogue lost the special

election to incumbent Councilman E. Norman Wilson Jr. last night. Vezzetti had strongly supported Manogue and seemed "very downcast and disappointed" at the party, according to Councilwoman Helen Cuning.

Cuning said she last saw Vezzetti when he left the cafe and started to walk home. "He stopped to talk to some people and that was the last

time I saw him," she said. Roy Haack, the city's water and sewerage superintendent, said he met with Vezzetti several times during the day yesterday but had noticed nothing wrong with the mayor. "It was just a typical day for Vezzetti," Haack said.

Although he had not complained of illness recently, Vezzetti had had a history of heart trouble and had checked into St. Mary several times for chest pains since becoming

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## Massive heart attack claims Mayor Vezzetti

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in 1985. On New Year's Day, Vezzetti's seat slipped off a crowded podium at the inauguration of County Executive Robert Janiszewski at the Hudson County Administration Building. The mayor fell down and struck his head on the marble floor. He remained hospitalized for almost a week from the injuries.

Vezzetti would have been up for election next year. City Attorney William Graves is expected to make a determination this morning as to how the city's acting mayor will be chosen, said Crimmins.

Business Administrator Edwin Chius said everyone in the city was shaken by the news. "It's just a tragedy. He was a man who dedicated his whole life to the common good."

On July 2, 1985, 57-year-old Thomas Vezzetti took his oath of office from Gov. Thomas Kean. In his way, Vezzetti had reached the top in one of the most bizarre elections ever to occur in Hudson County politics.

For years considered nothing more than a political gadfly, Vezzetti had slowly created a following among the voters of Hoboken, growing in political power and winning an upset victory for councilman before heading the strong ticket that upset three-term Mayor Steve Cappelletto.

Walking the streets and shouting his campaign slogan "Always a pleasure" into his bullhorn, Vezzetti became an instantly recognizable fixture on the streets that summer. With the bullhorn and a display of colorful, clashing suits and ties, Vezzetti's mayoral campaign made every day seem as if the circus were in town.

And in first the general elections and then a special runoff, the symbol of Vezzetti combined with growing voter dissatisfaction with Cappelletto's administration to push the former gadfly into City Hall.

Almost immediately, Vezzetti took City Hall like a hurricane, sending old workers out and bringing in a new team to run the city. Still, Vezzetti maintained the same style of

outgoing cheer that he displayed during the campaign.

This style soon became known to the rest of the metropolitan area through a story in the New York Daily News. Their Sunday Magazine article on Feb. 2, 1986 proclaimed him "the Wackiest Mayor in America."

Other officials might be put off by such a designation, but Vezzetti seemed to thrive on the image.

"I'm international now. Four million people are going to see Hoboken's handsome mayor — my exuberance, my charm, my looks," Vezzetti joked in discussing that article.

"I think people are sophisticated enough to comprehend what I'm doing. Don't mind words. Always mind what I do."

JUST PAST MIDNIGHT

## Vezzetti dies of heart attack

3-2-88  
Revival attempts at hospital failed

By DAVID LIPPMAN  
and MICHAEL STEARNS  
Staff Writers

HOBOKEN—Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti died at 12:03 this morning of a heart attack at St. Mary Hospital here. He was 59. Police Chief George Crimmins Sr. announced the mayor's death in the emergency room of the hospital.

Dr. Angelo Caprio pronounced the mayor dead in the emergency room and evacuated it. According to Caprio, neighbors heard Vezzetti fall in his apartment at 314 14th St. They called the Hoboken Volunteer Ambulance Corps, which responded within minutes, along with Jersey City paramedics. The mayor arrived at the hospital at 11:35 p.m.

Caprio said the emergency medical technicians and later the hospital staff attempted to revive the mayor for an hour, but all attempts were fruitless. The hospital halls were full of the mayor's supporters, most of whom were crying.

City Business Administrator Edwin Chius said at the hospital

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trying to determine how to run a city without a mayor.

In the City Clerk's Office, council members who had not been aligned with Vezzetti planned governmental and political strategy, trying to decide who to support for interim mayor. Upstairs in the Mayor's Office, Vezzetti's friends and advisers planned the details of the funeral on Saturday and discussed the daily operation of the city.

They also tried to explain their feelings about the city's first mayor to die in office.

"He loved young people, he loved creative people, he loved people with guts," Laurie Fabiano, Vezzetti's top aide, said between sobs. "He was completely selfless. He was such an innocent."

"He was always saying one of two things — either thanking everybody, or apologizing because he wasn't better," she continued.

As they discussed the mayor, friends kept coming back to the same themes: his openness, his simple, naive dedication to hon-

esty and his assumption that honesty leads to better government.

Councilwoman Helen A. Cuning, whose photograph is framed above Vezzetti's desk, said that, regardless of the impact of the mayor's efforts, they were honest efforts.

"He promised good, open government, and he tried to deliver it," Cuning said. "He was a dreamer, you know, and he had a knack for making some things come true."

Vezzetti was known by those outside his circle of friends as a tenacious campaigner, who took his bullhorn onto the streets as early as 6 a.m., spreading his message to anyone and everyone. His mayoral style had been attacked by his political enemies as remote, and some had tried to paint him as a figurehead who largely was controlled by his advisors.

Cuning disputed that yesterday as she recalled frequent arguments with her political ally. "That stuff was garbage. Tommy had his own mind — you couldn't get Tommy to do something if you had an ax to his

head," she said. Vezzetti was a fighter, his friends and foes recalled, who was eternally on the campaign trail. The night he died, he had suffered a setback in the 5th Ward City Council race, when his candidate, Helen Manogue, was beaten by the incumbent, E. Norman Wilson.

"Ineptitude, they chose ineptitude," a haggard Vezzetti told this reporter a couple of hours before he died. He then turned around, characteristically, said, "I want to thank you."

The Hoboken Knights of Columbus Council is again entering the federally subsidized housing arena, this time with a 67-unit senior citizens project on Madison Street.



Mayor Thomas Vezzetti, right, and councilwoman Helen Cuning, left, listen as challenger Helen Manogue gets results confirming her defeat. A few minutes later, the mayor headed home, where he suffered a fatal heart attack.

## Street smarts, plain talk provide winning margin

By Janet Wilson  
J.J. 3-2-88  
"They beat us on the street," said a dejected Mark Singleton, campaign manager

### News analysis

for defeated Fifth Ward challenger Helen Manogue. "They had nine workers on every corner for our one, and they beat us."

Incumbent Councilman E. Norman Wilson trounced Manogue for a number of reasons.

One was a solid street campaign organized by the Young Democratic Club, and their effective canvassing of Joseph Barry's subsidized housing units.

Wilson is also the old-timer, born and bred in Hoboken with roots in City Hall as well as in his Fifth Ward anti-poverty offices. Manogue is the first of the urban pioneers — she is by no means a newcomer — but she needed the newer residents' votes to win.

At 5:10 p.m., with less than

three hours left in the election, Manogue was trying to drag votes off the rush-hour buses on Washington Street. Wilson's workers were ringing doorbells in Applied Housing and corraling neighbors by their first names off street corners.

"Yuppies don't like to vote. They'd rather go for a drink after work," said mayoral assistant Laurie Fabiano bitterly as she looked at the district results four hours later. "If she

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## Knights seniors project OK'd

By Jim Kopchans  
J.J. 3-2-88

The Hoboken Knights of Columbus Council is again entering the federally subsidized housing arena, this time with a 67-unit senior citizens project on Madison Street.

The council received final site plan approval from the city Planning Board for Columbian Towers, their second senior citizen's project in Hoboken.

Construction on the six-story building, to be built at 514-526 Madison St., could begin in

May, according to Maurice DeGennaro, chairman of the chapter's Board of Trustees.

The new project follows Columbian Towers, a 170-unit seniors project on Bloomfield Street between First and Second streets built in 1985.

Like Columbian Towers, the building will be constructed solely with federal housing funds and all rents will be subsidized through federal Section 8 housing grants.

To build the project, DeGennaro said the Knights agreed to serve as the sponsoring organization which means that the members will oversee the spending of the federal funds and will maintain and operate the premises on a budget supplied by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

DeGennaro said the council decided to approach HUD for approval on a new project because of the long waiting list for Columbian Towers.

"Right now, we have about 500 people on the list looking for apartments at the towers," DeGennaro said. "While we can make some accommodations for emergency cases, most of the applicants can only just wait."

The tenants in the new project will be taken from the first applicants on the list for Columbian Towers, DeGennaro said.

At last night's meeting, DeGennaro, Martin McCarthy, attorney for the Knights, and Saul Prall, a representative for architect A.T. Pancari convinced the board to grant four variances. Two of the variances will permit the chapter to build up to the property line rather than set the building back 10 feet from the line. Another variance will set the height of an enclosing fence at six feet and the final variance will waive the requirements for a loading platform.

In other business, the board approved subdivisions for plans at 1008-1010 Washington St. and 128-130 Park Ave.

The Washington Street property will permit the reconstruction of two four-story residential apartment buildings. The Park Avenue subdivision clears the way for two new two-family buildings on the site.

## Street smarts wins it

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can't win 'em, who the hell can?"

Manogue supporters charged that Applied Housing workers campaigned in Barry's buildings for Wilson. The several hundred subsidized units under publisher-real estate magnate Barry's control do provide a unique opportunity to pick up solid blocs of votes in Districts Three and Five, and that is exactly what Wilson did.

Wilson also ran a series of slickly designed negative ads about his opponent in Barry's Hoboken Reporter, yet his campaign expenditure forms show no payment for those ads. Barry could not be reached for comment.

But Wilson also used plain words in debates, while Manogue gave complex but lengthy answers. He talked about "keeping Hoboken as one happy neighborhood," while she outlined equity financing solutions for affordable housing.

To Manogue's supporters, Wilson's victory is an outrage because they didn't see any substance in his answers.

"They voted for ineptitude. They got it," said Mayor Thomas Vezzetti, who lost the chance to pick up another ally, albeit an uneasy one, on the fractious council.

Manogue did have veteran campaigner and former Council President Marty Brennan on her side, but it wasn't enough to stop the steamroller. Without having to worry about their own elections or any pretenses of a "fragile coalition" with pro-Vezzetti council members, Sixth Ward Councilman David Roberts, Council President Patrick Pasculli and the rest of James Farina's Young Democratic Club were able to push Wilson into City Hall.

Wilson's victory was important to them because it helps eliminate Manogue as a possible mayoral candidate in two years against their candidate, Pasculli, and keeps their organizational skills well-oiled.

The Young Dems have now won every race they've taken on in the last year, except against former Mayor and current Third Ward Councilman Steve Cappelletto on his home turf last May.

## 'City has lost its heart': Chius

By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—It is not the bullhorn, unlaced shoes or purple felt hat that Tom Vezzetti's friends will remember.

"The city has lost its heart," Business Administrator Edwin Chius said early yesterday morning.

Those closest to the flamboyant mayor, who died of a

heart attack early yesterday, agreed — through their grief — that Vezzetti's warmth far outweighed his unconventional demeanor.

As red-eyed friends and co-workers tried to put their feelings in words, the business of the city continued yesterday. City Council members and supervisors scurried between offices,

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GIRL HIT BY CAR — Paramedics arriving on DeKalb Avenue in Jersey City assist Tamika Brodder, 11, whom, police said, apparently lost her balance and fell backward against a passing car while playing in the street at 4 p.m. yesterday. The girl suffered injuries to her stomach, left arm and left leg, said Police Lt. Glenn Gilbert of Jersey City's West District. She was treated and released from Jersey City Medical Center, said a Medical Center spokeswoman.





Harry Sgardelis, the roommate of late Hoboken Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti.

ROGUES OF HOBOKEN

# The sad tale of Tommy and Harry Mayor's roommate grieves over the death of his savior

By WALTER OWEN  
Obituary Editor

HOBOKEN—John Steinbeck wrote about men such as Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti and Harold Sgardelis. His broken characters mended in bonds of friendship formed on skid row, much as Harry healed in the huge grasp of his friend, Tommy.

Tommy collapsed late Tuesday, his weak heart stricken by a political setback that night, or crushed by his hurried pace walking up six flights to the two-bedroom apartment the men shared for 10 years.

"I tried to tell him to take his time going up these stairs," Harry said. "But he wouldn't."

Tommy, who never smoked or drank,

had more luck saving Harry. In 1978, when the two men moved into the railroad flat at 109 14th St., Tommy helped Harry, 62, wean himself of a pint of whiskey a day. He was there when "the horrors" struck. He kept Alcoholics Anonymous a vibrant alternative.

"He said the happiest day of his life was when I got my 90-day pin," Harry said. "He was so happy he wanted to

speak at the meeting. We had to hold him down."

HARRY SMOKED Benson & Hedges cigarettes and paced in the kitchen the men shared when he talked about Tommy yesterday. Wearing plastic sandals and a pajama top over his T-shirt, he

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made Sanka in a battered pot on the stove. He did not want to sit.

Harry met Tommy at the bar of the Madison Hotel in 1960. Tommy's father owned the place. Harry was living at the YMCA at the time, and he came in to start drinking. It felt like home, and later in the day he took a room, and stayed until 1978, when Tommy sold the hotel.

Then Tommy found the apartment at 109 14th St. for Harry and planned to stay until he found his own place. He never left.

"Perseverance was his greatest attribute," Harry said. "He had an average IQ, but I wish I had his standards. I used to tell him he was too dumb to be a thief. He said he'd rather be dumb and honest than be a thief."

Tommy's mind was deceptive, by turns sweetly naive and eloquently witty. In the dim room where the late mayor's ragged bed is crowded by books and clothes, there is no sign of comfort or vanity. "The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt" in three volumes sits in a cleared space above a dresser bursting with suits.

Gibbon, Whitman, Mann, Adam Smith, Churchill all have places in the gloom.

"HE HAD to work harder," Harry said. "His older brother had all the attributes, good looks, tall, high IQ. That's why he tried to save drunks. His brother died from alcoholism."

Harry, a cook for Meals on Wheels in Secaucus, has the first room off the kitchen. Tommy had his own entrance, but eventually his bookshelves and clothes blocked the door. To get to his room, you must walk through Harry's, which is the only room where Tommy's garish suits are not racked in bundles or spilling off shelves.

"I tried to tell him to take his time going up those stairs," Harry said again.

When Tommy became mayor in 1983, he was out for dinner most nights of the week. He loved eggs and pork, but he gave them up under doctor's orders. Amid the clutter on the counters



Thomas V. Vezzetti uses his familiar bullhorn during a campaign swing down the streets of his beloved Hoboken.

are signs of a bachelor's unpracticed shopping, numerous jars of spaghetti sauce beside family packs of Ivory soap and boxes of Rice Krispies.

HARRY HELD up an unopened bag of granola and said Tommy was supposed to be on a health kick.

He pulled an uncovered pot of chicken breast and rigatoni in tomato sauce out of the refrigerator.

"I knew he was going to have a big day yesterday, so I made this special for him. It was his favorite," he said.

Late last night, Tommy collapsed by the refrigerator, by the door that had not had a lock for four years because Tommy and Harry knew everyone in the neighborhood.

## By 8:07 p.m., it was Wilson without doubt

By Patricia Scott

It was just a few seconds on a hold button—maybe 10, maybe more—but time stood still in the E. Norman Wilson campaign headquarters at 8:06 last night.

Only the buzz of a glaring fluorescent overhead light could be heard.

Supporters stood, hands on hearts, cigarettes dangling from parched lips, waiting for the official word.

And when the "hold" button lifted—and the City Clerk's office informed Wilson workers their incumbent councilman will comfortably retain his office—the screams could be heard as far off as Washington Street, two blocks away.

There, the silence was palpable as Helen Manogue's campaign manager Mark Singleton offered a "sad announcement" to the gathered Manogue camp: "They killed us."

By 8:07, the verdict was officially in, and 20 minutes later independent challenger Manogue briefly stopped by the Wilson headquarters formally to concede.

For E. Norman Wilson, who stayed outside in the bracing cold removed from the 300 workers who filled every nook of his 12th Street headquarters, victory was never sweeter.

"All I can say is, it couldn't have happened without these people," Wilson said, as his crowd of cheering supporters poured onto the street to report the outcome. "They came out for me and they stuck with me and I can never thank them enough."

Among the familiar faces:

who stayed at Wilson's camp throughout the tense hours leading to his victory were his fellow Councilman Dave Roberts, attorney Richard Seltzer of Help Hoboken Housing, Maurice Fitzgibbons and Board of Education Trustee Perry Belfiore.

An emotional crowd, jubilant and sobbing with joy, stayed at headquarters long after the results flooded in.

"I can say with honesty that Norman is one of the most decent and genuine people I know and it's a pleasure to work with him," said Roberts, who manned the phone lines and received district outcomes from 7 p.m. on. "He's a great guy and we're all very proud of his success tonight."

Wilson shunned reporters early in the evening, and stayed out on the street bundled into a heavy beige cape. But by 8:30, Wilson was beaming and offering a hearty hand-

See INCUMBENT — Page 10.

## Election result is 'negligible'

By Dominick Calicchio

Be they happy or sad about the results of yesterday's Fifth Ward election, apparently no one in Hoboken City Hall felt obligated to notify the Hudson County Board of Elections about the final tally, in which incumbent Councilman E. Norman Wilson defeated challenger Helen Manogue.

"We called and called and either no one was there or no one picked up the phone," said Maria Klein, a county election staffer who called The Jersey Journal to find out how the election was going.

Eventually, she found out. "We finally got through to the Police Department and they said Wilson won by about 150," she said.



Victorious councilman E. Norman Wilson, left, receives a concession handshake from Helen Manogue.

## Incumbent Wilson captures 5th Ward special election

Continued from Page 1

shake to his supporters.

The scene was a sadly contrasting one over at Manogue's gathering, where volunteers with red-rimmed eyes hugged their defeated candidate, then slowly filed out.

"I had so much wonderful support. You've been absolutely great," said Manogue, before conceding to the man she has challenged three times in less than a year.

Rick Shafter, a Wilson campaign coordinator, said workers sensed the "Wilson momentum" 10 days ago. "That's when we first began hearing that people were coming out," he said. "It fell into place."

Anxious poll workers who gathered to nibble pizza and doughnuts at the shabby Wilson storefront headquarters said the incumbent's easy sweep to victory was a triumph "for old Hoboken."

"This proves people remember who really is there for them and who represents the interests of the city," said one

poll worker, a longtime Wilson aide. "It shows the yuppies don't vote."

Even Manogue supporters conceded that a lack of voting by the yuppie contingent may have hurt their candidate badly.

Throughout the often bitter campaign, Manogue portrayed herself as the "new" choice who represented change for the city and, Wilson claimed, depicted him as part of the old guard.

Wilson last night said his victory represented a moral triumph as well as a political one. "Anything more than one

vote for me would have been a triumph after what we all went through this year," he said. "It was ridiculous."

The incumbent said Hispanic voters played a "special part" in his victory. "I couldn't have done it without every group," he said. Support for Wilson was particularly high in the ward's poorer areas, especially the Third and Fifth Districts.

"I'm a happy man tonight because I'm vindicated," he said. "We went through a lot to get to this point and finally have it settled. Now we look ahead."

## Vezzetti and his legacy

There are plenty of images and words of Thomas Vezzetti that stand out in memory—his catch phrases, his unconventional clothing, his emotional outbursts.

But he left a more significant legacy behind. He broadened the possibilities of politics in Hudson County, especially in Hoboken.

He had gained a reputation for years as a critic of government, who sometimes would bring his typewriter to council meetings to work on papers for his master's degree while waiting for a council meeting to start.

He performed that role with perseverance. He was not discouraged by how often he would have to repeat his point to get an answer from the council, or from the Hudson County Board of Freeholders. He had his perspective and passions about what government should do, and he persisted in his activist, critic's role.

But in winning a council seat, he went from critic outside government to Hoboken legislator. And in 1985, during a period of sharp change in Hoboken, he won the mayoralty itself. He showed that he held a special place in Hoboken's public life. He also showed that there was a way to win without being either a technocratic elitist or clubhouse politician.

In a curious way, his triumph was a demonstration of the vigor of democracy in city government.

As a reform mayor, he wasn't beholden to special interests, he brought in some fresh faces to local government and pushed some good and important programs including an anti-warehousing law, restructuring of city government administration and mandatory affordable housing contributions.

He also made mistakes. Sometimes it seemed very hard for him to be switching from the role of critic to one of administrator. It seemed he found it easier to say what should be done than to tell people to do it.

But his basic legacy is a highly positive one. He deserves to be remembered with a special fondness.

## City's stake in housing

The swirl of economic development has been dramatic in Hoboken this past decade. But while giving benefits to some, that development has made things much more difficult for less-affluent people hoping to rent an apartment.

The City of Hoboken has an important stake in maintaining a place for the less-affluent rentpayer. To do that it must harness some of the development still to come.

That's why a proposed affordable housing ordinance in Hoboken deserves support.

The proposal, which the city council has forwarded to the planning board for review, wouldn't affect small projects of four units or fewer.

But, by requiring an affordable housing component in larger developments, it would provide a level playing field for any developer to build in the city.

In addition, it is flexible enough to allow the affordable housing component to be in the form of a cash contribution to an affordable housing program, a set-aside within the project for low-or-moderate income residents, or construction of similar units elsewhere.

There may be some compromises that can be agreed upon in the details of the proposal. But the concept deserves strong support and the ordinance should be enacted speedily.

Of course, such action is an intervention in the market economy. But the severe troubles in the housing market, and the concurrent dearth of federal funding available for housing for the less prosperous people in the county, make such action by local governments and local developers highly desirable.

An affordable housing requirement deserves to be adopted. The ordinance could stand as a real achievement for the administration of Mayor Thomas Vezzetti and the members of the city council who support it.

## Small agency is a large mover

Waterfront Transit unit plans light-rail line on Hudson shore

By JUDY TEMES  
Business Writer

HOBOKEN—For a \$1 billion program, there are few faces behind the state's proposed waterfront transportation project, but those in charge say they wanted it that way.

They did not want the bureaucracy that has often bogged down multi-million dollar state projects.

The Waterfront Transit Development unit of New Jersey Transit has a staff of about a dozen people. Once fully established next year, it will have a staff of about 30, but no more, says NJT spokesman Anthony Grazioso. Located in a small office at the Hoboken Terminal here, a small size is critical.

So is keeping costs down. The unit, when started, received less than \$1 million for start-up costs from NJT. It now has more than \$80 million in the bank, but that's still less than 10 percent of the total project cost.

The unit was established in May 1987 by NJT's Board of Directors in response to a request

from Gov. Thomas H. Kean, who in 1985 called for a program to implement a waterfront transitway on the Hudson River coastline. Its first director, Joseph A. Martin, was appointed last spring.

Martin and his team are charged with planning the \$1 billion bus, road and light-rail system that will extend from Edgewater to southern Jersey City, hopefully by 1998, if all goes as planned. Martin will oversee land acquisition, a lengthy process that has just begun, and construction of the light-rail line, the bulk of the program that will account for about \$700 million of the cost.

The light-rail line, as planned, will extend from the former Pennsylvania Railroad's Weehawken Tunnel in North Bergen, turn east through the Arcorp and Hartz Mountain properties in Weehawken, head south around the western rim of Hoboken, turn south along the waterfront in Jersey City and end near Jersey City State Park. Martin envisions the rolling

stock as a trolley system similar to ones in use in Portland, Ore., and Pittsburgh, with tracks on a grade alongside cars and power cables (called pantographs) overhead.

Portland operates a modern system of Boeing light-rail vehicles whereas Pittsburgh runs an older system with a more patchwork collection of trolleys, ranging from Art-Deco 1934 PCC cars to gleaming new Hawker-Siddeley articulated cars.

Critics of the plan say they want it extended much further than now planned—west, north, and south. Others want big chunks of the system elevated—such as the Boston subway's Green Line—to avoid congestion on local roads. But both plans at this point are unrealistic, according to Martin. Cost, again, is the key factor.

Unlike other divisions of NJT, Martin answers directly to the state agency board. That's something only NJT Executive Director Jerome C. Primo does right now. That in itself demonstrates how important the state

considers this project, Grazioso said. "It's such a big project, it needs daily attention," he said.

Martin was recruited by a national agency after months of search. He is the former county administrator of Essex County, where he served from 1985 to 1987. Martin was also a management consultant to Touche-Ross, an accounting concern, and Cresan, McCormick and Paget of Washington, a long-range planning financial management firm. Martin also was a transit planner for Arlington, Va., and Syracuse, N.Y.

## Hoboken gets \$100G to raze eyesore sites

By Patricia Scott

A small building near Stevens Institute of Technology complex may be facing the wrecker's ball.

Hoboken yesterday received a \$100,000 grant from the State Urban Center Special Assistance Project. The program is a special funding plan that provides money to urban municipalities to be used toward the razing of old and deteriorated buildings.

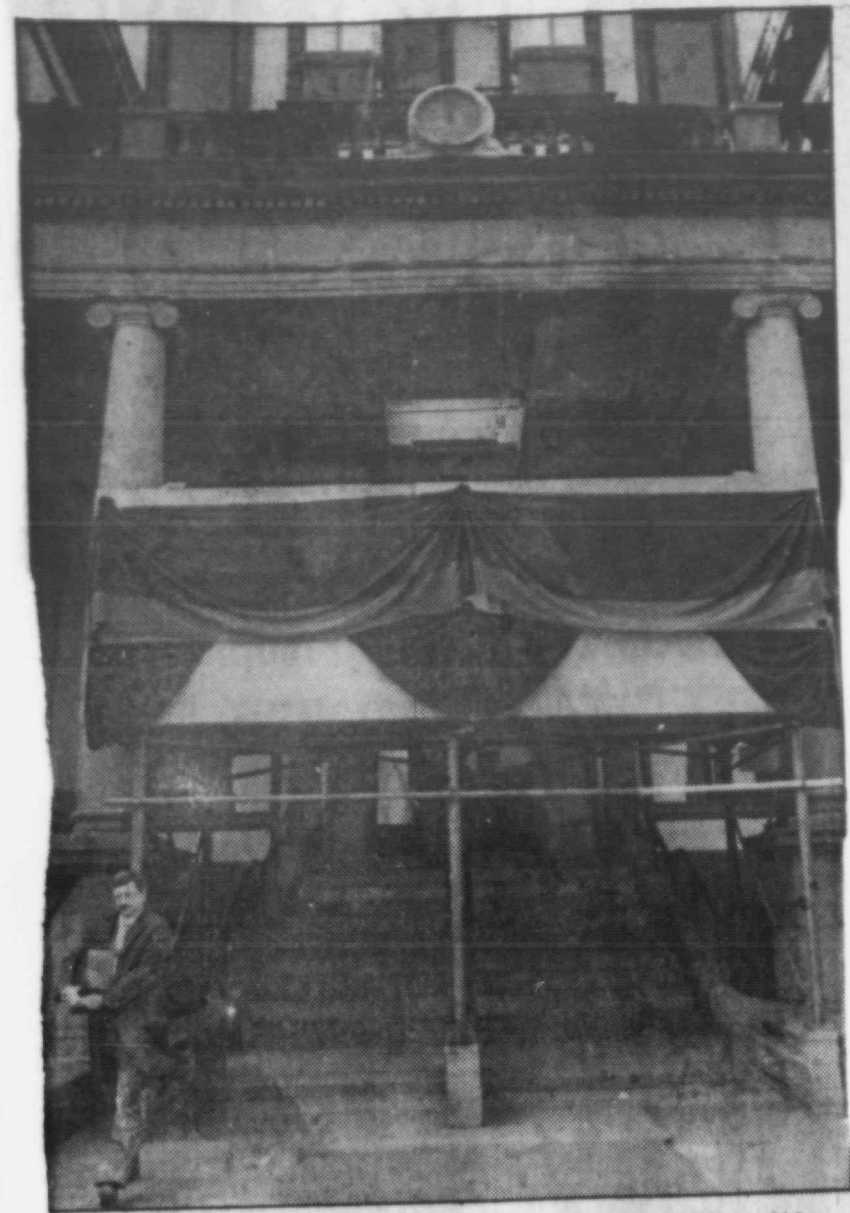
The late Mayor Thomas Vezzetti was instrumental in obtaining the grant, mayoral aide Laurie Fabiano said.

Fabiano said there are several eyesore sites, but the most likely is one at Stevens Park on Fourth and River Streets.

The little building near the college campus has fallen into disrepair. At one time, the city site held bathrooms and served as a tool shed for the park, but has been unused for decades and is a local eyesore.



# Vezzetti will lie in state tomorrow



Black mourning bunting is draped across the entrance to Hoboken City Hall.

By Janet Wilson

The body of Hoboken Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti will lie in state in City Hall from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. tomorrow, on the first floor outside the City Clerk's office.

On Saturday, a funeral cortege will proceed along Washington Street toward St. Francis Church, Third and Jefferson Streets, where Mass will be said at 10 a.m. The Rev. Daniel O'Brien, a close friend of the mayor since childhood, will celebrate the Mass. The City Council last night proclaimed tomorrow and Saturday official days of mourning in the city. City offices will be closed tomorrow.

Black bunting was draped outside City Hall yesterday, with the American flag at half staff in honor of the mayor, who died at 12:03 a.m. yesterday of a massive heart attack.

A short statement issued yesterday by Vezzetti's secretary said, "The city of Hoboken has suffered a monumental loss. Mayor Vezzetti was a special person in the hearts of many. We, the City of Hoboken, mourn his death and will always love him and treasure his memory."

Those sentiments were repeated last night in a resolution adopted by the City Council at its abbreviated regular meeting. Only routine city business was taken care of at last night's City Council meeting. No acting mayor was named, and probably will not be until after the funeral this weekend.

Once an acting mayor is named, a special election will be scheduled for November. The winner of that election would serve out the remaining seven months of Vezzetti's term. If no one was appointed within 30 days, a special election would be held in mid-April. The winner of that election would serve the remaining year and two months of Vezzetti's term.

The Council Chambers in City Hall was

See VEZZETTI — Page 10.

## Vezzetti lies in state; funeral rites Saturday

Continued from Page 1

filled with supporters of Fifth Ward Councilman E. Norman Wilson, who took the oath of office following his victory in a special election Tuesday.

City Clerk James Farina conducted the ceremony, with Wilson's sister, Carol Ann Wilson, holding the Bible for the councilman.

At the end of the meeting, Charles DeFazio, 82, a retired

Hoboken municipal court judge, made an impromptu speech in honor of Vezzetti.

"In my judgment and opinion, he did a fantastic job," DeFazio said.

"I liked Tom because he was a humanitarian."

"He was a great man, he was an honest man. He was the most honest man Hoboken ever had."



Michael Acquaviva, an aide to late Hoboken Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti, admires a framed cover of the Daily News Magazine calling the reader's attention to a story on "The Wackiest Mayor in America." The subject of the article was his boss, who died early yesterday morning.

THE BELOVED CLOWN

## So long, Tom

Dispatch 3-7-88

To his opponents, Thomas J. Vezzetti was a clown. He was known for trudging up and down Washington Street in garishly patterned, mismatched suits, shouting through a bullhorn his indignation over villainy in the politics of Hoboken.

To the people who voted for him, Mr. Vezzetti was Hoboken's Everyman, weary of a municipal government that seemed to be a private club to which ordinary citizens paid dues but could not join.

Two years after a surprise victory that brought him into the City Council, Mr. Vezzetti stunned even his supporters — an unlikely mix of old-timers, Hispanics and yuppies — by toppling a 12-year incumbent mayor. But Mr. Vezzetti's purple and green coattails were short, and he failed to take with him a Council majority.

This led to years of political turbulence, in which Mr. Vezzetti battled to transform the city's government according to his vision. He won some, lost some — won sometimes the support of a "fragile coalition," lost sometimes to barricaded opponents fearful of change.

He brought into City Hall new ideas, and freely delegated his powers to young people with new energy. He was no administrator, even his friends would admit, and enemies criticized him for it. Unable to assail him for his content, opponents attacked his style.

BUT HIS hold on people was powerful. They perceived a man who was honest. His visibility — and audibility — endeared him to Hoboken's citizens. Mr. Vezzetti's daily one-man processions between his cold-water flat on 14th Street and City Hall were a street event.

From his bullhorn-echoed compliments on the grace and beauty of elderly ladies out shopping, and barbed, witty invective for the latest misdeeds of his enemies.

Mr. Vezzetti's greatest virtue and greatest fault was to be uncompromisingly outspoken. For this he paid a penalty, for success in politics demands being politic. And therefore many of his dreams for Hoboken were thwarted by those he castigated.

He tried so hard. In a city of machine politics, Mr. Vezzetti beat the machine, and would not replace it with one of his own. But voting with the machine was all that some people knew, so they went on voting for the only machine in town. It broke his heart.

Tom Vezzetti was Hoboken, in much the same way half a century ago Fiorello La Guardia was New York City.

Goodbye, Tom. We'll miss you.

## VEZZETTI: The man, the mayor

LIFE  
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"His spirit always surpassed his flesh," said Gerard Costa, a supporter and Board of Education candidate. "He ignored his personal needs and he was imperfect. But his sense of what was right was flawless."

How well the mayor executed that instinct is open to debate. A drive to create affordable housing is largely unrealized because major portions of the effort have not yet passed by the City Council. Similarly, plans to reorganize city government are not yet in place, and even Vezzetti's considerable skills as a campaigner could not avert defeats in various municipal elections. That includes the 5th Ward race, where the mayor canvassed his final votes Tuesday night.

Dolores Mongon, mother of eight who has not had a fixed address for two years, resides with her mother-in-law in the same 14th Street building in which Vezzetti lived. Five of her children are in foster care, and the rest live with her.

"I would see him and he'd keep promising he was working on getting me a place," Mongon said. "But I don't think he had power. He was trying, but he was not the kind of person to push people."

HAD HE lived, Vezzetti might have faced a race he could not win in 1989, when his term ex-

ment.

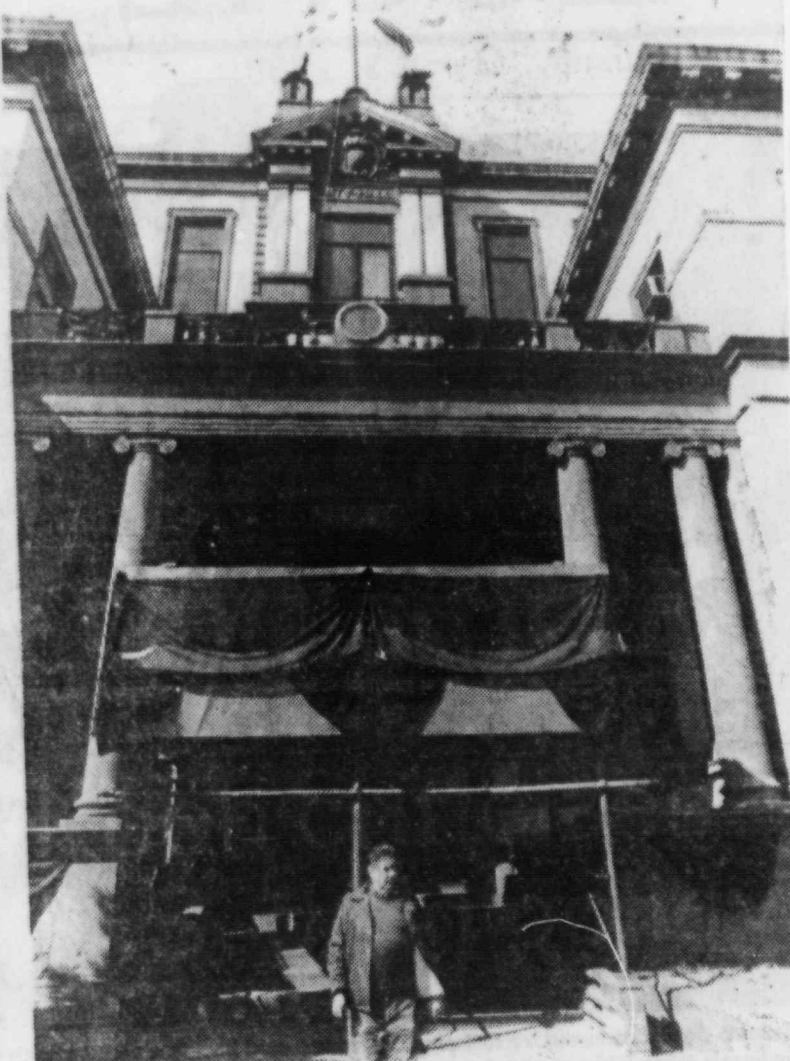
He railed against what he called the "scoundrels" that preceded him in the second-floor City Hall office, "raping the city of Hoboken." He was obsessed with ridding the city of looming, entrenched powers — an obsession, perhaps, that proved too stressful even for his bulky frame.

"Very few people can say, 'I gave my all,'" Councilwoman Helen Cunningham said. "He did."

VEZZETTI AND a twin sister, Louise Camp of Isla Verde, Puerto Rico, were born the last two children in a Hoboken saloon owner's family of five. Vezzetti worked in the family's Madison Hotel on the southwest corner of Washington and 14th streets until he joined the Navy in 1950.

He was a burly man who played both offensive and defensive tackle on the Navy football team. He was discharged in 1954 and returned here to work at the Madison and finish his high school education with correspondence courses. He continued his studies at New York University, majoring in American history. He earned a master's degree in 1976 at NYU, where he was working on his doctorate in American history.

"He had stick-to-it-iveness," said a friend, Nialletta Godfrey



Hoboken City Hall is draped in mourning yesterday in a final tribute to Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti, who died early yesterday.

regard for earthly comforts as a windfall.

"They couldn't take anything away from Tommy," he said. "Everything he had, he had within himself."

VEZZETTI'S POLITICAL idealism had its roots at the bar of the Madison, which he informally turned into a last refuge for the down and out. Men could flop on the pool table. When they passed out, Vezzetti threw them over his shoulder and took them to bed, force feeding them the next day, if necessary.

"He didn't want them to die," Godfrey said. "He thought he could straighten them out, like he thought he could straighten out the housing in Hoboken. Later he told me, 'I was very naive. The corruption is mind-boggling.'"

VEZZETTI'S concern for alcoholics began with the death of his brother Frank from alcoholism in 1960.

Former school Trustee Steve Block said the concern was only one symbol of a lifelong commitment to helping others.

"He had a gentleness of spirit and a selflessness that I've literally never seen in another human being," Block said. "This

man's life was Hoboken."

VEZZETTI SOLD the Madison in 1978 and moved into a sixth-floor railroad apartment at 109 14th St., which he shared with a friend and reformed alcoholic, Harold Sgardelis, 62.

Vezzetti could have lived in more comfortable circumstances, but he appeared not to care about himself. His bizarre clothing may have been contrived, but it was anything but vain.

"He didn't seem to have an ego," Godfrey said. "He told me he had to keep his goal in mind. 'I want to keep my humility,' he said."

In addition to his sister, he is survived by two brothers, John and Robert.

The Earl F. Bosworth Funeral Home here is handling the arrangements.

March 3, 1988

## MAYOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

cil members who supported Vezzetti to ask their support today.

But sources close to those three council members — Joseph Della Fave, Helen A. Cunningham and Thomas Newman — said they would oppose the naming of Pasculli. The three have maintained that one of their own should be named to fill out Vezzetti's term to preserve its integrity. Cunningham would not comment on the issue except to say a formal statement from the three will be released today or tomorrow.

On what may be a key legal question, City Law Director William Graves circulated a memo to council members last week saying legal precedent suggests that a council member is not allowed to vote for himself in a mayoral vote. If that opinion is accurate, it would force Pasculli to convince all five opponents of Vezzetti's administration to support him.

It could not be determined whether Pasculli had accomplished that by late yesterday. Sources close to the council said Councilmen David Roberts, E. Norman Wilson and Edwin Duroy support Pasculli. That leaves Councilmen Steve Cap-

piello and Robert A. Ranieri, two of Vezzetti's most rabid enemies, as the key to Pasculli's election.

Cappiello said yesterday he has not decided who to support. He said he was looking for someone with conservative economic policies for the city, which is facing a revaluation and steep Board of Education and municipal budgets this year. "I want to know which person is going to have policies to keep this government stable," Cappiello said.

Sources maintain that Cappiello also wants to obtain some influence over the new administration before he agrees to support it.

If the council fails to select an interim mayor by April 1, it would be forced to declare an election, which would be held in mid-May. The council may also declare its intention to hold an election, at its meeting Wednesday or at any subsequent meeting. The election would be held approximately 45 days after that declaration.

The council meeting, set for 7 p.m. Wednesday in its City Hall chambers, also will allow the council to pursue business it delayed in its meeting last week.

## PASCULLI MAKES THE BIG MOVE

Dispatch 3-7-88  
By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The City Council may select an interim mayor when it meets Wednesday night, according to City Clerk James Farina.

City Council President Patrick Pasculli, who yesterday called the meeting after private negotiations with other members of that body, is considered

to be the favorite for the job. Sources close to the council said Pasculli had the support of at least four other council members.

The office of mayor became vacant early Wednesday when 59-year-old Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti, a self-proclaimed reformer, died of a massive heart attack.

Almost from the moment

Vezzetti died, his political foes have been conferring on his replacement. Under state law, the City Council had 30 days from the date of Vezzetti's death to appoint an interim mayor, who would serve until a special election in November. Five of the council's nine members must agree on a candidate for his appointment to be valid.

Pasculli, a frequent foe of

Vezzetti, said yesterday that he would not accept the office unless he could find the needed votes on the council without having to "cut a deal," giving up mayoral power in exchange for council support.

Pasculli said that he was close to forming a coalition around his candidacy. He added that he would approach the three coun-

Please see MAYOR Page 16

## HIS LIFE WAS HOBOKEN

Rites set for the city's 'fighter of scoundrels'

Dispatch 3-3-88  
By WALTER OWEN and CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writers

HOBOKEN—Rumpled, manic and visionary, he had no fear. In a shambly life — as an ex-barkeep and one-time security guard — he found his gait as a crusader against "scoundrels" in City Hall, and topped a three-term mayor.

Thomas F. Vezzetti, mayor for 32 months, died early yesterday morning at St. Mary Hospital, ending the sneers of opponents and invoking sadness and grief.

There will be a wake at City Hall's first-floor

hall tomorrow, from 1 to 8 p.m. A Mass will be said at St. Francis Church at Third and Jefferson streets on Saturday at 10 a.m. Burial at Holy Name Cemetery in Jersey City will follow.

THE BACHELOR mayor inspired supporters with his passion for honesty in government. A sometimes slovenly man, he attracted scorn from his enemies for his mismatched socks, his missing buttons and his grizzle. But more often than not, his words, not his clothes, rattled them.

Please see LIFE Page 16



## His own epitaph: 'An honest man'

By Jim DeRogatis, Janet Wilson and Bill Campbell

Hoboken Mayor Thomas Vezzetti always said he wanted to be remembered as "an honest man in a corruptible profession."

The 59-year-old mayor died of a heart attack early yesterday morning after a long day of campaigning for Helen Manogue, who was defeated in a bid for the Fifth Ward City Council seat.

Vezzetti's style was unique, even among Hudson County politicians, known for their flamboyant ways.

The mayor loved to stroll down Washington Street, loudly announcing his political views through his trademark bullhorn or stopping every few feet to chat with residents.

At 200 pounds and more than six feet tall, Vezzetti stood out in a crowd with his loud, colorful outfits, bright ties and unlaced shoes.

If it was a special occasion, he might have even worn his purple tuxedo with matching top hat and bright red shoes.

(size 13, quadruple E).

"I was conceived on Castle Point and born in Bradley Beach," he often said. He was the son of Frank Vezzetti, who owned four hotels, including the Madison on 14th Street, and Lucy Bazzini, heiress to the Bazzini peanut fortune.

Vezzetti grew up in a red brick house on Castle Point Terrace and attended St. Peter and Paul grammar school. He claimed he was left back in the fifth grade because classmate Robert Ranieri refused to help him with his spelling homework. Ranieri later became a councilman and Vezzetti's political arch-rival.

Even in his youth, Vezzetti was outspoken and enjoyed being the center of attention. "He was very loud, but not a troublemaker," recalled grammar school classmate Lorraine Campbell.

After graduating from Dearest High School, Vezzetti volunteered for the Navy in

See HIS OWN — Page 12.

## His own epitaph: An honest man



It's his first day as mayor, and Thomas Vezzetti hauls out a personal welcome 'mat.'

Continued from Page 1

1950 during the Korean War. He was 22. He served as a storekeeper aboard the aircraft carrier Franklin D. Roosevelt and was a star guard on the Navy football team.

While in the Navy, Vezzetti was frequently given demerits for keeping a sloppy uniform. Once, he nearly walked into a spinning airplane propeller. Nevertheless, he "was a big, honest clumsy guy that you couldn't help but love," said shipmate Steve Dado, now a North Bergen shopkeeper.

When he left the Navy in 1954, he returned to Hoboken to care for his mother and run the Madison. Vezzetti's father had died in 1952.

"At the time, the Madison was basically a men's drinking bar, and I would put them up for a night or two," Vezzetti said several years ago.

When he wasn't working at the Madison, Vezzetti was studying history at New York University. He kept his books behind the bar and studied between pouring drinks. After 35 years in night school, he had earned a B.A. and an M.A. in history and had hoped to return to NYU next fall to earn his doctorate.

If patrons of the Madison succumbed to too much alcohol, Vezzetti carried them up several flights of stairs and put

them to bed. After the bar closed, he often slept on a pool table to ward off burglars.

Vezzetti sold the Madison in 1977 shortly after a fire that claimed the life of one man. Deputy Fire Chief Richard Tremietti recalled Vezzetti's strength and courage during the fire. Vezzetti carried several men from the burning building, the chief said.

Although he had a college degree, Vezzetti spent the next few years at odd jobs, including working as a security guard at a bank in New York and at the municipal garage in Hoboken. While working for the city, he ran unsuccessfully for president of the municipal employees union. He said that election sparked his desire to enter politics.

He began to attend City Council, Board of Education and county Board of Freeholders meetings regularly, often sitting in the front row with a rickety old portable typewriter, frantically typing notes. On the bus home afterwards, he would rail about the incumbents and the "political machine."

"I knew him from those early council meetings, and frankly, nobody took him seriously," said Danny Altilio, a close friend and member of his political organization. "He was somebody you'd see on the bench who seemed to be up to date on what was going on but a little eccentric."

In 1983, Vezzetti campaigned for the Second Ward City Council seat. He ran on a campaign that stressed that incumbent Councilman Walter Cramer had moved out of the ward, and he won a surprising victory.

As a councilman, Vezzetti constantly sparred with Mayor Steve Cappiello, and soon set his sights on upsetting Cappiello in his bid for a fourth term.

The 1985 mayoral election was a crucial one in Hoboken's history, coming during one of the city's greatest periods of change. Many longtime resi-

## Vezzetti presided over great change

Here are some of the policy initiatives and accomplishments of Thomas Vezzetti during his term as mayor of Hoboken:

- Enactment of Hudson County's first law prohibiting landlords from warehousing vacant apartments.
- Initiation of a program to replace sewerage facilities for the first time since the Civil War.
- Creation of development guidelines for the Hoboken waterfront.
- Elimination of tax abatements for developers.
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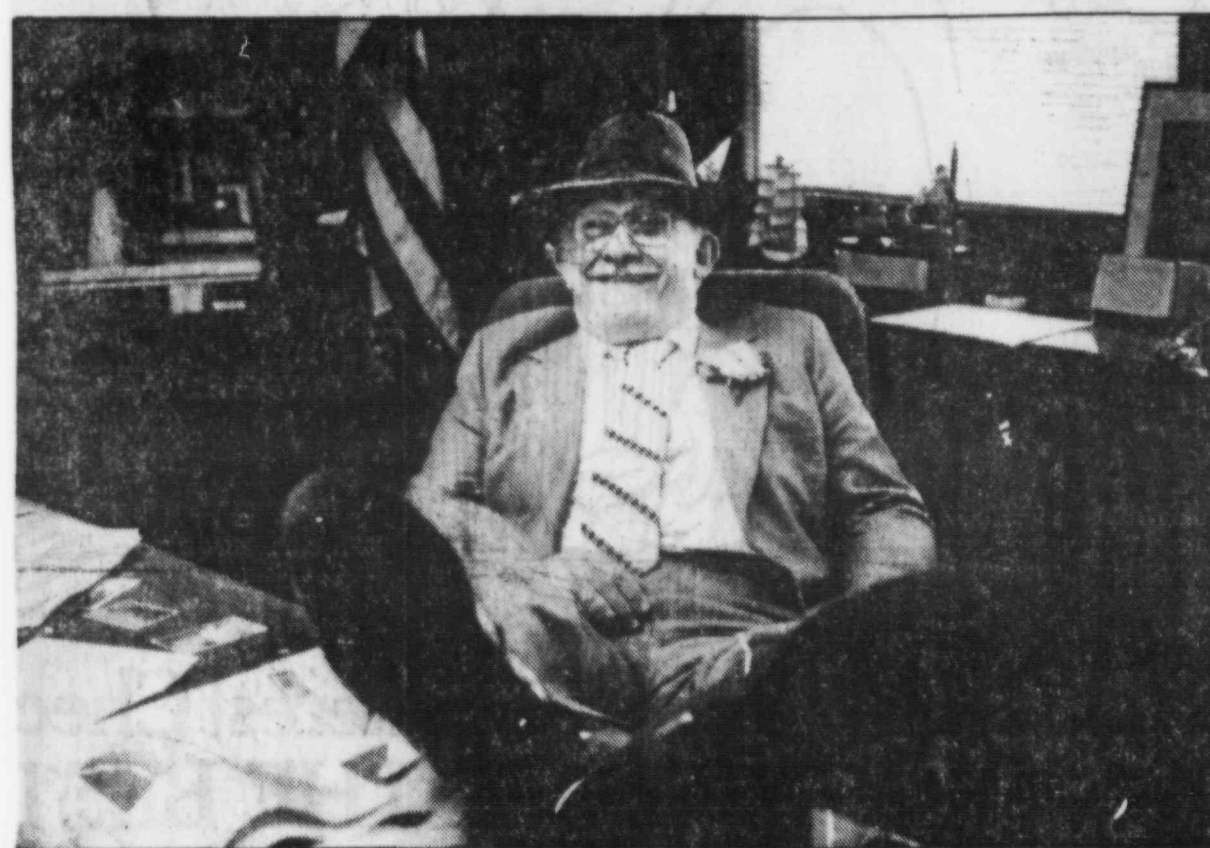
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But the mayor always had one phrase to describe his service to the city he loved: "Always a pleasure."

### HOBOKEN IN MOURNING

# CITY WITHOUT A MAYOR



A smiling Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti takes a brief break from a busy schedule, in his office at City Hall. The first-term mayor died early yesterday.

## Council postpones replacing Vezzetti

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By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

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The lack of a decision comes in the midst of wild speculation on whom the fractious council might name.

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Council members made no statements about a possible successor, saying only that another

meeting is possible on Monday. The regular council agenda was reduced last night, and all proposals held over will be handled at the council's next scheduled meeting.

Under state law, the council has 30 days to name an interim mayor, who would serve until a special election in November. If the council chooses not to name an interim mayor, a special election would be called to fill the remainder of Vezzetti's term, which expires June 30, 1989.

That election, according to city Business Administrator Edwin Chius, would take place in mid-May, leaving the city without a chief executive for at least 10 weeks.

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A grim-faced Mayor Thomas Vezzetti gets the word from Helen Manogue that she had been defeated in the runoff City Council election. Vezzetti had been counting on Manogue's support in the council. This is one of the last photos taken before the mayor returned home, where he suffered his fatal heart attack.

### COUNCIL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

lowed a day of frantic, mostly secret negotiations among council members over who, if anyone, would be appointed to the position. Five of the council's nine members must agree before a candidate is selected. The candidate may be a sitting council member, who would have to give up his seat, or any other city resident who meets the minimum legal qualifications.

Vezzetti's death shattered the tenuous balance the council had attained in recent weeks, and split the council into at least two — and possibly three factions — according to sources.

Clearly united are the three council members who supported Vezzetti: Thomas Newman, Helen A. Cunningham and Joseph Della Fave. They have vowed to stay together, sources said, and for the time being oppose any move to endorse other council members or City Clerk James Farina, one possible candidate.

A second fairly cohesive group is said to comprise Pasculli,

David Roberts and E. Norman Wilson, who won re-election Tuesday to his 5th Ward seat with considerable help from the other two. This group, sources said, is pushing for Pasculli's appointment. Pasculli, who has hinted strongly he would seek the office in 1989, was not commenting on that possibility yesterday.

A third group might be the remaining three councilmen: former Mayor Steve Cappiello, Robert A. Ranieri and Edwin Duroy. It was not clear yesterday if those three had formed an alliance.

If an interim mayor were to be named, some coalition would emerge. Chius is thought to be an official who might attract coalition support. Chius was named to his post when Cappiello was mayor, and was retained by Cappiello's sworn enemy, Vezzetti. Chius has no known aspirations for running for the office in an election, another possible bonus.

## Tributes to the mayor

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### MAN OF DECENCY

## Tom Vezzetti — a gentleman and friend

Dispatch 3-7-88  
By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Obnoxious, disorganized and bullheaded — that is the memory some have of Tommy Vezzetti.

Certainly, those impressions are accurate. No one who knew the late mayor could forget his habit of blaming — sometimes, through a bullhorn — his political predecessors for all of the city's ills. "Soundbells, they're all scoundrels," he would say. Then he would cup his massive hands to his mouth and lower that booming voice, as if he were sharing a secret. "It's all political horse...." he would say.

But lost somewhere between the bullhorn and the politics, I fear, was the man's decency. Tom had a simple, almost baroque sweetness about him. To me, a young reporter in his first-ever journalism job, he was a gentleman from the moment I met him last summer to the final conversation we shared a couple hours before his death. His courtliness — often reduced to a handful of well-

worn phrases — was nonetheless heartfelt.

He didn't praise you to get something from you — he praised you because he meant it. And Tom's concern went beyond his curious location. His single-mindedness extended to his actions toward his constituents.

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A few hours before he died, Tom suffered a major political defeat when his candidate for the 5th Ward Council seat, Helen Manogue, lost to incumbent E. Norman Wilson.

I BUMPED into the mayor, who looked drawn and pale, as I was leaving to write about the election. "Ineptitude, they chose ineptitude," he said. We walked half a block to Maxwell's and he said he had no regrets about keeping a low profile in the election because he had followed his friends' advice.

"They wanted me to keep quiet about it, so I kept quiet," he said.

I told him I was sorry and turned to go. "Chris," he said, as he had a thousand times before, "I want to thank you."

Thank you, Tom. I never really took the opportunity to say it.

Christopher Ave covers Hoboken for The Hudson Dispatch.

## Mayor's final hours recalled by friend

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"He was angry. He wasn't depressed," said Ira Karasick. "He looked awful, but he did not look like he was ready to die."

Karasick, an attorney who was a friend of Tom Vezzetti, spent many of the last hours of the mayor's life with him. Friday, as the wake was being held in City Hall, Karasick sat in Roma's Salumeria, Vezzetti's favorite deli, and reminisced. "He had his last supper here in Roma's," said Karasick, gesturing at the counter.

After dinner and last-minute campaigning for Helen Manogue, who was challenging incumbent Fifth Ward Councilman E. Norman Wilson, the

mayor arrived at Manogue's headquarters, the Singleton-Galman realty office on Washington Street. He was dressed in the raccoon coat he had worn daily since buying it a month ago. He leaned over Manogue's shoulder, learned she had lost, and delivered his opinions in a loud voice.

Vezzetti and Karasick ended the evening at Trilogy, the 11th Street tavern where Manogue's troops were holding a post-campaign bash. "The mayor danced. He was fine," said Karasick. "He was cheering people up. He left about 10:30, and I went with him. We

See THE FINAL — Page 6.

## The final hours

Continued from Page 1

walked down Washington Street. He accosted a couple of people on the sidewalk, told them about the election, what had happened.

For weeks, people had noticed that Vezzetti looked ashen. As Karasick and the mayor approached Karasick's car on Twelfth Street, the mayor said his head and left shoulder were hurting badly. He kept pointing to his left shoulder, Karasick said, and he asked the mayor twice if he realized the pain could be a sign of his recurring heart trouble. Vezzetti dismissed that, saying it was related to his fall on New Year's Day in the Hudson County Courthouse.

"He said he was going to sue," said Karasick. "He was laughing. He wanted to know how much I thought he could get." Karasick offered him a ride to his home two blocks away, but Vezzetti said he preferred to walk.

"He looked very tired, but his mind was very clear and lucid. I said 'bye and that was it.' Karasick mentioned that he might have been the last person other than Vezzetti's roommate to see him before he died, then shrugged it off. "He always talked to every single person on the street. He probably had five conversations by the time he got to his front door."

Vezzetti suffered a massive heart attack about ten minutes later, after racing up the five flights of steps to his apartment at 109 14th St. He died an hour later. — Janet Wilson



## His own epitaph: 'An honest man'

By Jim DeRogatis,  
Janet Wilson  
and Bill Campbell

Hoboken Mayor Thomas Vezzetti always said he wanted to be remembered as "an honest man in a corruptible profession."

The 59-year-old mayor died of a heart attack early yesterday morning after a long day of campaigning for Helen Manogue, who was defeated in a bid for the Fifth Ward City Council seat.

Vezzetti's style was unique, even among Hudson County politicians, known for their flamboyant ways.

The mayor loved to stroll down Washington Street, loudly announcing his political views through his trademark bullhorn or stopping every few feet to chat with residents.

At 200 pounds and more than six feet tall, Vezzetti stood out in a crowd with his loud, colorful outfits, bright ties and unlaced shoes.

If it was a special occasion, he might have even worn his purple tuxedo with matching top hat and bright red shoes.

(size 13, quadruple E). "I was conceived on Castle Point and born in Bradley Beach," he often said. He was the son of Frank Vezzetti, who owned four hotels, including the Madison on 14th Street, and Lucy Bazzini, heiress to the Bazzini peanut fortune.

Vezzetti grew up in a red brick house on Castle Point Terrace and attended St. Peter and Paul grammar school. He claimed he was left back in the fifth grade because classmate Robert Ranieri refused to help him with his spelling homework. Ranieri later became a councilman and Vezzetti's political arch-rival.

Even in his youth, Vezzetti was outspoken and enjoyed being the center of attention. "He was very loud, but not a troublemaker," recalled grammar school classmate Lorraine Campbell.

After graduating from Dearest High School, Vezzetti volunteered for the Navy in

See HIS OWN — Page 12.

## His own epitaph: An honest man



It's his first day as mayor, and Thomas Vezzetti hauls out a personal welcome 'mat.'

Continued from Page 1

1950 during the Korean War. He was 22. He served as a storekeeper aboard the aircraft carrier Franklin D. Roosevelt and was a star guard on the Navy football team.

While in the Navy, Vezzetti was frequently given demerits for keeping a sloppy uniform. Once, he nearly walked into a spinning airplane propeller. Nevertheless, he "was a big, honest clumsy guy that you couldn't help but love," said shipmate Steve Dado, now a North Bergen shopkeeper.

When he left the Navy in 1954, he returned to Hoboken to care for his mother and run the Madison. Vezzetti's father had died in 1952.

"At the time, the Madison was basically a men's drinking bar, and I would put them up for a night or two," Vezzetti said several years ago.

When he wasn't working at the Madison, Vezzetti was studying history at New York University. He kept his books behind the bar and studied between pouring drinks. After 35 years in night school, he had earned a B.A. and an M.A. in history and had hoped to return to NYU next fall to earn his doctorate.

If patrons of the Madison succumbed to too much alcohol, Vezzetti carried them up several flights of stairs and put

them to bed. After the bar closed, he often slept on a pool table to ward off burglars.

Vezzetti sold the Madison in 1977 shortly after a fire that claimed the life of one man. Deputy Fire Chief Richard Tremietti recalled Vezzetti's strength and courage during the fire. Vezzetti carried several men from the burning building, the chief said.

Although he had a college degree, Vezzetti spent the next few years at odd jobs, including working as a security guard at a bank in New York and at the municipal garage in Hoboken. While working for the city, he ran unsuccessfully for president of the municipal employees union. He said that election sparked his desire to enter politics.

He began to attend City Council, Board of Education and county Board of Freeholders meetings regularly, often sitting in the front row with a rickety old portable typewriter, frantically typing notes. On the bus home afterwards, he would rail about the incumbents and the "political machine."

"I knew him from those early council meetings, and frankly, nobody took him seriously," said Danny Altilio, a close friend and member of his political organization. "He was somebody you'd see on the bench who seemed to be up to date on what was going on but a little eccentric."

In 1983, Vezzetti campaigned for the Second Ward City Council seat. He ran on a campaign that stressed that incumbent Councilman Walter Cramer had moved out of the ward, and he won a surprising victory.

As a councilman, Vezzetti constantly sparred with Mayor Steve Cappelletto, and soon set his sights on upsetting Cappelletto in his bid for a fourth term.

The 1985 mayoral election was a crucial one in Hoboken's history, coming during one of the city's greatest periods of change. Many longtime resi-

## Vezzetti presided over great change

Here are some of the policy initiatives and accomplishments of Thomas Vezzetti during his term as mayor of Hoboken:

- Enactment of Hudson County's first law prohibiting landlords from warehousing vacant apartments.
- Initiation of a program to replace sewerage facilities for the first time since the Civil War.
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- Elimination of tax abatements for developers.
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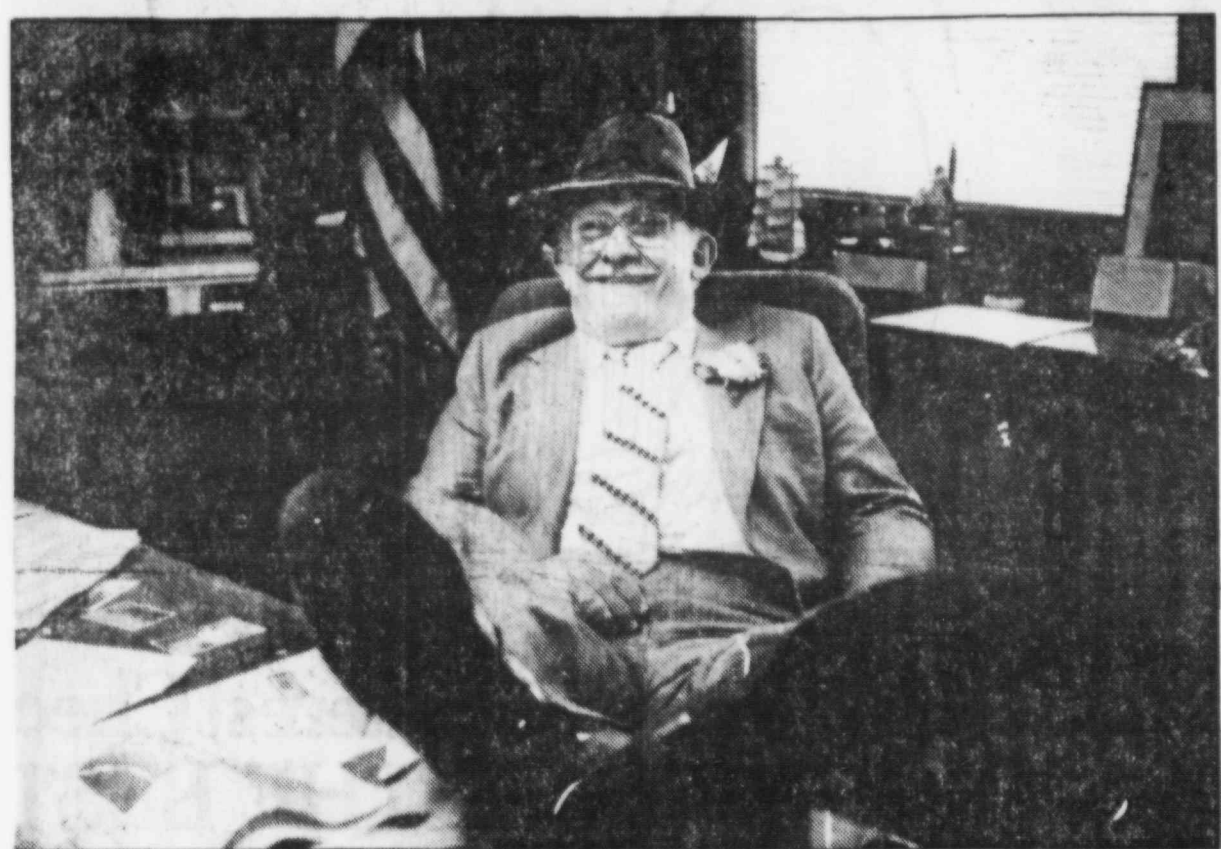
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For weeks, people had noticed that Vezzetti looked ashen. As Karasick and the mayor approached Karasick's car on Twelfth Street, the mayor said his head and left shoulder were hurting badly. He kept pointing to his left shoulder. Karasick said, and he asked the mayor twice if he realized the pain could be a sign of his recurring heart trouble. Vezzetti dismissed that, saying it was related to his fall on New Year's Day in the Hudson County Courthouse.

"He said he was going to sue," said Karasick. "He was laughing. He wanted to know how much I thought he could get." Karasick offered him a ride to his home two blocks away, but Vezzetti said he preferred to walk.

"He looked very tired, but his mind was very clear and lucid. I said 'bye' and that was it," Karasick mentioned that he might have been the last person other than Vezzetti's roommate to see him before he died, then shrugged it off. "He always talked to every single person on the street. He probably had five conversations by the time he got to his front door."

Vezzetti suffered a massive heart attack about ten minutes later, after racing up the five flights of steps to his apartment at 109 14th St. He died an hour later. — Janet Wilson



## Speculation and assessing

J.J. 3-8-88  
The revaluations in Jersey City and Hoboken have sparked something of a property owner's revolt in parts of the two cities, and that's quite understandable.

There has been a terribly long delay between revaluations in the two cities, and that delay has skewed the picture of property values.

On top of the unfortunate nature of the property tax itself, which requires payments with no regard to income, the delay makes any attempt to make assessed values conform to market values likely to cause severe strain.

Some owners are more severely affected than others. Jersey City's Downtown homeowners, for example, are likely to blast the revaluation when the Downtown Coalition of Neighborhood Associations meets on this issue tomorrow at 7:30 at St. Michael's Church Parish Hall, 252 Ninth St., Jersey City.

There are two important considerations that should be kept in mind in considering this issue.

One is that the new assessments are not cast in stone. People who find their home values out of whack with their market value, or unfairly differing from a similar home in virtually the same place, can contact the appraiser, Real Property Appraisers, for reconsideration. If that proves unsatisfactory, they can appeal to the Hudson County Tax Board.

It's important that the appeals process be handled fairly and competently.

The second important consideration to keep in mind is the effect that the failure to revalue properties for so many years has had in Jersey City and Hoboken.

In looking at the real estate speculation that has swept through Hoboken and to a lesser extent Jersey City in the past few years, economists can find many causes.

But by postponing revaluation for over a decade, the two municipalities have been contributing to the atmosphere of the soaring residential property values.

Some manufacturing properties have successfully appealed tax assessments based on their relative market value of nearly two decades ago. Other factories burdened with a relatively high tax rate have been converted to residences.

Meanwhile, the property tax burden, which could be expected to put a brake on the soaring property values, didn't serve that purpose for residential buildings in some newly desirable neighborhoods because the properties there are still being assessed at their old values. Without that brake, home values in some of those neighborhoods zoomed.

After this long postponement, systematic property revaluations are now being forced upon Hoboken and Jersey City. Even if done properly, they will produce hardships for some. But the exceedingly long delay has made the distortions greater, and the likely strains even more severe.

To make sure that the housing markets reflect the true cost of maintaining services in the municipality, as well as to reduce the unfairness of the property tax system, both cities ought to prepare for revaluations at much shorter intervals after the revaluations of 1988 are put into effect.

## Childhood friend eulogized mayor

J.J. 3-7-88  
The tiny yellow and sky-blue church was packed with more than 400 people. Outside, hundreds more listened to the Mass from loudspeakers.

Early Saturday morning at St. Francis Roman Catholic Church, the Rev. Daniel O'Brien of Syracuse, formerly of Hoboken, celebrated Mass and eulogized his childhood friend, Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti, dead of a heart attack at 59.

"He was a generous, open-handed man who was in love with this city, in love with his people, and in love with life. Every tear is past, every election is over, every frail human infirmity is over for Tom, and we are left with our memories. But Tom is not merely memory," said O'Brien. "He is inescapably built into all of us. I can only speak for myself, but who and what I am Tom has helped to shape. Because of

him I am more human," Vezzetti's aides read the lessons and prayers. Each segment was concluded with the refrain "And Justice for All," Vezzetti's campaign slogan.

Eleven priests from nearly every church in Hoboken celebrated the Mass. Pallbearers included Law Director William Graves, Community Development Agency Director Michael Coleman, CDA tenant advocate Thomas Olivieri, City Councilman Thomas Newman, Director of Public Works Roy Haack, Business Administrator Edwin Chius, former school board member Steve Block, school board candidate Felix Rivera, and Michael Cerullo, a friend. Bishop Jerome Pechillo, vicar of Hudson County, considered the future, while nearly every local politician and many state officials listened from the first two rows.

"The mayor's chair is empty. We do not know what the future holds. Let us pray for a future mayor for the city of Hoboken. And may our future leaders put into practice in concrete ways Tom Vezzetti's ideals, his qualities."

Vezzetti's twin sister Louise was given the flag that had draped his coffin, a present from the President of the United States. Laurie Fabiano, his closest aide, spoke last. "Tommy wore a little path between our offices," she said. "He always said, over and over again, 'Keep it going, kids. You're my brains.' Well, we might've been the brains, but there's something we didn't get to say enough to Tommy," she said, her voice breaking. "He was the heart and spirit and example for all of us, and we love him forever." — Janet Willson

## Hoboken revaluation notices in the mail

Continued from Page 1

Hoboken property values have increased 15-fold since the last revaluation. Properties that increased in value less than 15-fold will probably not experience a tax increase in 1988, providing the municipal, school board and county budgets do not increase from last year, Pizzoli said.

Homes and businesses that increased in value more than 15-fold will likely experience a tax hike. "Some properties went up in value 20, 22 or 25 times," Pizzoli said.

Hoboken has not revalued property since 1970, even though state law requires cities to conduct a revaluation every

10 years. Real estate values have increased dramatically in the city in the last decade, and property is currently valued at only 13 percent of its market worth.

The revaluation will bring all properties up to 100 percent of their appraised market value. Although property values are increasing, the tax rate will decrease.

Pizzoli stressed that taxpayers won't be able to judge the exact impact of the revaluation until after the tax rate is struck several months from now. The rate depends on the municipal, school board and county budgets.

City Tax Assessor Woody Monte said last week that he anticipates a \$20 tax rate in Hoboken, although some city officials said that rate was high.

Last year's rate was \$210 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, the highest in the state.

"Those property owners who have been paying more than their fair share will now pay only what they are obligated to pay," Pizzoli said.

"For those property owners who have been paying less than their fair share and thereby being subsidized by other property owners, they will pay more taxes in 1988."

Owners of condominiums

and newly constructed buildings will benefit from the revaluation since their property has been valued closer to its true value, Pizzoli said.

Longtime property owners, especially those on a fixed income, may be hurt since the value of their homes and their tax burden have both increased.

Hoboken officials have said they will explore options to help fixed-income homeowners cope with their tax bills. Residents will also have two chances to appeal their valuations.

Property owners who think their homes have been overval-

ued can send a postcard to Real Property and meet with a local appraiser hired by the firm to present proof of their claims. Pizzoli said they should be prepared with documents detailing the selling price of other homes in the area or a recent appraisal.

Residents will have another chance to appeal the amount of taxes levied against them before the county Board of Taxation after the tax rate is adopted.

People with questions about the revaluation can contact Real Property at 792-9611, or city Tax Assessor Woody Monte at 420-2024.

## 'Reval' notices are in the mail

By Jim DeRogatis

Most Hoboken property owners will receive their revaluation notices in the mail today.

Real Property Appraisers, which is conducting a court-ordered revaluation of all property in Hoboken, mailed most of the notices yesterday, although some residents received the results Saturday.

All of the notices were scheduled to be sent out last week, but the mailing was postponed after the death of Mayor

Thomas Vezzetti early Wednesday morning.

The revaluation is expected to have a dramatic impact on fixed-income property owners, who could be hit with sharp tax increases, and condominium owners, who will likely see a tax decrease.

For residents concerned about how the revaluation will affect their tax bills, 15 is a magic number, according to Joseph Pizzoli, project manager for Real Property.

See HOBOKEN — Page 6.

## Baker gets his sewage permit

By Bill Campbell

Sewage permit in hand, Hoboken attorney turned developer Gerald Baker said yesterday that his 93,000-square-foot waterfront office complex is finally official.

The state Department of Environmental Protection last week awarded Baker a much-coveted sewer hookup permit for the \$10 million project at 2 Hudson Place. The permit is the first awarded to a Hoboken developer since the state imposed a ban on hookups nearly three years ago.

Baker's project was exempted from the ban. The developer, who received a Federal Urban Development Action Grant to finance a portion of

the project, had agreed to install a small "package" sewage facility to treat the building's waste.

Although the first tenant moved into the gleaming granite and marble building last September, the permit was the last legal hurdle for Baker to clear and it may have removed a psychological barrier which prevented prospective tenants from signing leases.

"I imagine the permit issue may have made some tenants hesitant," Baker said. "But we have always been optimistic that this would be resolved. Now that the building is fully on-line, it should encourage tenants to come in."

Two of the building's eight floors are already occupied by

firms in the textile and shipping industries, and Baker said he has another tenant signed to rent the entire third floor.

Baker is negotiating with several restaurants and banks for space on the ground floor mezzanine. Pizzeria Uno, a restaurant chain, has expressed interest, Baker said. He would not what other restaurants or banks have expressed interest.

Baker Waterfront Plaza is the first newly constructed waterfront project in nearly two decades and is located one block from the Erie Lackawanna Terminal. Office space in the building is renting for about \$30 a square foot, considered moderate for a city where commercial rents range from \$20 to \$40 a square foot.

Baker said that about 50 percent of the building will be occupied by this spring, while he expects 100 percent occupancy by next spring.

The DEP imposed the sewer ban after Hoboken fell behind on a federal mandate to upgrade its sewage system to a secondary level. The action, which applies to buildings that generate more than 2,200 gallons of sewage a day, has prompted some bankers and developers to postpone large projects.

Smaller projects and larger ones which received permits before the ban was imposed have not been affected by the state action. Hoboken is expected to have its secondary plant completed by 1991.

## Hoboken will swear in 28 new firefighters today

Hoboken's Public Safety Department will get a shot in the arm today, with the swearing-in of 28 new city firefighters.

The move will bring the city Fire Department ranks to nearly 140 officers and men.

The 28 new firefighters all live in Hoboken, according to

Law Director William Graves, and will begin work at a starting salary of \$18,469.

All the firefighters must pass a physical examination next month and will then be sent for intensive training, officials said. They would be assigned to city fire duty before summer.

## Even sky weeps at Vezzetti wake



Mourners view the flowers and memorabilia outside City Hall.

By Patricia Scott

The man who brought laughter as well as political change to the lives of his constituents was formally mourned yesterday in Hoboken City Hall by several thousand people.

The body of Mayor Thomas Vezzetti, who died at 12:03 a.m. Wednesday of a heart attack, was viewed yesterday by thousands, who waited sadly in the winds and downpour for a last moment with their mayor.

Vezzetti was waked in City Hall's first floor corridor outside City Clerk James Farina's office, wearing his favorite red-and-yellow plaid suit and a wide yellow tie. Vezzetti's trademark bullhorn was displayed on a little table next to the mayor's head.

More than a hundred floral wreaths lined the City Hall corridors, main entrance and exits, including one from his roommate, Harry "The Greek" Sgardelis that said, "You were that good." Vezzetti often joked about his opponents saying "Am I that good or are they that bad?"

A special memorial shrine to Vezzetti featuring the mayor's grinning face in assorted poses, including a shot of Vezzetti's head superimposed on the Statue of Liberty's body, was set up in the rain outside the Hall.

Tearful residents lined up at noon, though the wake did not begin until 1 p.m.

They just had to be there.

"I took off from work today to pay my respects," said Genevieve Luiz, a Monroe Street resident. "I called in sick. He was the first official in the history of this city to actually care what went on. When I had trouble staying in my building, he was there and he encouraged me. He always had a moment to stop and help you."

"I truly enjoyed him," said Agnes Mulley. "He was the kind of character who will be remembered forever. You could have 10 more mayors, but in 50 years Vezzetti will be the one everyone tells stories about."

The crowd waiting to pay respects to the late mayor snaked around the block by the time doors opened at 1 p.m., where Vezzetti's twin sister, Lucille, joined a badly-shaken Laurie Fabiano, Vezzetti's closest aide, and Councilman Joseph Della Fave, whom Vezzetti often called "my son," to accept condolences.

Fabiano and Della Fave noted how quiet the entire city seemed. In a city known for its intense vibrancy — honking horns, rushing sirens, playing children — time seemed to stand still yesterday. "It seems



The Rev. Sandy Hegadorn eulogizes the mayor from the steps of City Hall.

## Kids felt he cared

By Patricia Scott

Last month they waited in the mayor's City Hall anteroom, nervous kids snapping their gum and wondering if they were making a big mistake.

What mayor — what big-shot official — would want to see a group of kids?

What famous politician would care if they had anything to say?

"We were so scared our hands were freezing cold and our knees were shaking," Anthony Morin, a 12-year-old from Our Lady of Grace School, remembered yesterday. "We almost left 'cause we got so afraid. We said, 'We gotta be crazy, a guy this important doesn't care what we think. We're just kids. Are we nuts?'"

That's the moment when Tom Vezzetti poked his head out the door and rolled out the red carpet.

And a sneaker-clad group of tense 12-year-old kids were treated like a visiting panel from the governor's office.

It wasn't the mayor's plaid hat, his big red shoes or the two-foot-long purple tie he

See THOUSANDS — Page 6.

See SCHOOL KIDS — Page 6.



## THOMAS F. VEZZETTI, 1928-1988

## Public pessimistic with Vezzetti gone

By WALTER OWEN  
Obituary Editor

HOBOKEN—The mournful bunting draped across City Hall, so appropriate in Friday's dark rain, looked misplaced in Saturday's sunshine as citizens tried to reconcile the gentle man they buried with the difficult office he held.

While the city said goodbye to Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti Saturday afternoon under brilliant March skies, there was little optimism about the prospects of the mayor's successor carrying on what was described as his selfless approach to government.

"Nothing changed under him," said Tom Prendergast, the owner of Pier Platters, a record store here. "But you felt an undercurrent of honesty with Vezzetti, an undercurrent of goodness."

"He didn't succeed in bringing in honest politics," said a resident, who declined to be identified. "The regime will get back in there."

The 59-year-old mayor died suddenly of a massive heart attack early Wednesday morning after 32 months in office. More than 1,000 persons attended services at St. Francis Church here and at Holy Name Cemetery in Jersey City,

where he was buried.

AS MAYOR during an era of change in this riverfront city, affordable housing was one of Vezzetti's main political themes. He prodded developers to build low- and middle-income housing for longtime residents of the city, instead of expensive housing to meet the needs of the young professionals who have been flocking here, most of them from New York City.

"He always fought the regime," said one resident, "but they tied his hands."

They put the poor people out of the temple."

"He stopped development in the past two years," said Iggy Camporeale, who ran for councilman in the 1st Ward in 1971. "He was no administrator, but he didn't want the oldtimers chased out."

As much as he moved those closest to him, Vezzetti did not stir the electorate. Unusual habits of dress, baroque patterns of speech and an apparent political clumsiness distanced him.

"He was out of the 1890s," said Glenn Morrow, who moved here in 1977. "He was a man out of time."

Despite his flamboyance, Vezzetti felt this alienation deeply. A bachelor all his life, with no close family ties, he had little in his life other than his responsibilities as a councilman from the 2nd Ward from 1983 through 1985, and then as mayor, since he blew the now-famous bullhorn to victory that year.

"ON THE surface, he never let anyone get to him, but everything he felt, he felt with passion," said a former aide, Gerard Costa. "And that passion had a flip side. He had his dark moments."

## Pasculli is likely Hoboken mayor

Bill Campbell  
and Janet Wilson 3-7-88

City Council President Patrick Pasculli, who rode Mayor Thomas Vezzetti's coattails to win an at-large council seat in 1985 but quickly split from him, will probably be named Hoboken's next mayor Wednesday.

He will serve until Nov. 2, when a special election will be held. The winner will fill out the rest of Vezzetti's term, through May 1989.

Sources said Pasculli will be named by a council majority vote to succeed Vezzetti, who died last week of a heart attack.

The only other councilman seeking the post was Robert Ranieri, but he didn't attract

enough votes. Pasculli, 38, and Vezzetti, 59, were allies on the council from 1983 until 1985. After winning an at-large seat on Vezzetti's ticket in 1985, Pasculli split from the mayor, citing differences over appointments.

As soon as Pasculli is appointed, said sources, many of Vezzetti's key aides and department heads will be out.

"It looks now like we've got the majority for Patty," said a source close to Pasculli. "There was no question of who would be named (mayor), it was just a matter of getting enough support."

Ranieri and E. Norman Wil

See PASCULLI — Page 6.

## Pasculli likely Hoboken mayor

Continued from Page 1

son, who served as council president until May, are mentioned as chief contenders to replace Pasculli as council president.

A five-vote majority on the nine-member council is needed to name a mayor. They could opt to leave the post vacant, forcing a mayoral election in 45 days. However, anti-Vezzetti administration sources said there is "no way we'd want to keep this status quo."

"There's too much power in that office," said one. "There's too many appointments that can be made."

Those close to Pasculli said his appointment would bring sweeping changes at City Hall. According to state law, department directors must vacate their posts when a new mayor is inaugurated.

Graves, the city attorney, and Michael Coleman, executive director of the Community Development Agency, will be let go, according to sources. The sources said Laurie Fabiano, Vezzetti's closest aide, will be asked to step down rather than be fired.

Fabiano was grief-stricken last week, and anti-Vezzetti organizers fear that public sym-

pathy for her could haunt them on November. Graves was one of Vezzetti's key advisors and was seen by many anti-administration council members as "a thorn in our side."

Leading candidates for law director are Fred Bado and Thomas Caligly, both assistant corporation counsels, sources said. Bado served as CDA director under former Mayor Steve Cappelletto and Caligly was appointed to the law department in the Cappelletto administration.

Peggy Thomas, assistant CDA director, is said to be favored by Pasculli to replace Coleman, who reportedly fell out of favor with Pasculli and Wilson for openly supporting Helen Manogue's unsuccessful council candidacy against Wilson in the Fifth Ward.

Pasculli will probably ask Business Administrator Edwin Chius and Public Works Director Roy Haack to remain in their posts "for the time being," said one of his advisors.

Haack, who has headed Public Works for two years, is coordinating the city's efforts to upgrade its sewerage system to federal levels. Chius, who served as business administrator during the Cappelletto ad-

ministration, is preparing the city's 1988 municipal budget.

Pasculli will not have an easy agenda. Both the budget and the recently completed property revaluation, which will send some homeowners' taxes soaring, could make the job of mayor extremely difficult in the next eight months.

Also, in spite of his vocal stance against the Port Authority's plans for development on the waterfront last year, one of Pasculli's closest aides said he would probably change his mind pretty quickly because of the need for more revenue.

Throughout his term, Vezzetti's aides complained that his administration was unfairly blamed for problems — like an inadequate sewage treatment facility and delay in property revaluation — which were inherited from Cappelletto's tenure. Pasculli will experience the same difficulties.

Vezzetti reformers said last week that while the short term outlook was disastrous, November's special election and the regular election the following spring would be pivotal, when they could recapture City Hall. "Pasculli's got just enough rope to hang himself," said one.

## VEZZETTI SUCCESSOR

## Pasculli lacking coalition

## Council chief seen as mayoral favorite

By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—City Council President Patrick Pasculli, the clear favorite for interim mayor, has not forged a solid council coalition supporting him, according to sources close to the council.

Pasculli needs five of the council's nine votes to be appointed to the office, which became vacant when Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti died of a heart attack early Wednesday.

Three council members who had supported Vezzetti have openly refused to back Pasculli, and at least one of the remaining six is wavering, according to sources close to Pasculli.

The developments suggest there is a chance the council will not select an interim mayor, leaving the office void until a special election is held in mid-May. Pasculli, repeating a pledge to avoid making deals to obtain council support, said yesterday he is prepared to wait until the May election if he cannot build enough council support without giving away power in exchange for votes.

The council is set to meet tomorrow night at 7 in City Hall, where a mayoral vote may be taken.

City Hall yesterday was abuzz.

Please see MAYOR Page 14



PASCULLI is wavering, according to sources close to Pasculli.

## April 1 deadline looms on new mayor

By Janet Wilson 3-9-88

If the City Council doesn't appoint a temporary mayor by April 1, Hoboken will be without a leader until November.

The council is badly split, and there has been no sign its members will come close to agreeing on a temporary successor at tonight's meeting.

But several city officials are saying it would be tragic if no agreement is reached. They hope that the news that no special election can be called before November will goad the council into action tonight.

City attorneys admitted yesterday they

had not completely read state statutes last week after Vezzetti's death. By yesterday, they had realized that if the council does not choose to fill a vacant post within 30 days, that post must remain empty until the next general election. The next general election is Nov. 2.

Originally, law director William Graves thought a special election would have to be called in May if the council didn't choose a mayor within 30 days.

But he and assistant city attorney Thomas Calligly, along with several other attorneys, have thoroughly researched the municipal vacancy law and other laws regarding special appointments. They con-

cluded that because the law was changed in 1980, the council was no longer required to appoint a successor within 30 days, but had the option to do so.

If Vezzetti had died after Sept. 1 of this year, then a special election would have to be called.

But because he died before Sept. 1, the city could end up without a mayor for seven months. In fact, had Vezzetti died last November and no Council agreement been reached within 30 days, the city could have been without a mayor for a year, say Graves and Calligly.

"I think the law is just plain wrong, it is severely lacking," Graves said.

## School kids felt that their mayor really cared

Continued from Page 1

were that day that the kids were remembering yesterday.

They recalled the way they were treated — as interesting, intelligent people with problems Vezzetti was honored to learn about.

"He was so kind to us and so interested," recalled Morin. "He brought us into his own big mayor office and we all sat down together. He asked us how things are and what we need. He said he wanted to make the city nice for us kids."

The children told Vezzetti they needed a park.

"We told him everytime we tried to play ball over at Hudson Street the teen-agers hanging out there call us curses and chase us," remembers Our Lady of Grace sixth-grader Allen Hudson. "He got really concerned when he heard that. He said it wasn't fair and he'd try to find a place not being used where he could make us a little park to play."

Some would say even as an adult the mayor was childlike, others remember him when he was a child. Sister Anna Daniel, the mayor's sixth and seventh grade teacher at St. Peter and Paul School, said young Tom Vezzetti was generous but a little on the wild side.

"He was what you would call today a hyper active child," she said.

Vezzetti's inimitable style reached city children as well as voters, and yesterday dozens of children from various city grammar schools attended the mayor's wake in City Hall.

Many came with their parents, but the majority came on their own in little groups of six or seven.

All public and several private schools were closed yesterday and more than 4,000 children had the whole day off.

Some decided to spend it standing in the pouring rain, waiting to pay their last respects.

"He was a terrific guy," recalled Hudson. "He was unusual and special and we thought he was great. When we went to see him, we expected him to get mad. Instead he sat with us a long time and treated us great. We couldn't believe a mayor would sit with just kids and be so nice."

Victor Pellegrini, 13, was astonished at the mayor's interest.

"He was one cool guy," said Pellegrini. "He really wanted to hear from us. He didn't scream or kick us out; he cared."

"We were shocked when he said he'd even see us," said James Tarabocchia, a Joseph F. Brandt school sixth-grader. "We thought he'd talk to us maybe a minute, but he wanted to know everything. He liked us."

Tarabocchia remembers something else as well: Vezzetti's famous sojourns along Washington street, bullhorn in hand.

"We loved to see him coming because he was always so funny he made us laugh and made us interested in politics," Tarabocchia said. "He never

said the usual politician stuff, he was fun."

Joey Matesic, a Calabro School sixth-grader, saw the mayor often at parades and whenever Vezzetti visited Calabro School.

"The whole class liked him a lot," said Matesic. "He was never too serious. He had fun with everything."

The children said the mayor remembered each of them individually — sometimes by name, sometimes by a memory of when and where he saw them last.

"He'd say, 'Oh, yeah, I know you. I saw you at the school last week,' or 'I saw you over by that store the other day,'" remembers Morin. "It made you feel like you stood out and you were really important to him."

For many of the smaller children who stood with their classmates in the rain, Vezzetti was the only mayor they had ever known and yesterday's wake the first they ever attended.

"I don't remember anyone else who was ever mayor," said Mary Gurbach, an eight-year-old joining her mother to pay respects. "I didn't know anyone was mayor before. I liked him."

The team of little ball players said the toughest part of it is only hitting them now.

"When I came down here today it hadn't really gotten to me yet," said 12-year-old Morin with a worldly sigh. "None of it seemed real. But then I saw the flowers and all the crying and then him. I feel really, really bad."



School children, left to right, Anthony Moun, Victor Pellegrini, James Tarabocchia, Joey Matesic and Allen Hudson recall memories of Mayor Vezzetti.

## Vezzetti death ends defamation suit

Salvatore E. D'Amelio Jr., the former Hoboken law director, dropped his defamation suit against mayoral aide Laurie Fabiano yesterday, as his attorney linked the decision to the death of Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti.

D'Amelio's attorney, William Shulman of North Bergen, maintained yesterday the suit was valid but Vezzetti's death made it unnecessary because Fabiano would be leaving her post.

"The act of God spoke louder than the act of man," Shulman said, referring to the shakeup of city administration caused by the mayor's fatal heart attack.

"She will be going, (Law Director William) Graves will be going," the lawsuit isn't necessary anymore, Shulman said.

Fabiano has agreed to leave her post and is expected to meet with interim Mayor Patrick Pasculli next week to discuss the transition.

D'Amelio filed the suit over criticisms Fabiano made to reporters about D'Amelio's employment as attorney for the Police Superior Officers' Association. Fabiano charged the relationship was improper because of D'Amelio's previous employment as law director for the city, a position in which he represented the city in negotiations with the association.

DISPATCH 3-12-88 —JEFFREY HOFF



# 'An eccentric, but in a great way'

By Patricia Scott 3-3-88

Hoboken newcomer Patricia Quinn remembers her first meeting with Mayor Thomas Vezetti.

"I was coming home from work New Year's Eve when I first saw him," Quinn recalled yesterday. "He was stepping out of the Beat n' Path wearing a long white opera scarf and a white tuxedo. He walked straight toward me and said, 'My dear, you look lovely!'"

That casual meeting is the stuff Vezetti folklore is made of.

A larger-than-life character from his flaming red shoes to the tip of his purple velvet fedora, Vezetti's daily marches along Washington street were theatrical events.

His fake fur coat sweeping behind him in the wind, bullhorn firmly in hand, Vezetti stopped to chat with every pedestrian along his route.

And when he approached voters — his huge hands extended, head cocked, eyes twinkling — something special happened.

"I'd see him coming along and you got a sense he cared about what was going on," said Rose Sciarra, a Fifth Ward resident.

"He'd always say to me, 'You look so beautiful, my dearest' or 'Your intense physical beauty is exceeded only by



Rose Sciarra  
'A regular guy'



Patricia Quinn  
'White opera scarf and tuxedo'



Ann Tambone  
'Took a personal interest'

genuine interest in people."

The trademark bullhorn was as much a part of the Vezetti mystique as his "triple E, I gotta admit it" feet and the broom he often carried when a bout of street-cleaning fervor overcame him.

Residents, who yesterday recalled their mayor's cries for honesty in government, quoted Vezetti's favorite expressions from memory, at times wiping away tears.

"He'd always say to me, 'You look so beautiful, my dearest' or 'Your intense physical beauty is exceeded only by

your magnificent brains, my dear," said 70-year-old Mary Festa of Bloomfield Street. "God, I loved that man. He was the most decent, honest, adorable person Hoboken ever had."

"We all knew he was a little, I don't know, eccentric — but in a great way," said Ann Tambone of the Sixth Ward. "He was not only a nice man, but you knew he really cared because he took a personal interest in things."

Minnie DeCrisci cried when she heard the news on the radio at 5:30 a.m. yesterday.

"I ran and told everybody in my 11-unit tenement," she said. "I couldn't believe it. He was such a good, decent man; he always had a nice little saying. And always so kind."

Leonard Goldblatt, a civil engineer, called the late mayor a "man of great genius and a tremendously warm heart."

"He had a genuine concern about doing good for the public and I'll always remember him with kind memories," said Goldblatt. "He had great hopes for the city which unfortunately

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## MAYOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

takes the 30-day opportunity, or we serve with no mayor until November," he added.

Graves, Assistant Law Director Thomas Callagy and other city officials said the city could not function without a mayor for that long. The officials said dozens of contracts require the mayor's signature every week, making government practically impossible with the office vacant.

Council President Patrick Pasculli, who has lobbied other council members for the job strenuously, still did not appear to have a clear majority yesterday. Citing legal precedent, Graves said no council member may vote for himself as mayor — an opinion that will force Pasculli to obtain five votes on the nine-member body.

The opinion is based on a 1985

case in the Appellate Division of state Superior Court in which the mayor of East Orange tried to vote for himself as the de facto police chief. The court rescinded the mayor's vote.

Although they initially disagreed with Graves' interpretation of the case, Pasculli and his allies accepted that opinion yesterday.

"He won't vote for himself," City Clerk James Farina, a close associate of Pasculli and the head of Pasculli's political club, said.

That opinion may make it difficult for Pasculli to get five votes from among the other eight council members. Three council members who were allied with Vezetti — Joseph Della Fave, Helen Canning and Thomas Newman — openly oppose Pasculli. They released a joint

statement yesterday explaining their position.

"We believe it is our responsibility and certainly our intention to see to it that Tom's (Vezetti) policies and programs come to fruition," Della Fave, speaking for the group, said.

The decision of the three council members means Pasculli needs all five remaining votes. Pasculli appears to have the solid support of Councilmen David Roberts and E. Norman Wilson. Councilmen Steve Cappiello and Edwin Duroy also are said to back Pasculli, although their support may be waning, according to sources. Councilman Robert A. Ranieri, who had offered himself as a mayoral candidate in private meetings with other council members, has not announced his candidacy.

## Board backs limits

### Waterfront plan faces amendment

By JUDY TEMES Business Writer

HOBOKEN—The Planning Board last night said it supports the city's proposed guidelines to limit construction along the waterfront, but said it may seek changes to some of the numbers suggested by the administration.

In a working session at City Hall, the board said the numbers are a good benchmark with which to work. The board is scheduled to meet next Thursday and issue its own recommendations on the guidelines, which were developed by the administration of then Mayor Thomas Vezetti last summer.

"This is a maypole we all have to dance around," said board Chairman Peter Alicandri. "But we can make the string longer or shorter depending in the circumstances."

Developers here have opposed the plan, saying it will leave a piece of the Gold Coast in the dust. Several developers spoke against the plan last night, arguing that the restrictions on building density will increase costs to the point where projects may not be undertaken.

The guidelines, as set forth last summer, would limit new housing to 2,000 units along the waterfront and restrict commercial construction to no more than 2.5 million square feet. Buildings on the outskirts of the city will be limited to 25 stories, and eight stories between Fourth and 11th streets.

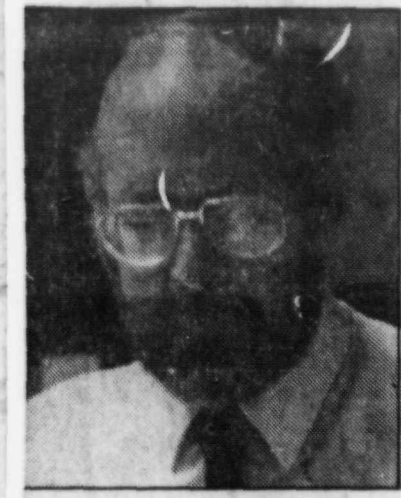
The guidelines would also prohibit cars along the city's waterfront, requiring people to park in garages on the outskirts and take mass transit.

Frank Lanza, an attorney for developer Anthony Della'Aquila, last night called the guidelines arbitrary and capricious, and said they would lead to more litigation. He said development should be allowed to continue on a case-by-case basis.

But board members, including Alicandri, stressed the need for guidelines, although they said some flexibility must be included.

"I don't favor a case-by-case review," Alicandri said, "but we must not lose sight of the need for creativity."

While developers criticized the plan for its lack of detail, board consultant Ralph Seligman said the numbers are based on specific studies of how much growth Hoboken can support in the coming years. The guidelines are needed, Seligman said, to preserve Hoboken's "human-scale quality," something with which most board members agreed.



WILLIAM GRAVES  
Pressures council members

## VEZZETTI SUCCESSOR

# City warned: Pick mayor

## Hoboken counsel issues April 1 deadline

By CHRISTOPHER AVE Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The city law director put pressure on the City Council yesterday, saying that unless the body chooses an interim mayor by April 1, the city will be without a leader until November.

The opinion puts added pressure on the council to name a replacement for Mayor Thomas F. Vezetti.

The opinion puts added pressure on the council to name a replacement for Mayor Thomas F. Vezetti.

Vezetti, who died early last Wednesday. The council is scheduled to meet tonight, when it may choose a mayor.

In announcing his interpretation of state law, Law Director William Graves reversed his earlier opinion that the city

clerk could call an election after 30 days of no mayor.

"I have re-read the statute a little more carefully and with a little less pressure, and now it appears that option is not open," Graves said. "Either the council

Please see MAYOR Page 31

## A Dream Falls Flat: Fleeing Hoboken for the Suburbs

By DENA KLEIMAN Special to The New York Times

HOBOKEN, N.J. — Seton and Brian Beckwith bought a brownstone here seven years ago amid hopes that this old waterfront city, minutes from Wall Street and with spectacular views of New York, would be transformed into a new middle-class community.

Now, two children later, discouraged by poor schools, rundown parks, inadequate parking and filthy streets, they are leaving for the suburbs. And they are not alone.

"A lot of people are jumping ship," said Mrs. Beckwith, who is moving to Montclair in June.

They are leaving a city that indeed has been transformed. Where boarded-up storefronts stood, there are fancy boutiques. Tenements have been demolished and replaced by expensive condominiums. But as some young families here are learning, it takes more than renovating buildings to change a 100-year-old community that has, they believe, entrenched politics and problems.

Lacking Time and Energy Appreciative of Hoboken's quirky charms yet impatient with its problems, many newcomers to this ethnically diverse city have been unable or unwilling to join forces to change things. Busy with families and often two careers, many say they do not have the time or energy to become involved in civic affairs; a few say they tried but are worn out.

"The new people are not plugged into the political community," said Maureen Singleton, a real-estate agent who is active in community affairs. "They are too busy with their own lives. They don't have the time and energy to do something about reform. It's too awful, too impossible."

"The more you educate them, the more overwhelmed they get. The easiest answer is to move to Montclair."

"At one point I felt like waving a white flag," said Jane Trombley, who moved to Summit after many years as a Hoboken fan. She and her husband had hoped to send their children to public school. But after discovering that Hoboken ranked among the 10



Brian and Seton Beckwith with their daughters, Catherine, left, and Brindley, outside their brownstone in Hoboken, N.J.

worst school districts in New Jersey, they, like many other newcomers here, decided to send their son to a private school.

After a year of spending two and a half hours every day driving their son to and from school in Englewood, 15 miles away, they decided to move.

There are many natives in Hoboken, of course, people who were raised here and love it the way it is.

"Some people can't cope with urban life, but there are plenty of others who can and love it here," said Jerry Citro, a 34-year-old native who recently bought a brick row house himself.

Mr. Citro, who is a real-estate agent, said he warns buyers that Hoboken is not the suburbs, that its schools leave a lot to be desired and that many families may consider private school a necessity.

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Continued from Page 1.

ly he'll never realize. I hope the person who must eventually take his place strives to do as well."

Michael Kulp of First Street, who moved to the city three years ago, said he had hoped Vezetti would be mayor forever.

"If Hoboken were a banana republic, and politically it often seems like it is, we'd be smart to appoint him the leader for life," said Kulp. "He was a man for all ages, a snappy dresser and a great guy. He was constant entertainment."

Jim Mills, who recently settled in the Fifth Ward, said he was astonished the first time he saw Vezetti.

"The mayor was all dressed up, passing by my house in a parade," said Mills. "I didn't

realize he was the mayor then, but I thought he was great — a really incredible local character."

Like Mills, Robert Moyle remembers Vezetti as "an absolute original. There was certainly no way you could ever not notice him on the street," said Moyle. "I saw him every day in the deli getting his lunch at Roma's. He was always ready to stop and talk and say a few nice things."

Residents watched with teary eyes as the flag over City Hall was dropped to half-staff and black and purple bunting was hung over the sunny steps.

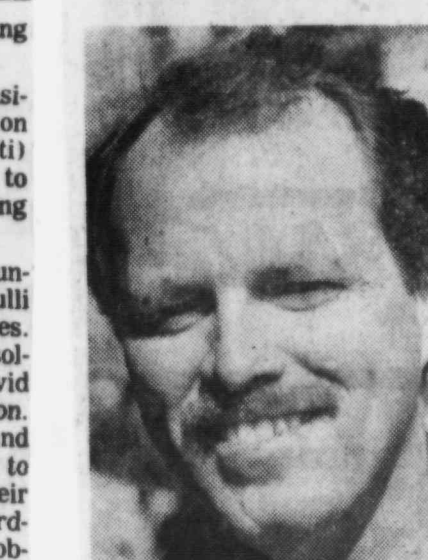
Old men gathered on benches outside the hall, sitting in the sun and shaking their heads. Women stopped to speak briefly with each other, or to pray.



Leonard Goldblatt  
'Man of great genius'



Michael Kulp  
'A man for all ages'



Jim Mills  
'Incredible local character'



Robert Moyle  
'An absolute original'



A constituent applies a soothing icebag as the mayor makes the rounds with his bullhorn.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, MONDAY, MARCH 7, 1988

## Shifting Dream: Fleeing Hoboken for Suburbia

Continued From Page B1

\$30,000 are now worth \$300,000. Over the last 15 months, 1,500 new studio, one- and two-bedroom condominiums have come on the market and have attracted another new population of young professionals to this once predominantly blue-collar city.

But among that first small group of urban pioneers who set off Hoboken's renewal and real-estate boom, the dream seems to have run aground.

"The dream fell flat on its face," said Lou Mont, a developer who has lived in Hoboken for five years but is leaving because he plans to start a family.

"Can Still Be the Gem" "I had expected when I moved to Hoboken," he said, "that things would have changed enough that I'd be able to say: 'I'm proud enough I built some buildings and, hey, I'm going to raise my family, too.'"

"Hoboken can still be the gem of the Hudson, but it's going to take time."

The population has grown — in large part because of the condominium boom — to about 48,000 now from 45,000 half a dozen years ago. So, too, according to the Hudson County Board of Elections, has the number of voters, to 19,487 last year from 17,534 in 1982.

The state's Education Department says the schools are improving. Test scores last year were up 20 percent over the year before. Still, a spokesman for the department said, only 34.8 percent of Hoboken's public school students passed all three parts of a mandatory ninth-grade test in reading, mathematics and writing.

Less clear these days is what Hoboken's new residents have contributed to the renewal of the community. Is their Hoboken primarily a bedroom community for young professionals who stay only as long as they are single? Or is there still hope for it to be a place where people can set down roots, raise their children and become active members of the community?

Planning to Leave That question was much in the air the other day at Stevens Park, a playground overlooking the Hudson, where three mothers played with their toddlers in the afternoon sun. Of the three, two plan to leave. The third is thinking about it seriously.

"This is no place to raise kids," said one of the three, Marilyn Ray, a nurse, who is moving with her husband and 2-year-old daughter, Ashley, to Florida. "There is no place to ride a bicycle. No swimming pool. No soccer field. The parks are in terrible condition."

Pat Prendergill, who said she loves Hoboken, lives in a three-bedroom home for \$950 a month — a steal, she says — but is now moving with her husband and 3-year-old son, John, to Connecticut. "It's a great place for young people or anyone else if they don't plan to use it as anything except a bedroom," she said of Hoboken.

To be sure, there are families who plan to stick it out in Hoboken and are

working hard to make that possible. Ken and Susan Schept, for example, have been in Hoboken since 1972. They bought a brownstone in 1978 and have two children — Judah, 9, and Rebecca, 5, whom they send to private school in Hoboken at a cost of \$3,600 per year per child.

No Guinea Pigs They have decided not to send their children to public school or to try to make the schools better because, Mrs. Schept said: "I'm not willing for my children to be guinea pigs. I would spend time to change the system but I know it won't happen in my children's time."

Nevertheless, the Schepts plan to stay. So do Gail and Martin Tuzman, who moved to Hoboken in 1977 and whose children are now age 3 and eight

months. Actively involved in the April school board election, Mrs. Tuzman said she hopes the schools will be better by the time her children are old enough to attend.

Matt Russo, a truck driver and actor who was born in Hoboken 65 years ago and raised five children there, loves Hoboken. Four of his children remain, and two of his grandchildren attend the local schools. "It's the place to be," he said.

For Mr. Mont, the developer: "People come to live here because they hear how great it is. When it comes voting day, no one comes out. The right people are living here but they don't get involved. They have no personal commitment to changing Hoboken."

Voting or Cooking Laurie A. Fabiano, who was executive assistant to Mayor Thomas Vezetti, who died of a heart attack last week, summarized the political involvement of the new Hoboken resident this way:

"The last school board election, I was on the phone with a woman and I asked her if she went to vote. She said: 'I meant to. But I just put a chicken in the oven.' The education of children are at stake and she's worried about a chicken."

The graffiti on the boarded-up Brass Rail restaurant, once one of Hoboken's more exclusive dining places and now temporarily closed after a fire, holds one vision for the city: "Stox Kaput. Real Estate Next. Bye Bye Yuppies."

But Joe Barry, a real-estate developer and publisher of a local newspaper, The Hoboken Reporter, has a different prediction.

"The dream," he said, "is deferred."



## UPFRONT

## Did reform coalition die with Vezzetti?

By Janet Wilson, Jim DeRogatis and Bill Campbell

Thomas F. Vezzetti broke down the doors of City Hall.

Literally. As an anti-administration councilman in 1983, he was so angry about not being let into a closed committee meeting in the Law Department that he knocked and knocked until he left the door hanging from its hinges.

Two years later, he moved into the mayor's office, armed with a list: "I'm going to clean out the Board of Ed, make sure the waterfront is for all of us, and see that (ex-Mayor Steve) Cappiello and his self-seeking friends are out of a job. They're all going."

By the beginning of next week, many of Vezzetti's appointees may be going, just 2½ years after they moved in. With his death, all of the directorships are automatically vacated, to be filled by whomever the acting mayor wants to appoint.

It is unclear whether the council will appoint an interim mayor or wait until April to hold a special election.

Jersey Journal 3-3-88

## News analysis

The future of the reform movement Vezzetti fathered is now in doubt. Although he was personally popular with Hoboken voters, his popularity rarely transferred to the younger reform candidates he supported in City Council and Board of Education elections.

Vezzetti's major political success was the fusing of a unique coalition of old-time Italians angry with machine politics, Puerto Ricans who feared displacement and newly arrived, briefcase-toting professionals. The groups coalesced into a voting block strong enough to sweep the Cappiello machine out of office.

But after his surprising victory, he found he had little real governing power. An anti-administration council majority thwarted him on many appointments and policy initiatives.

A major source of contention between Vezzetti and the council was the group of young, creative administrators he surrounded himself with. The mayor entrusted key policymaking to people like chief aide Laurie Fabiano and political adviser Steve

Block, "newcomers" who were distrusted by many as outsiders.

Despite political squabbling with the council, his administration accomplished many of his campaign goals.

But left hanging by his death are the adoption of his plans for a trust fund to create new affordable housing, implementation of a new Master Plan for development and creation of developer fees for rebuilding roads, sewers and infrastructure.

As the administration attempted to fulfill Vezzetti's campaign promises, the reform movement stumbled along. The mayor and the reformers won several seats on the City Council and Board of Education over the last three years, but they never secured a voting majority on either body.

Vezzetti threw himself into each election with renewed hope, pacing the streets from daybreak with his bullhorn to garner votes. He was always crushed when his candidates

lost, and his health deteriorated as the political pressures mounted.

The mayor suffered from an irregular heartbeat and was hospitalized several times during his term. He was last hospitalized for a week after he fell from the stage on Jan. 1 during the inauguration of County Executive Robert Janiszewski. Vezzetti suffered a concussion when his chair tipped over and he fell several feet to the marble floor of the County Administration building.

Although he had complained of dizziness in recent weeks, and had trouble rising from his chair, Vezzetti threw himself wholeheartedly into the special election for the Fifth Ward council seat. He saw in Helen Manogue's candidacy a chance to finally grasp real power on the council.

"He was so excited this weekend," said Steve Dado, one of his closest friends. "He kept saying 'She's going to win, she's going to win, this is it. I can finally turn the corner and do what I want to do.'"

After the polls closed Tuesday night and defeat was announced at

Manogue's headquarters, Vezzetti approached Fabiano as she eyed the results.

"I've got to get out there tomorrow with the bullhorn, Laurie," he said. "They can't do this. I've got to get out there and let people know what they did."

But concerned about his health, Vezzetti's advisers had been discouraging him from taking such an active role in campaigning on the streets. In the wake of Manogue's defeat, his closest supporters also tried to talk him out of his plans to run for reelection in 1989.

Vezzetti left Manogue's post-election gathering at the Trilogy Lounge on 11th Street at about 10:30 p.m. He walked to his apartment at 109 14th St. and ran up the 60 steps to his cold water flat.

His roommate heard him enter the apartment and fall to the floor. He was pronounced dead of massive heart failure at 12:03 a.m. "He died of a broken heart," said Block. "The stress and the strains of the job broke his heart."

## Don't expect new mayor

The Hoboken City Council is scheduled to meet tonight to select a new mayor. Don't be surprised if it doesn't.

In the last few days, deals to succeed the late Mayor Thomas Vezzetti seem to have fallen apart almost as soon as they were made.

The problem is that there is no majority faction on the council. There are Vezzetti allies, Vezzetti foes and those

## Political whirl

By Peter Weiss



somewhere in between. Exactly where in between has been extremely fluid in the week since Vezzetti's sudden death.

Administration supporters on the council are Joseph Della Fave, Helen Cunniff and Thomas Newman, a trio likely to stick together in the long run. The other six can be considered anti-administration, but that doesn't mean they are pro-each other.

Councilmen Steve Cappiello, the former mayor, and Robert Ranieri, are considered out-and-out administration foes. At least, they were before Vezzetti's death. But even they've been talking to the pro-administration council members in recent days.

Somewhere in the middle are Councilmen Pat Pasculli, Dave Roberts, Edwin Duroy and E. Norman Wilson. For several days, Pasculli seemed likely to get enough support to be named mayor, but he was unable to solidify it.

Further complicating the situation are two potential legal disputes.

The first is whether council members can vote for themselves.

To become mayor, a candidate must get the votes of a majority of the council. The point of contention is whether a council member can vote for himself or herself.

There are some council members who may be able to put together five votes for themselves, including their own, but wouldn't be able to get a sixth vote if they're not allowed to include their own vote as part of the needed majority.

If there were any prospective hopefuls outside the council, it wouldn't be an issue. But, so far, all the serious candidates to replace Vezzetti are now members of the City Council.

The other possible dispute is what happens if the council can't pick a new mayor in the allotted time, by the end of this month.

One legal view is that a special election must then be held within 45 days, by mid-May. The other opinion is that the office would remain vacant until November, when a special election for mayor would be held at the same time as the general election.

No matter what, the next regular election for mayor will be held in May 1989. But that may be part of the current problem.

Any council member named mayor now should have the inside track in the November 1988 and May 1989 elections, unless they blow it by doing a lousy job. Given that, it's understandable why any one faction is reluctant to make someone from another faction the mayor.

It's possible some agreement made last night or today will stand up until tonight's meeting, but don't bet on that, especially with a three-week leeway for various council members to see how much their votes are worth.

## Hoboken planners postpone action

By John A. Oswald

Hoboken planners agreed last night that a proposal to develop the south waterfront area should maintain what they called the low, human scale that characterizes already existing structures in the city.

Developers Murray Connell and Anthony Dell'Aquila are scheduled tomorrow night to present the board with its formal "phase one" plan for the site. Their proposal includes the construction of office and residential units as well as a supermarket.

Because the board did not have a quorum of its members present at last night's session, no official action was taken.

Members discussed whether the board should first approve new guidelines for development along the site before they consider any specific project.

The executive director of the city planning agency, Michael Coleman, urged the board to enact strict guidelines for waterfront development and to integrate the measures into the city's master plan.

But board member Peter Alicandri said that Hoboken must move quickly in developing its waterfront and cannot afford the time the formation of such guidelines would take.

"We can agree on the concept. I'd like to see the planning board agree on the concept of waterfront guidelines," he said.

Alicandri added that he wants to have the board recommend to the city council a

## Both foes, bosom pals recall him with respect

By Patricia Scott

As word of Hoboken Mayor Thomas Vezzetti's death echoed through the tiny city he loved, officials who worked with him strove yesterday to express their own sense of loss.

In a statement issued yesterday morning, Gov. Thomas Kean said:

"I'm shocked and deeply saddened by his passing. He was a good friend and an excellent public servant who worked tirelessly on behalf of the city he led. He stood for what he saw as his duty to betterment of the city. His leadership and strong voice will be missed."

Councilman Joseph Della Fave, who with Vezzetti's chief confidential aide Laurie Fabiano was closer to the mayor than anyone, said the loss left him "totally speechless."

"There is nothing I can say because he was far more than a good friend to me," said Della Fave. Vezzetti often called him "son."

"He was just wonderful and a very, very special person. I know we'll never again see the courage and heart that we saw in Tom Vezzetti. He was everything."

Choking back tears, Fabiano said she just wanted Vezzetti alive again, if only to allow her time to tell him how much he had done for Hoboken. "I just wanted him to walk out of here with his head held high at the end of four years," she said.

Throughout City Hall, employees with red-rimmed eyes shared anecdotes and memories of the mayor, while his trademark bullhorn sat on a corner desk in his empty office.

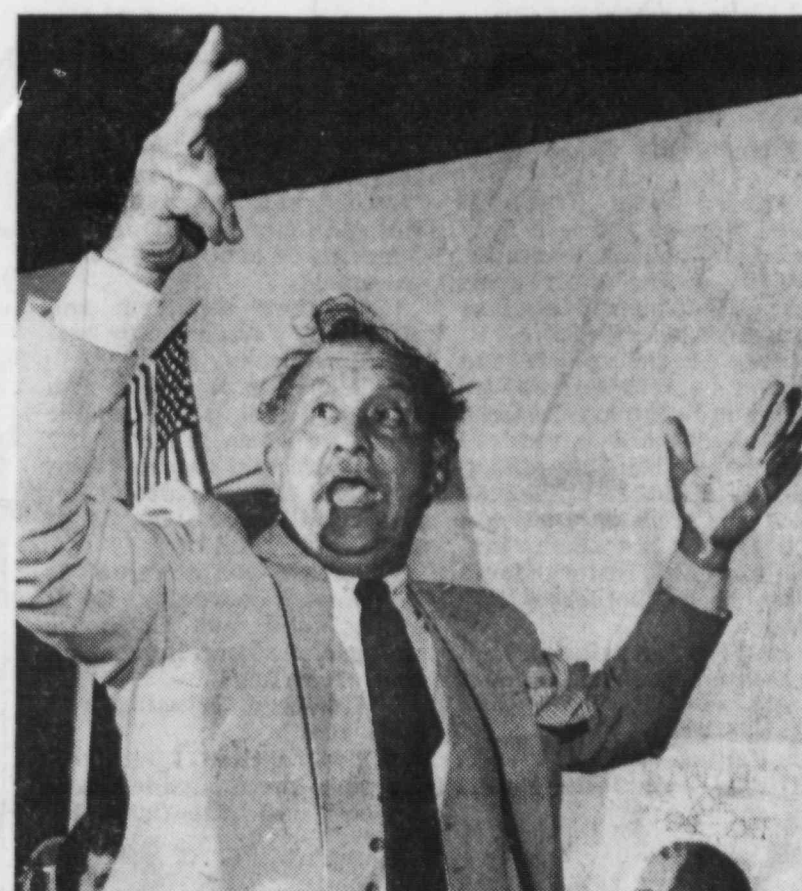
Deputy Fire Chief Richard Tremietti, a personal friend, said he is reeling from the loss.

"When I heard he was sick I prayed for his life, then I heard the official news and prayed for his soul," said the chief.

"He was a wonderful man who slept, ate and lived his job. There was no separation for Tom. The people he helped and served were everything."

Councilwoman Helen Cunniff said Vezzetti was "absolutely selfless. His life, his family was this city. Tommy was a dreamer — he had this dream of a corrupt-free, everybody gets their just-deserts kind of Hoboken, and I guess we were young enough to believe him."

Even Vezzetti's longtime detractors, those who often found themselves at odds with their flamboyant mayor, yesterday conceded his style, charisma and great kindness.



"We won!" A shout for joy on election night, 1985.

"He was a genuine man who played a major role in reshaping this city," said Pasculli. "I wish he had taken his health into consideration more instead of living for the job."

Councilman Robert Ranieri, another political foe, said he considers him a part of his life. "We were little kids together, our families have known each other forever. This is a terrible thing for us all."

Councilman Steve Cappiello, Vezzetti's predecessor as mayor, said that despite their much-publicized fights he harbored a certain affection for the man.

"He was a true out and out character and certainly a colorful one," said Cappiello.

"Tom and I grew up together, and in a way we're part of each other. I could write a book about all we went through. I was a few years ahead of Tom in school, but we knew each other and joined the Navy at the same time. When we got back, Tom was a constant critic of all administrations."

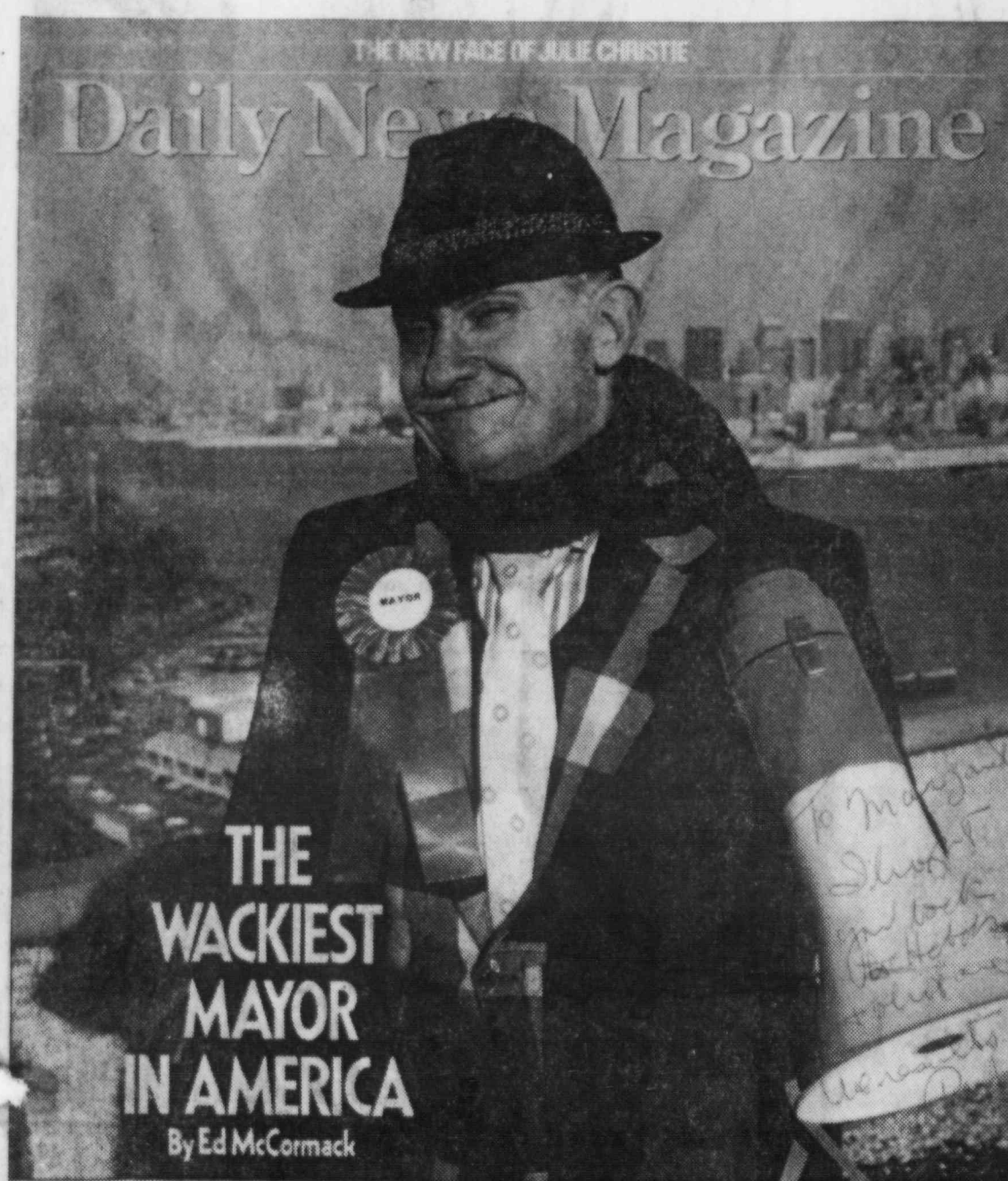
Cappiello said he remembers a day several years ago when he was heading to a freeholder's meeting and Vezzetti needed a ride there "to criticize."

"He ran and jumped on the hood of my car while I kept going. I finally stopped and put him in. Then I took him to the meeting and let him abuse me and the other freeholders. It was a typical day."

Angela Servello, Vezzetti's secretary since his swearing-in in July 1985, spent yesterday answering phones. "I can't believe any of it," she said. "I felt like he was more than a friend because I took care of him: I watched what he ate, I gave him his medication. I'm going to miss him a lot. I can't imagine it."



Hizzone points to a front page headline about himself during his hospitalization in 1985 and tackles a question from behind his desk in City Hall.



## Tom Vezzetti loved the press, was always ready with quote

When Tom Vezzetti was angry at a reporter, he'd get right to the point.

"I remember you when you were a reporter," he'd say with his devilish grin and you'd know that you probably hadn't worked hard enough on a certain story, that you'd probably let deadline pressures step in the way of getting one more quote, that you may not have tried your best.

And then you'd work a little harder.

It meant something when Tom Vezzetti criticized the press — because he believed so strongly in it.

He truly believed what we are all taught in school: the people have a right to know what's going on in their government, a right to know when tax money is well-spent and when it is wasted, and, most important, a right to know when someone has violated the public's trust.

A full-time public servant even before he was elected to public office, he had plenty of time to talk with reporters and to joke with them in the same way he joked with his favored supporters and his most ardent opponent.

He sought the press, hunted you down in City Hall so he could have his say.

"Where is she? Where's The Jersey Journal?" he would demand as he stomped from room to room when I covered Hoboken City Hall.

That was before he became mayor.

Once elected to the city's



MARGARET SCHMIDT  
REPORTER'S JOURNAL

highest office, the lifelong watchdog became less demanding of the press. Instead, reporters sought him out and he reveled in all the attention he began to receive.

Major publications — both statewide and national — wanted to profile him, and suddenly all the silly remarks he had made for decades became known as "Vezzetti-isms."

"It's not that I'm so good. It's that they're so bad."

"I'm an honest man in a corruptible profession."

"I consider myself a verbal psychological therapist."

He was always ready with a quote (even if he didn't know the subject). He was always willing to lead a tour of the city (even if it took five hours because he stopped in every bar, shop and fast-food restaurant along the way to greet constituents). And in his own wacky way he tried to make you feel special.

Whenever he spoke with Jersey Journal political reporter Peter Weiss, for example, he referred to Weiss' prediction (against just about everyone else's) that Vezzetti would become may-

or in 1985. Ever since then, Vezzetti referred to Weiss as "the reporter who made me what I am today."

"I always wondered whether he meant that as a compliment or an insult," Weiss recalled yesterday. "I presume he meant it as a compliment."

With me, he focused on a television interview we did on "Meet the Mayors."

"I remember you when you wore the yellow dress," he would say every time I ran into him. "But you didn't say enough. You've gotta get in there and ask more questions."

Indeed, every reporter who ever saw Vezzetti in action has a story about him.

Jim DeRogatis, a former Hoboken reporter for the Journal, recalls the City Hall interview he and another reporter did with Vezzetti to mark the mayor's first year in office.

"He leaned back too far and he fell out of the chair. He rolled over on his back onto the floor and said, 'That's the ghost of his predecessor' Steve Cappiello. He never even stopped talking."





A girl studies pictures of the late Mayor Thomas V. Vezzetti yesterday before paying her last respects at Hoboken City Hall.

WILLING TO HELP

Dispatch 3-5-88

## Minister sees Vezzetti as the good Samaritan

By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Throughout a dreary, wet afternoon, thousands of friends and strangers paid their final respects yesterday to the late Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti, whose body lay in state in City Hall.

The mayor, who died of a heart attack early Wednesday, was laid out in an open casket from 1 to 8 p.m. on a dais on the first floor, surrounded by flowers. His closest friends stood in a receiving line nearby, accepting condolences, speaking softly with other mourners and wiping away tears.

A funeral procession is scheduled at 9 a.m. today in front of City Hall, to be followed by Mass in St. Francis Church at Third and Jefferson streets.

Yesterday, the mayor, who had been a vibrant, flamboyant presence in this city, was dressed in a garish plaid jacket that typified his crazy-quilt style.

In a brief message to about 200 mourners gathered outside City



Grief etched on their faces, two women approach Hoboken City Hall yesterday to visit the body of Thomas F. Vezzetti, who lay in state there yesterday. Hundreds braved the rain to say goodbye to the fallen mayor.

Hall before the public viewing began, the Rev. Paul Hagedorn of St. Matthew's Trinity Lutheran Church said Vezzetti pro-

fessed no strong religious ties. But Vezzetti's life, Hagedorn said, was reflective of that of the

Please see VEZZETTI Page 8

# Thousands at funeral bid Vezzetti farewell

Skies smile on journey to last rest

Dispatch 3-7-88  
By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The city bade farewell to Thomas F. Vezzetti with the style and pomp in which the flamboyant mayor would have felt quite at home.

A funeral procession for Vezzetti began at 9 a.m. Saturday with a line of 11 limousines, about 10 private cars, a color guard from the Police and Fire departments, and thousands of mourners.

Complete photo coverage of the funeral / See Page 16.



Priest anoints the casket bearing Hoboken Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti as it is carried from his funeral at St. Francis Church.

Vezzetti, whose electric bullhorn, garish attire and unbridled tongue propelled him into the mayor's office in 1985, died of a massive heart attack early Wednesday. He was 59.

The funeral cortege made its way up Washington Street, the site of Vezzetti's trademark

campaign jaunts, passing in front of his 14th Street apartment and turning south to St. Francis Church at Third and Jefferson streets. As the procession passed, residents hung from window sills and gathered in groups on the street, watching

silently. Some wept.

Near 12th Street, a handmade sign held aloft by a man and a woman mimicked Vezzetti's oft-repeated phrase, "Always a pleasure." It read: "Tom, thanks for honesty. It was a 'pleasure.'"

IN CONTRAST to Friday's rainy City Hall wake, the azure skies on Saturday were bereft of clouds.

Loudspeakers had been set up outside the 370-seat church for

Please see FUNERAL Page 16

## Pasculli new mayor in Hoboken

Continued from Page 1

The council then moved the regular items on the agenda before calling another closed session to discuss litigation and the mayoral choice.

Graves had told the councilmembers that unless they appointed an acting mayor before April 1, the city would have had to go to Superior Court to set up the date of a special election.

Vezzetti supporters wanted to see Councilman Joseph Della Fave as mayor since he was considered closest to the former mayor and fully supported his position on city issues.

The Vezzetti supporters wore "V" buttons with the slogan: And Justice for All superimposed over the V. They also carried placards with a drawing of Vezzetti.



Sister Norberto, left, and other supporters of the late Mayor Thomas Vezzetti look glum at the Hoboken City Council vote that named Council President Pat Pasculli mayor.

## Asbestos removal facing another delay

By Patricia Scott  
J.J. 3-9-88

The Hoboken Board of Education moved ahead last night on its plan to remove asbestos from city schools, but actual removal might not get under way until more than 4,000 school children have returned to their classes next September.

In other business last night, the school board confirmed reports that city-wide school absenteeism figures for both teachers and students continues climbing, and is significantly higher than it was only a year ago.

Trustees unanimously authorized Anthony Curko, board secretary, to seek bids for the hiring of a company to oversee a sweeping asbestos removal project. Asbestos is a chemical compound that was used as insulation in many old buildings. When it decomposes and flakes off, becoming airborne (friable), it has been linked to lung cancer and other cancers.

The board will hire a firm to prepare a blueprint of exactly where asbestos is present in the seven grammar schools, the high school and the high school's Kennedy Stadium and detail how the asbestos can be

safely removed, board members said. The removal plans will be filed with the state Health Department and Department of Education prior to the clean-up.

The board has known about the asbestos in the Joseph F. Brandt School since last September but has failed to take any action.

The asbestos is known to exist in the Brandt School's basement and boiler room but sources said it may also be on the first floor in the nurse's office and pre-school day care center. Asbestos may also be present in other city grammar

schools, Curko said. The board expects to receive bids for the asbestos removal by May and to award a contract before summer, but officials said clean-up of the carcinogen might not get under way until even later.

"We can't tell when the firm we choose will start their removal work," said Curko. "It's a very careful procedure and it can take time."

Trustees said there is no guarantee the job will be completed — or even started — before classes begin next fall.

In other business last

See ASBESTOS — Page 8.



Hoboken City Council chambers are packed as councilmembers choose an interim mayor. The eventual choice was Council President Pat Pasculli, center with back to camera.

## Pasculli is chosen Hoboken mayor

By Jim Kopchains

Hoboken Council President Pat Pasculli became Mayor Pasculli last night, filling the post left vacant by the death of Thomas Vezzetti.

Pasculli recited the oath of office at 10:46, ending an uproarious meeting before an overflowing crowd which saw the council meet twice in closed session before finding enough votes to name a new mayor.

Pasculli's wife held the Bible while City Clerk James Farina read the oath. As if to illustrate the divided city that Pasculli will govern as mayor, only half the audience applauded his selection. The other half sat glumly during the ceremonies.

The council president received five votes to be named mayor when Councilman Robert Ranieri switched over to his side. Ranieri reportedly made the switch in closed session after offering himself as a compromise candidate.

Council members Edwin Duroy, David Roberts, E. Norman Wilson Jr., Steve Cappiello and Ranieri voted for Pasculli. Council members

Helen Henning, Thomas Newman, and Joseph Della Fave voted 13-10.

Pasculli said he was first hesitant to assume the mayor's position. "I was frightened, frightened to death actually, with the thought of assuming the responsibilities, the challenge, and obligations of the office of mayor."

Pasculli, who has served on the council since 1983, will serve as mayor until November, when he must run in a special election if he wants to fill out the unexpired portion of Vezzetti's term of office.

Since Vezzetti was scheduled to face re-election next year, Pasculli would have to again run for a full four-year term in May. Vezzetti died on March 2 of a massive heart attack.

The change in all levels of style and personality is as striking as the differences between the loud outfits of clashing colors that Vezzetti wore and the impeccable clothing of Pasculli.

Although Pasculli has lost his temper in public at different times, the new mayor has always tried to keep his emotions in check.

The odd sequence of elections caused by Vezzetti's sudden death could mean that Hoboken could have four different mayors over 18 months.

Pasculli said he did not have any idea who he, as mayor, would appoint to fill his vacant council position. Nor did he know which directors would remain under his new administration.

Prior to the meeting, several directors had said they would consider offering their resignation at the meeting if Pasculli was elected. The directors included city spokeswoman Laurie Fabiano, Community Development Agency head Michael Coleman, and City Law Director William Graves.

However, they later said they would not resign and would wait until they met with Pasculli.

The council took its first votes in closed session. At about 7:45 p.m., the members opened the meeting and Pasculli reported that no member had received the necessary five votes.

See PASCULLI — Page 9.

## Asbestos removal faces new delay

Continued from Page 1

night, the Board of Education noted that the city-wide absenteeism figures for both instructors and students has continued rising.

In 1987, the February attendance rate for teachers was 96.07 percent and 90.40 percent for students.

Last month, the attendance rate for teachers was a considerably lower 94.80 percent and for students 90.20.

"Obviously we're very concerned by the drop in attendance and it's something we're studying closely," said school Superintendent Walter Fine. "We want to bring those figures up fast."

School board attorney Robert Murray said the plummeting attendance rate could seal the doom of the city school system, already in jeopardy with the state.

The Hoboken school system has thus far failed to secure its much-needed state certification and remains in Level 3, necessitating ongoing inspections by a state team observing school tactics and educational approaches.

Murray said the "numerous positive achievements" made

by the system could be obliterated by a high absenteeism problem.

Board Trustee Perry Bel-fiore asked Superintendent Fine if the absenteeism problem seems to involve just a few schools, but was told the crisis is general.

"We noticed a lot of people out recently with the flu and other viruses," said Fine. "We're hoping the poor figures for February reflect that and not a bigger problem."

Fine said he and Assistant Superintendent Frank McGorty spoke to several teachers who "exhibit an extreme problem" with absenteeism and said they will speak to more problem teachers.

State guidelines allow for an average 3.5 percent absenteeism rate for teachers and students, though the state holds a 3 percent absenteeism figure as an ideal.

A teacher who is absent from his or her class nine days in the course of a school year would achieve the targeted 3.5 absenteeism figure, Fine said.

The far higher absenteeism rate in Hoboken's system shows the balance is "way out of proportion," said Fine.

## VEZZETTI

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"He was the greatest man I ever met," Kennedy said. "He was the most honest mayor this town has ever had. He had a lot of people against him because of that. He tried, but you can only do so much."

Janice Bowers, a college student who lives on Jackson

Street, said she was angry at Vezzetti's death because the mayor was "willing to help people."

"good Samaritan," the subject of a New Testament parable.

Hagedorn proposed a modern-day parable of a homeless man sitting on City Hall's front steps. The man is passed by a minister and a businessman.

"Then along comes a fellow with mismatched socks, a crazy plaid jacket, and pants that are green," Hagedorn said. "What does he do? He goes to the man, and he picks him up, and he says, 'How are you? How can we help you?'"

The crowd moaned its approval at the image.

—DALLIE



## FUNERAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the hundreds of mourners who could not fit inside. Vezzetti's pallbearers — all politically-active men who were some of his closest friends — stood by solemnly as police and fire officials carried the wooden casket inside.

The Rev. Daniel O'Brien, Vezzetti's boyhood friend who now serves in Syracuse, N.Y., said the mayor was "part of us all."

"He is inescapably built into our lives," O'Brien said. "Because of Tom, I am sure I am more Christian, more human. Can any of you say less?"

O'Brien was joined by 10 other clergymen on the dais, including Auxiliary Bishop Jerome A. Pechillo of the Newark archdiocese, former Vicar of Hudson County. In brief remarks, Pechillo asked that Vezzetti's political agenda of honest, compassionate government be preserved.

"Let us pray for the future," Pechillo said. "May the future leaders of this city put into practice, in concrete ways, these marvelous characteristics and practices."

After the Mass, Vezzetti's body was taken to Holy Name Cemetery in Jersey City, where

his closest friends made brief remarks.

In voices that trembled with emotion, Councilman Joseph Della Fave, Councilwoman Helen A. Cunniff and Laurie Fabiano, Vezzetti's confidential aide, remembered the mayor as the driving force behind all administration policy. They pledged that they will continue to fight for what the mayor believed in.

"God knows — as well as Tommy knows — we have plenty of

**"Let us pray for the future. May future leaders of this city put into practice, in concrete ways, these marvelous characteristics and practices."**

BISHOP JEROME PECHILLO

work ahead of us," Della Fave said purposefully. "Tom saw so many things in black and white. So often, Tom was actually right."

"We might have been the brains, like everybody told him," Fabiano said. "But Tommy was the heart, Tommy was the spirit, Tommy was the example. We'll love him forever."

THROUGHOUT THE day, city residents, in the ceremonies

or on the streets afterward, remembered, not only the mayor's philosophy, but his warm personality and earthy, colorful sayings.

One of his favorite phrases was: "It's not that I'm that good — they're that bad."

As Vezzetti's casket lay in City Hall before Saturday's Mass began, a flower arrangement sat on an easel a few feet away. It was a gift from Harry "The

Greek" Sgardelis, Vezzetti's roommate and perhaps the major beneficiary of Vezzetti's warmth.

Vezzetti, a teatotaler, moved in with Sgardelis in 1978 and brought him to health after Sgardelis' long bout with alcoholism.

So it was appropriate that the simple message accompanying Sgardelis' flowers read: "You were that good."



Hoboken firefighters and police officers carry the casket of Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti outside St. Francis Church, while a military honor guard stands at attention.

M. KATHLEEN KELLY THE HUDSON DISPATCH

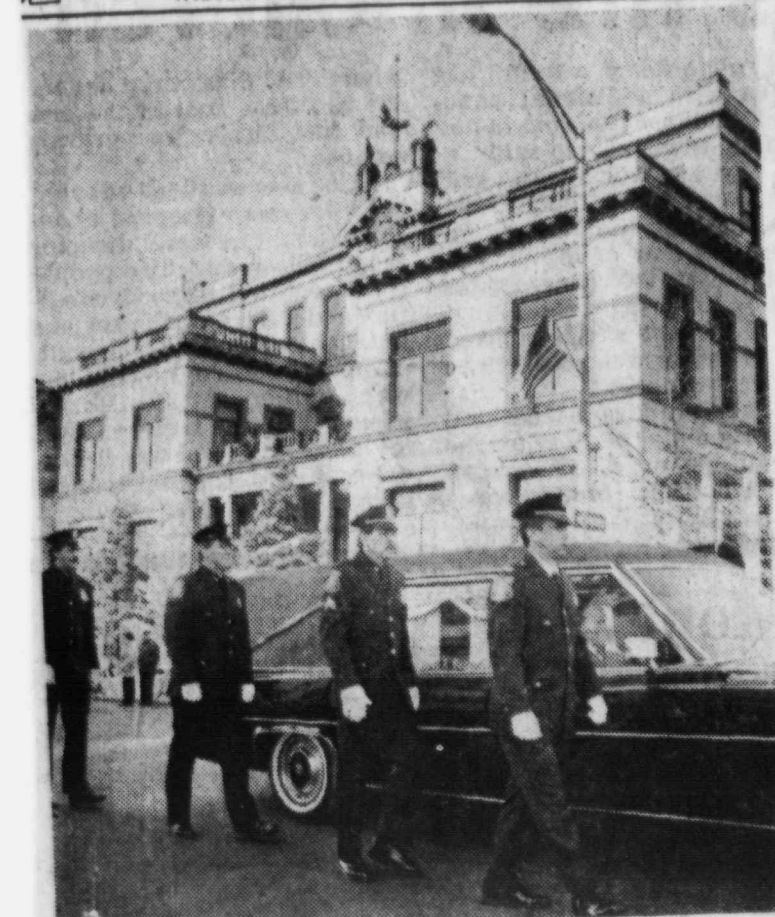


A mother and her son, left, and a member of the Disabled American Veterans watch the activity outside St. Francis Church in Hoboken during services for Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti.



The casket of Hoboken Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti awaits burial in his family's plot at Holy Name Cemetery in Jersey City.

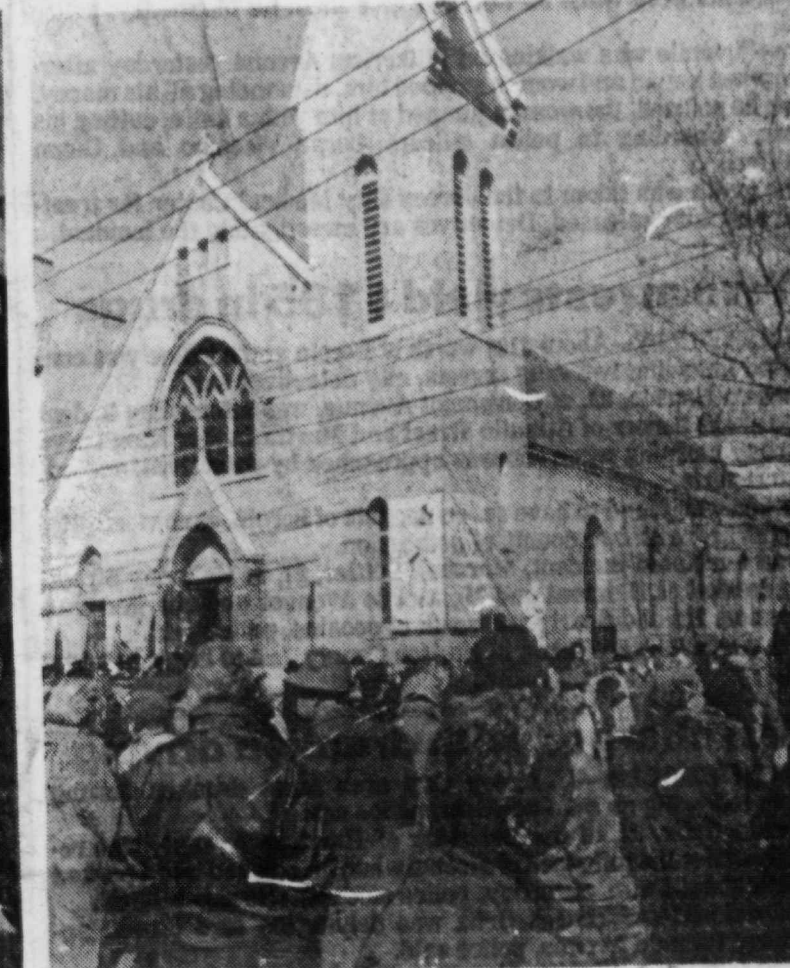
THE JERSEY JOURNAL, MONDAY, MARCH 7, 1988



The casket of Mayor Thomas Vezzetti is escorted from Hoboken City Hall by a police honor guard.



Hoboken City Councilman Steve Cappiello, center, waits to enter St. Francis Church for the funeral of Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti, while Assemblyman Bernard F. Kenny Jr., D-Hoboken, left, and state Sen. Thomas F. Cowan, D-Jersey City, stand behind him.



Some of the thousands of Hoboken residents who gathered to bid farewell to Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti stand outside St. Francis Church at Third and Jefferson streets, waiting for the casket bearing the mayor, who died early Wednesday, to arrive.

## Candidates are drawing the lines

By Paddy Scott

3-11-88

With less than a month to go before the Hoboken school board elections, battle lines are being drawn among the 13 contenders for three seats.

Though school board candidates cannot file as a slate, it is customary for united candidates to announce themselves as a group and run under a banner name.

The first such organization — the Coalition for Better Schools and Lower Taxes — announced its candidates and platform yesterday. The Coalition is comprised of Gerry Costa, Vivian Flora-Distaso and Felix Rivera.

Costa was a founding member of the city's liberal education organization Committee for a Quality Education, and the trio is likely to receive the support of CQE membership. CQE has not yet announced

support for any candidate. CQE took a beating in last April's school election, when candidates Steve Block, Mike Rosano and Carlos Perez were defeated by school board President Richard England, Mario Mercedo and Geraldine Pantoliano. The late Mayor Thomas Vezzetti had worked on behalf of CQE, which spent more than \$11,000 in the race.

Though the Coalition for Better Schools and Lower Taxes has ties to CQE, the candidates represent a "new approach," said Costa. The candidates said, if elected, they will focus on ridding the school system of politics and of fundamental educational deficiencies which may cost the district state certification.

Costa, who was the first director of the Hoboken Head Start program, is a lifelong city resident and a developmental psychologist with the Associa-

tion for Retarded Citizens of Hudson County. He is also on staff with the Community Mental Health Center of Christ Hospital, chaired the city's Task Force on Child Sex Abuse and was a member of the Family Life Education Committee of the Board of Education.

Vivian Flora-Distaso, a Third Ward resident, is a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine teacher at St. Ann's Church and has served the Family Life Committee of Hoboken's school board. She is client service associate with the Nielsen Television Ratings firm, and has worked as assignment editor at Channel 68 News.

Felix Rivera ran unsuccessfully for the board last year as an independent. A former city police officer, he is now a Port Authority police officer, and was appointed last year by the late Mayor Thomas Vezzetti to the city Housing Authority.

## City checks for lead in school water

By Patricia Scott

3-10-88

Hoboken school officials will know next week whether a dangerous amount of lead is present in water in the city's eight schools and Kennedy Stadium.

School administrators this week took water samples from the seven public grammar schools, Hoboken High School and the stadium.

Custodial workers in each school turned on all water taps Monday morning and collected one gallon of water at each site.

The water was sent to Garden State Laboratories for analysis to determine if Hoboken's school system has lead contamination.

The study came after the state Department of Health last month sent a warning letter to municipal officials noting that potentially toxic levels of lead could be present in water that

has been sitting for a long period of time, such as in pipes connected to a water fountain only used a few hours each day.

The DEP particularly warned that school water fountains are likely sites for high lead levels, according to studies performed in several other states. The DEP notification also ordered officials to notify residents within three months of the potential health hazards from lead present in their home water systems. The city has been placing notices in lo-

cal newspapers alerting the public.

An excess of lead in the body can cause serious damage to the brain, kidneys and nervous system and can lead to death, according to medical experts. Young children and pregnant women face the greatest risk, even with short-term exposure.

Hoboken School Board Secretary Anthony Curko said he understands the "highest risk problem" to exist in areas where the water systems were

installed in the past five years. But Curko's version differs from the state DEP warning, which contended that older plumbing lines installed in the early part of the century and lined with lead pose the greatest risk.

"Whatever the situation is, we want to check our school water systems and see if a problem exists here," said School Board President Richard England, Jr. "We'll know by next week whether we face any problem."

## Hoboken eyeing revaluation vote

Dispatch 3-15-88

By CHRISTOPHER AVE

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The City Council may vote to force the city's revaluation firm to lower its dramatically increased assessments when the council meets tomorrow night.

But Hudson County authorities and the firm agreed that if assessments are lowered, the final tax rate will be higher, negating any real benefit to taxpayers.

"If you reduce the amount raised through ratables, then the tax rate has to go up," Stanley Kosakowski, the county

tax administrator, said.

Because it has been 18 years since the last revaluation, the tax burden has been shared unequally among city residents. Owners of non-condominium housing have paid taxes on only 6 or 7 percent of the true value of their homes, while condominium owners have paid taxes on 12 percent, and businesses on between 14 and 45 percent.

The revaluation raises all assessments to 100 percent of true value, equalizing the tax burden and sharply increasing taxes for owners of non-con-

Please see TAXES Page 23

## TAXES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

dominium housing.

Because of this, city homeowners have been up in arms over the new assessments, which raise the assessed value of some properties 15 to 20 times. The issue is politically explosive, and with two mayoral elections scheduled for the next 13 months here, politicians seem eager to appear tough in the face of the revaluation.

The resolution the council will consider is sponsored by Councilman David Roberts. Councilman Steve Cappiello, who has berated the revaluation since it became public March 2, and Mayor Patrick Pasculli both said they would support the move.

"There is some mistake here and it has to be corrected," Roberts said. "We feel those numbers are grossly inflated — and we're not accepting those numbers."

Roberts said he had received at least 50 telephone calls from irate homeowners who complained that the values given their properties were too high. He said he would be pleased if a 10 percent reduction in the assessments could be attained, and added that he would ask the firm to review all its assessments at no charge.

Roberts speculated that the Black Monday stock market crash of last October caused a depreciation in the market not reflected in the new figures.

But according to Kosakowski, state law requires that the assessment must reflect the value of property on Oct. 1, more than two weeks before the stock crash.

Kosakowski also said that if Real Property Appraisers, the revaluation firm, is asked to reduce assessments, then the city's tax rate will increase proportionately to make up for the loss in ratables.

The rate, which will not be struck until Board of Education and municipal budgets are complete, is expected to be between \$18 and \$20 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation — down sharply from the pre-revaluation rate of \$210.

Kosakowski also stressed that the city and the revaluation firm have signed a contract that has been approved by the county and the state. He said the firm could not legally be compelled to do more than the contract requires.

The project manager for Real Property Appraisers, Joseph Pizzoli, said the firm would consider re-evaluating some of the assessments, but only if it would not require extensive work above what is required by the \$460,000 contract.

"We go out of our way to accommodate a client," Pizzoli said. "It depends on the scope of the request."

He added that he had not been contacted by city officials over the proposal, which will come up for a vote at tomorrow's meeting, at 7 p.m. at City Hall.



# Thousands bid farewell to Vezzetti

By Jim DeRogatis  
and Janet Wilson

J.J. 3-7-88

Hoboken Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti made his final trip up Washington Street Saturday as thousands of residents turned out to bid him farewell.

Vezzetti had been a fixture on the street for the last five years, walking the length of the city he loved with a bullhorn in hand to spread his vision of reform politics.

The 59-year-old mayor died of a heart attack early Wednesday morning.

Vezzetti was the first Hudson County mayor to die in office. Longtime political observers said his funeral Saturday was the biggest and most emotional since the death of Jersey City political kingpin Frank Hague.



Photos by Ed Quinn

Thomas Vezzetti's twin sister Louise, center, casts a flower on his casket.

## 'There is no one can fill his shoes'

By Janet Wilson

Hundreds of the people who poured into City Hall where Hoboken Mayor Thomas Vezzetti was mourned Friday were not political regulars. They loved Vezzetti because they knew he wasn't a political regular either.

They spoke in halting English, with heavy Italian, Slavic and Hispanic accents.

"He was a real father of the town, a real father of the poor people," said Leonard Mendino, a retired barber who emigrated from Italy 50 years ago. "I feel so bad. We lost such great man. There will not be a mayor again, not like him."

"My best friend is dead," said Kristo Fatovic, 64, a former dockworker. "I cry like a baby when they tell me. I tell you true, I cannot forget this man. I never see such love like his."

He gestured angrily at the walls of City Hall. "The people here, they ruined him. They terminate his life

See THERE IS — Page 6.



Grief knows no distinction of age or race.

INTERIM HOBOKEN CHIEF

# Pasculli chosen mayor

ENDORSES NO ONE

## Pasculli on the hot seat for April board election

By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Like it or not, the ascension of Patrick Pasculli to the mayor's office last week thrust him into a key role in the April 5 Board of Education races.

The 40-year-old mayor, who has spent his professional career as a public school teacher here, has maintained a public silence on the school campaign, and for good reason. Some councilmembers who voted for him last week have asked him to support their school board candidates, according to sources.

Pasculli's moves will be watched closely. Yesterday, he said he had come to no decisions.

"Frankly, I haven't even had time to talk about that, or think about it," Pasculli said.

As is the case in other Hudson County municipalities, school

board control is considered a necessary ingredient for lasting political power. The board has a large budget replete with jobs that traditionally have been rewards for political service.

City Clerk James Farina, who heads the Young Democrats political club, to which he and Pasculli both belong, said he and the mayor may reach agreement with Councilman Steve Cappiello on a single slate of candidates.

As of yesterday, however, no agreement yet had been reached. Cappiello, a former mayor who still has considerable clout in the 3rd Ward, has announced his school board slate. It consists of Aniello Mosco, a member of the Housing Authority; Antonio F. Moya, a businessman; and Joan D'Agostino, a local activist who is the wife of a former Cappiello campaign worker.

Chief among the opponents of

Cappiello and of the Young Dems is the first slate of three to declare its candidacy. The Coalition for Better Schools and Lower Taxes is basically a new incarnation of last year's Citizens for Quality Education.

The group, which announced last week, is composed of Gerard Costa, a psychologist and local children's advocate; Vivian Flora-Distaso, a researcher and political newcomer; and Felix Rivera, a Port Authority of New York and New Jersey police officer and Housing Authority member.

Other April 5 candidates are: Michael T. Mulvaney, a Housing Authority member; Ray M. Falco, a Fire Department official; Jerry J. Foreman, a local businessman; William E. Metcalf, a municipal worker; Mary C. Gaspar, a former school board member; and Margaret O'Brien, an active member of school parents' associations.

## Deadlock is broken at late-night session

Dispatch 3-10-88

By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—City Council President Patrick Pasculli was named interim mayor last night after hours of deadlock.

Pasculli immediately resigned his council seat and was sworn in by City Clerk James Farina.

Pasculli, 40, will serve until a special election in November. He succeeds Thomas F. Vezzetti, who died of a massive heart attack March 2.

After taking office, Pasculli said, "I'm frightened to death now. But I am ready to assume the responsibilities and the challenges of the office." The new mayor also called for unity and cooperation between the council and the Mayor's Office.

Pasculli had lobbied council

members strenuously for the job. He was compelled to obtain five of the nine council votes after a decision by city Law Director William Graves, who advised council members not to vote for themselves in light of a related court decision.

Pasculli was elected after two private council debates. After the initial closed session, the council announced that no one had obtained the required five votes. In a surprise, Councilman Robert A. Ranieri originally voted with Pasculli's opponents, pro-Vezzetti council members Helen Cunningham, Joseph DellaFave and Thomas Newman.

But Ranieri, who had been an ardent Vezzetti foe, switched positions after the second closed

Please see MAYOR Page 17

# Thousands bid farewell to Vezzetti

Continued from Page 1

The funeral procession started at the southern end of Washington Street at City Hall, where Vezzetti's body lay in state on Friday. The Rev. Daniel O'Brien, a childhood friend of the mayor, offered prayers over the body Saturday morning before a piper filled the lobby with the sound of "Amazing Grace."

Ten friends and members of the Vezzetti administration carried the casket out of the building where the mayor worked since taking office in July, 1985. Many of the pallbearers wore the "V for Victory and Vezzetti" and "And Justice for All" campaign buttons from the '85 mayoral race.

A funeral procession of 11 limousines and 10 private cars bearing Vezzetti's family and closest friends departed from City Hall at about 9 a.m. The motorcade was led by a police and fire color guard and three cars bearing the more than 100 hundred floral arrangements

that had been sent to City Hall. Many of the city vehicles, including fire trucks and Department of Public Works trucks, made up the end.

Churches throughout the city rang their bells as the cars moved on. Police on motorcycles stopped traffic at each intersection, and it seemed as if nothing moved in Hoboken other than the motorcade.

Thousands of Hoboken residents lined Washington Street or hung out of their apartment windows as the procession made its way from First Street to 14th Street. Some of the mourners made the sign of the cross as Vezzetti's body passed, while others waved American flags or saluted.

Many broke into tears. Two residents near 11th Street held a huge banner which read, "Tom, Thanks for Honesty. It was a pleasure." The crowds were thickest in the Second Ward, where Vezzetti started his political career by winning a council seat in 1983. About 100 people stood in front of the building at 109 14th Street where he lived for the last ten years after selling the Madison Hotel. Vezzetti died in the building after bounding up the five flights of stairs to his apartment.

After driving the length of the city, the motorcade doubled back to St. Francis Roman Catholic Church at Third and Jefferson streets. Vezzetti's grandparents were founders of the church, and his parents as well as his sister were married there.

The tiny church was quickly filled by the mayor's family, close friends and city, county and state officials. Outside, more than 1,000 residents huddled in the crisp morning chill to listen to the Mass over loudspeakers.

Two of the eleven priests who concelebrated the Mass came outside to distribute the eucharist.

The crowd was as diverse as Hoboken itself, a broad spectrum of the people who supported Vezzetti: longtime Italian residents dissatisfied with machine politics; Hispanics who believed his pledges to stop displacement, and newcomers who loved the eccentric mayor's style.

"We're here because we loved him," said Hoboken resident Mary Gordon, her nose and cheeks red from the cold. "He was really and truly a great man. He fought for all of us."

Dr. A.J. Robbins of Jersey City said she knew Vezzetti from attending meetings of the County Board of Freeholders. "Look in the dictionary under humanitarian. The definition is Tom Vezzetti," she said.

"He was my mayor," said Joan Rivera of Hoboken. "I loved and respected him."

As the pallbearers carried the casket from the church after the funeral, many residents strained to touch it as it passed.

"I wanted to touch him one more time. For years, he would cross the street just to shake my hand," one elderly woman said.

The motorcade resumed, driving past the Jefferson Street and Observer Highway firehouses, where the firefighters saluted and rang the fire engines' bells. The procession then left Hoboken and drove to Holy Name Cemetery in Jersey City.

Vezzetti was buried in a family plot on a tree-lined hill near the center of the cemetery. His estate paid for most of the funeral costs.

About 300 people followed the procession to the cemetery and listened as Father O'Brien recited the prayers at the grave.

Vezzetti was buried with his trademark bullhorn. "He's probably up there now, shouting to open up the gates," said city tenant advocate Thomas Olivieri.

While his supporters acknowledged that Vezzetti was the "heart and soul" of the reform movement, they vowed at graveside to continue his fight.

"He opened the door," said Councilwoman Helen Cunningham. "Now we have to keep up the faith and complete his dream."

## 'There is no one can fill his shoes'

Continued from Page 1

because he was honest man. They could not stand that." "He was a pure soul, and he done some good job," said a young black woman.

"I'm going to see my buddy," said Louis D'Esposito, carrying a purple leather Mass card from his veterans' group.

Maria Torobolis, originally from Yugoslavia, waited in the pouring rain twice to go through the viewing line. "I miss this guy. I have to see him again. I can't believe I will not see him again."

"He was my mayor, he was my man," said Elba Pratts, 39, originally from Puerto Rico, carrying a small bouquet of roses. "He loved this city, he loved poor people, he was one of us. They took his life because of what he believed in. There's no one in the world could fill his shoes."

MAYOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

session, throwing his support to Pasculli. The results of the votes from both closed sessions were announced to the tense overflow crowd at City Hall by Pasculli.

Many onlookers were puzzled at Ranieri's actions last night. There had been speculation that Ranieri was angry at Pasculli for Pasculli's opposition to Ranieri's failed Assembly bid last year.

Ranieri denied he was angry in an interview this week.

Earlier, the council, unable to agree on one person, had passed a resolution seeking Hudson County Superior Court permission to call a special election. But Graves had told the council that state law would not provide for such an election until November.

City officials agreed this week that the city could survive without a mayor for that length of time.

## New mayor keeps foot in classroom

By Patricia Scott

Yesterday was Patrick Pasculli's first official day as Hoboken's interim mayor, but the former City Council president spent as much time in the classroom as he did at City Hall.

The newly named mayor, chosen late Wednesday night after a lengthy council session, met at City Hall yesterday morning with several key city officials but then returned to his job as a city school teacher for the rest of the day.

Several City Hall sources said they understand Pasculli plans to teach full-time until the end of the school year despite his new role as mayor.

The mayor met privately yesterday with Laurie Fabiano, confidential aide of late Mayor Thomas Vezzetti, with pro-Vezzetti Councilman Joe Della Fave, with City Business Administrator Edward Chius,

Public Works Director Roy Haack and William Graves, Hoboken's Law Department director.

The department heads who spoke with Pasculli said he discussed no shake-up or changes in their job titles or responsibilities, but basically asked for an update on various aspects of city business.

"He had a few questions about the budget and how long we have before we have to get it all together," said Chius. "It was a very brief, friendly conversation. He's a very dedicated teacher and he had to get back to the classroom."

Pasculli then met with Fabiano, who told him about several ongoing city projects and brought him up-to-date on their recent developments. Fabiano, ill yesterday with a virus, left for the day at 2 p.m. and said

See NEW MAYOR — Page 10.

## To victors belong schools' headaches

By Patricia Scott

When the dust finally settles after next month's Hoboken school board race, the victors will carry a heavy responsibility into the next school year.

The three successful candidates — to be chosen April 5 from a field of 13 hopefuls — will step into the role of trusteeship in one of the most problem-filled school districts in the county: a system under state surveillance for its poor test scores and high dropout rate and a system dealing with an exceptionally high absenteeism rate for both teachers and students.

Three major challenges exist for the victors in the school board race, who will join an often highly political board while pushing ahead to see that district operations improve.

• Hoboken voters, already strapped with the highest tax rate in the state and buckling under from this month's shocking revaluation statements, are being asked to approve the Board of Education's whopping \$28 million budget, and to approve a \$6.3 million bond referendum that calls for upgrading and improvement at the city's eight schools and at the deteriorated Kennedy Stadium.

Voters, if they approve the requested budget, would be paying an additional \$5.6 million next year. The burden falls upon the board to show that the money is being used toward purposeful improvement within the system. As it stands now, Hoboken has the highest cost-per-student in the state, paying in excess of \$7,200 for each of the system's 4,000 pupils.

• School board trustees must seek to improve city test

scores which are abysmally low across the board. The district has failed to secure its much-needed state certification and remains classified in Level 3, which requires state teams to continue their observation and study of the district's educational policies and approaches.

The district could be taken over by the state if the situation doesn't improve. If the state takes over, the local school board would be disbanded, local administrators would be replaced and state teams would assume daily management of the district schools.

• The Hoboken school system is coping with an excessively high absentee rate for both teachers and students alike. The state seeks to stabilize the overall absentee rate at 3.5 percent, roughly equivalent to nine days absent a year, according to Schools Superin-



tendent Walter Fine. But in February of this year, the Hoboken absentee rate for teachers was four percent and for students a high 10 percent.

The projected closing of at least one city school remains a

See TO THE — Page 10.

## To victors belong school headaches

Continued from Page 1

thorn in the side of many parents. They contend the budget should be handled in an economical way that will avoid the closing of school facilities.

The school board originally planned to close the Demarest School, but plans changed and the David Rue School is now the likely victim.

The school has been operating at less than half-capacity, for years and is costing the city more than a million dollars annually just to keep the facility open. Parents, however, have complained about the closing of the site, which would necessitate sending their children to nearby Demarest School.

The Rue School also has on its premises several hundred thousand dollars worth of vocational and laboratory equipment.

## New mayor keeps foot in classroom

Continued from Page 1

she may take at least part of next week off.

"I am in just horrible shape physically, and I've been ignoring it," she said. "I need to get away from it all for a while and get myself straightened out."

Fabiano said she was not pressured by the new mayor to take the time off, saying her decision is purely "a personal choice because I don't feel well."

Rumors abounded yesterday that Maurice Fitzgibbons, director of the Hudson County Office on Cultural Affairs, will

be named to fill Pasculli's City Council seat.

That appointment would bring more voting bloc power to Pasculli and his council allies, including Dave Roberts, E. Norman Wilson, Edwin Duroy and Steve Cappiello.

Robert Ranieri also entered a surprising last minute vote in favor of the Pasculli appointment as mayor.

Fitzgibbons could not be reached for comment. Only three pro-Vezzetti council members — Della Fave, Helen Cunningham and Tom Newman — are on the nine-member board.



# Hoboken's revaluation stirs up nest of hornets

By Dominick Calicchio

Sam, a lifelong Hoboken resident, works two jobs. During the day he's a steelworker in Belleville. Three nights a week he tends bar on Hudson Street. His wife works in a delicatessen in Palisades Park and, together, they pay the mortgage on their single-family midtown home and pay the tuitions for their two girls to attend Sacred Heart Academy.

After driving home from Belleville late yesterday afternoon, Sam sat down in his kitchen and opened his mail.

Among the letters was a notice of the revaluation of his property, as required by state law. It said Sam's home is now worth more than \$300,000. At that rate, Sam says he expects to pay an extra \$300 or more in taxes each month.

"Right now we've got the highest goddamn tax rate in the state as it is," he said last night. "And what do we get for it? I'm not getting a chance to park my car, I'm not getting a chance to send my kids through the public school system, which stinks."

"I want to know where the taxes are going. I'm working two jobs to get by now, before this. There's no more hours left in the day for me to work."

"I'm 40 years old. I was born in this town, I like this town, but I can't afford to live here anymore."

"It's not the Hoboken it used to be."

The sentiments Sam expressed last night were heard in bars and restaurants, living rooms and grocery stores throughout Hoboken as city homeowners reacted to property revaluations that increased as much as 21 times or more since the last assessment in 1970.

City officials say homes were assessed at less than their true value for more than a decade.

John DePalma, another lifelong Hoboken resident and president of the Sixth Ward Block Association, said he couldn't believe that his home, valued at \$20,700 in 1970, was now considered worth \$430,000.

"I was completely shocked," he said. "But what I'm very discouraged about is that none of the notices we received included the new tax rate. All it told us was how much our house was worth."

"I think that's extremely unfair and irresponsible. There are people who own homes here, some who are foreign-born or might not be particularly astute in these matters. They may not read the papers, and they'll have no idea what this means."

DePalma said the people who'll be most adversely affected are senior citizens, living on fixed incomes, who own single-family homes or who rent units cheaply to their relatives.

"Just because the property they live in is worth more doesn't mean they have the means to pay the higher rate," he said.

"The typical example would be a 70-year-old woman, a widow getting Social Security. Her house is worth more, but she's able to eat better meals, wear better clothes? Chances are she's not."

"People in Trenton seem to think everybody in Hoboken is some kind of high-roller, but the fact is we're not."

Joseph Pizzoli, project manager for Real Property Appraisers, which conducted the revaluation, said it's too early to tell just how taxes will change because of the new assessments. It depends on the size of the budgets the city, school board and county ask for, he said.

The revaluation notices sent out to homeowners included information on how they can protest the amount of their assessment.

## HOBOKEN VACANCY

### Fitzgibbons suggested for council

By CHRISTOPHER AVE Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—As interim Mayor Patrick Pasculli became accustomed to the Mayor's Office in his second day there yesterday, speculation continued over who he would nominate to fill out his vacant City Council seat.

Sources close to Pasculli have mentioned city Democratic Chairman Maurice Fitzgibbons, the Hudson County Cultural Affairs director, as the choice.

Pasculli, the former council president who was selected interim mayor this week, said Fitzgibbons "is being considered very strongly, along



PATRICK PASCULLI

To recommend his successor

with a number of other candidates."

Under state law, the council has the power to choose a council member to serve out Pasculli's term, which expires

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## MAYOR

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in 1989. Pasculli said he will recommend his choice to the council after he has met with each member privately to sound out support for possible candidates.

Pasculli, who plans to approach the council Monday with at least some of his nominees for directorships and other city offices, praised Fitzgibbons as someone with "appropriate positions on issues."

It is unclear whether Pasculli has enough council support to land Fitzgibbons the office. Pasculli himself was appointed as interim mayor only after days of private negotiations and two separate closed sessions in a stormy council meeting Wednesday night.

If Fitzgibbons does win the appointment, it would be a gain for Pasculli, who will have the clear support of Councilmen David Roberts and E. Norman Wilson in addition to Fitzgibbons. The other six council votes are less

certain to support the new mayor.

Fitzgibbons has been allied informally with Pasculli since Pasculli's split from Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti in 1985. Both men support the Young Dems, a local political club, and both supported Wilson's successful bid to keep his 5th Ward seat in a special election last week.

Fitzgibbons said he would be a "damn good councilman" who would bring knowledge of county affairs and inside connections to county Executive Robert C. Janiszewski to the office.

Fitzgibbons also asserted that he appeals to born-and-raised residents and yuppies alike.

"I'm able to adapt to the old Hoboken, and be able to be part of the new wave," he said.

Pasculli was appointed to the interim job a week after the death of Vezzetti, who died March 2 of a massive heart attack. Pasculli is to serve until a special election in November.

# Sunshine clouds Pasculli election

Continued from Page 1

Law Director William Graves was consulted before the council went into closed session to discuss the mayoralty.

But Graves said he was never asked if the closed session was a violation of the sunshine law. He said he believes the council committed a technical violation of the law.

Another vote for mayor was taken by a show of hands behind closed doors, council members said. That time, Ranieri voted for Pasculli, giving him enough votes to be named mayor. The council returned to open session and repeated the vote before the public.

"All of the cases on record agree that votes can't be taken in private session," Oxford said.

The state Superior Court ruled two years ago that the Manville Board of Education violated the sunshine law when it voted in closed session to replace one of its members.

Somerset County Prosecutor Nicholas Bissell cited the sunshine law successfully last week to overturn a similar closed-session vote by the Board of Education in Branchburg.

Bissell said the board was forced to take another vote in public.

# Waterfront idea skewed

Vezzetti had planned to include 2 agencies in negotiations

By CHRISTOPHER AVE Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The administration of Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti had reached an informal agreement to develop a lucrative portion of the waterfront here before he died last Wednesday.

But all prospects for finalizing the agreement remain uncertain

after Vezzetti's fatal heart attack. Any final agreement would require the support of the new mayor, a majority of the City Council and the governing bodies of the two agencies.

The agreement — which would create a joint partnership with the city, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and New Jersey Transit — could solve a protracted struggle over

three piers and at least 48 acres of prime waterfront property, which has fallen into virtual disuse.

The agreement also would help the city increase its tax base in the face of a crushing revaluation and a bloated school budget. The decaying plots of authority land have been the focus of frustration and division here for many months.

The agreement was limited to a list of general principles that would govern the choice of a private developer for the property. The Hudson Dispatch obtained the three-page document yesterday, along with cover letters from Law Director William Graves to the authority and to NJT.

Neither Graves nor other administration officials would comment on the report.

In the letters, Graves says "a great deal of discussion and negotiation would be necessary" to form a comprehensive proposal based on the principles. He added that Vezzetti had planned to introduce the principles Thursday to the Waterfront Advisory Committee — a day after his death.

Under the agreement, the city and the two agencies each would have an equal say in choosing the developer and forming the development plans. The three bodies would form a "management board" to oversee the project.

Key details of the plan, such as amounts of investments by each body, the size of the development and the eventual amount of taxes the city would attain, are unspecified.

The agreement would be the first step toward solving the protracted fight between the city and the authority over the 48 acres. The authority, which has held a lease on the land since 1952, was ordered off the piers by the council in October. The authority immediately announced it would seek monetary compensation for leaving, and the two sides have been negotiating ever since. The agreement is one product of the negotiations.

# Selection of Pasculli challenged

## Opponent: Procedure unlawful

By CHRISTOPHER AVE Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Mayor Patrick Pasculli could lose his office in the wake of charges that his selection last week violated the state's Open Public Meetings Act.

Because Pasculli was selected behind closed doors, the City Council may be forced again to vote for mayor, retesting the strength of Pasculli's fragile coalition of supporters.

Ira Karasick, an attorney who was a frequent ally of the late Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti, said yesterday he will probably contact the state Public Advocate's Office this week in hopes of filing suit to force the City Council, which selected Pasculli on Wednesday, to take another vote.

The selection was voted on



PATRICK PASCULLI

Council coalition's choice

privately, a clear violation of the act, lawyers said yesterday. Also at issue is whether the private discussion that preceded the votes should have been public.

"The whole routine amounts to a tremendous contempt for the public," Karasick said.

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# D'Amelio drops suit against Vezzetti ally

By John Petrick

Former Hoboken Law Director Salvatore D'Amelio dropped his slander suit against mayoral aide Laurie

Fabiano yesterday in light of the death of Hoboken Mayor Thomas Vezzetti, according to D'Amelio's attorney.

D'Amelio alleged in his lawsuit that Fabiano made inflammatory statements to the press last year that were part of a conspiracy to have him thrown out of office.

Fabiano was quoted as saying that D'Amelio's contract with the Police Superiors Union was unethical, since it violated two rules of ethics.

D'Amelio argued that his contract with the union's prepaid legal plan expressly provided that he would not conduct labor negotiations with the city. Articles containing the quotes ran in The Jersey Journal Jan. 2 and 6.

William Shulman, representing D'Amelio, submitted a legal document to the court two weeks ago alleging that various Hoboken officials held secret meetings at Fabiano's apartment to conduct city business. Among that business was the interviewing and hiring of William Graves to replace D'Amelio as law director.

"In effect, Mr. Graves was hired by Miss Fabiano and allies as a 'hatchet man' to remove D'Amelio, who 'wouldn't comply with her intents,' the attorney states in the document."

Shulman said yesterday that with Vezzetti's death and the likely removal of Fabiano and Graves from the administration, the suit is pointless.

# Sunshine clouds Pasculli's election

By Jim DeRogatis

The Hoboken City Council violated the state Open Public Meeting Act last week when it voted to name Patrick Pasculli mayor, according to an attorney for the state Public Advocate.

The council could be forced to take another vote for mayor, according to attorney Susan Oxford, who said the council violated the law Wednesday by meeting in closed session when deciding on a replacement for the late Mayor Thomas Vezzetti.

The Public Advocate is responsible for the enforcement of the Open Public Meeting

## Public Advocate attorney calls vote illegal

Act, commonly known as the "Sunshine Law." The office can initiate lawsuits on behalf of community groups or private citizens who believe the law has been violated by a public body.

Ira Karasick, an attorney living in Hoboken, said he is considering filing suit against the council. Oxford said the Public Advocate could become involved in the case.

A lawsuit could force the council to vote for mayor again. Karasick said he is considering suing the council "not to

change the result of the vote, but to keep this government honest. The way this was done was disgraceful."

Pasculli said Karasick, an ally of the late mayor, is attempting to obstruct the new administration. But Karasick denied that his motives are political.

"We just don't want government behind closed doors and midnight swearing-ins (sic)," he said.

The council met before a packed chamber Wednesday, one week after Vezzetti's

death. It immediately went into closed session to discuss naming one of its own members to serve as mayor until a special election in November.

The Sunshine Law restricts public bodies from meeting in closed session except to discuss litigation and personnel matters. The personnel exemption does not apply when public bodies are discussing the qualifications of elected officials, Oxford said.

"You can make a strong argument based on the case law that deliberations on the can-

didate should have been public," she said.

The council returned from the closed session Wednesday after 45 minutes. Council President Pasculli announced that they had taken a vote in private and no member had received the five votes necessary to become mayor.

The nine-member council was divided. Pasculli announced that Councilmen David Roberts, Edwin Duroy, E. Norman Wilson and Steve Cappiello supported him. Council members Robert Ranieri, Jo-

seph Della Fave, Helen Cunningham and Thomas Newman were opposed.

The council moved through the regular items on the agenda, then called for another closed session to discuss ongoing litigation. Before leaving the dais, Ranieri added that the council might also discuss the mayoralty again.

Ranieri said Friday that he believed the deliberations on the mayor should have been held in closed session because "emotions at the meeting were running very high."

Both Pasculli and Assistant City Clerk Robert Drasheff said

See SUNSHINE — Page 4.



# PASCULLI TAKES OVER

## Issues galore facing mayor

Dispatch 3-11-88

By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Patrick Pasculli, the youngest mayor in the city's history, strode into City Hall yesterday promising to spur development and reduce the city's tax burden.

Pasculli, 40, was named interim mayor by the City Council Wednesday night. He will serve until November, replacing Thomas F. Vezzetti, who died in office March 2.

Pasculli, who teaches Grade 8 at the Wallace Junior High School here, said he would keep both jobs until the school year ends in June.

As he walked to the second-floor mayor's office yesterday morning, Pasculli said a major goal of his administration would be to break a "financial logjam" of bloated Board of Education and municipal budgets and a crushing property revaluation that will mean higher tax bills for most city homeowners.

"We have to make sure that the regular homeowners of the

city don't become displaced," Pasculli said.

To do this, Pasculli said he would ask Rep. Frank J. Guarini, D-Jersey City, and Gov. Thomas H. Kean to pressure the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey into cutting a deal with the city for 48 acres of prime waterfront property. The authority holds a lease to the property, a document the city refuses to acknowledge. The two sides have been in court-ordered negotiations since last winter.

Reversing an earlier position, Pasculli said he would work with the authority if it offered the best deal to the city.

"They're critical, right now, to moving the project forward," Pasculli said.

The Vezzetti administration came to an agreement in principle with the authority and New Jersey Transit over that land and over properties owned by NJT. Pasculli, stressing the agreement was tentative and

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Near a portrait of his predecessor, Thomas F. Vezzetti, Hoboken's newest and youngest mayor, Patrick Pasculli, gets a welcoming hug at City Hall from administrative secretary Angela Servello on his first day in office.

M. KATHLEEN KELLY THE HUDSON DISPATCH

## MAYOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

limited, said he and the council would examine it before commenting further.

Pasculli said he would also re-evaluate Vezzetti's administration plans for an industrial park to be built on land owned by Levolor, a window blinds manufacturer. Pasculli said he would consider other plans for the land if more revenue would result.

The new mayor listed several Vezzetti initiatives he would support, including efforts to complete the state-mandated secondary sewage treatment plant and to finish the reorganization of government begun under Vezzetti. Pasculli said he would meet with Vezzetti's top aide, Laurie Fabiano, next week, to review what had been Vezzetti's policy priority list.

To compensate for his time spent in school, Pasculli said he would work in City Hall two hours each day around lunchtime, and return to the job by 3:30 and stay late. He also said he would attempt to create occasional evening hours for himself and for municipal workers, reversing his opposition to such hours when Vezzetti proposed doing so in 1985.

Councilman Joseph Della Fave, a supporter of Vezzetti, criticized Pasculli's decision to keep his teaching job.

"We have full-time problems, we need a full-time mayor," Della Fave said. "Which salary is he going to collect, given the financial problems we have in the city?"

Pasculli brushed aside such criticism, saying he would work

as many hours as any other full-time mayor.

In private meetings yesterday, Pasculli asked Business Administrator Edwin Chius and Public Works Director Roy Haack to stay in their jobs, at least for the time being. Pasculli said he would ask Law Director William Graves and Michael Coleman, director of the Community Development Agency, to resign. Pasculli already has said Peggy Thomas, a CDA employee, will replace Coleman. Pasculli said he would announce Graves' replacement next week.

He said Fabiano would be asked to remain through a transition period of an undetermined length.

## Pasculli asks Coleman and Graves to quit

J.S. 3-12-88

By Bill Campbell

Two top officials from former Mayor Thomas Vezzetti's administration have been asked to resign, Hoboken Mayor Patrick Pasculli said yesterday.

Law Director William Graves and Community Development Director Michael Coleman, key policymakers for Vezzetti, were asked to step down.

Catherine Rush, who was appointed finance director by the City Council last month, has also been let go.

Pasculli, the former City Council president, was sworn in as mayor during a raucous council session on Wednesday, a week after Vezzetti died of a massive heart attack.

The departure of the three aides was rumored as long ago as last weekend. Technically, all top appointed municipal posts became vacant after Pasculli was sworn in.

"I have spoken to each of (the directors) separately and they were very cooperative," Pasculli said. "But I feel the mayor should be given every opportunity to select his own staff."

"The meetings were very cordial and professional, but there was just of difference of opinion over policy between them and me," said Sixth Ward Councilman David Roberts, a close Pasculli ally.

Neither Graves, Coleman nor Rush were available for comment.

Pasculli said he will not discuss his nominees for the vacant posts until the City Council meets in its caucus session next Monday.

He said he will also nominate a successor for his vacant at-large seat on the council during the Monday session.

Sources have said that Pasculli is considering assistant

city attorneys Tom Calligy and Fred Bado for the top law position and assistant CDA director Peggy Thomas for Coleman's spot.

Former City Council budget auditor Joseph Lisa has been rumored as the front runner for finance director, while local Democratic municipal leader Maurice Fitzgibbons is said to be favored by Pasculli for the vacant council seat.

Rush's appointment was ratified by the council last month and she was sworn Monday, according to City Clerk James Farina. Farina said she has not been paid because the council did not pass the salary ordinance for the position.

The Finance Department was a key element of Vezzetti's reorganization of municipal government. Pasculli said he will proceed with the reorganization plans.

Graves was appointed law director in November of 1986. His appointment was seen as crucial for Vezzetti since the previous two law directors split with the administration soon after taking the posts.

Graves, a former public defender in Essex County, worked closely with Vezzetti and his chief aide, Laurie Fabiano, to develop policy.

Coleman, who served as the city's first CDA director during the 1960 and early 1970s, was reappointed to the post by Vezzetti in December of 1985. He worked closely with the administration to develop housing policy.

Pasculli said he met with Fabiano on Thursday, but made no decision on her post. He said she could be a valuable member of his transition team.

Pasculli said he has asked Business Administrator Edwin Chius and Public Works Director Roy Haack to remain in their posts.

## PASCULLI ALWAYS A SCRAPPER

By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—From the ballfields of youth to the mayor's office, Patrick Pasculli always has found a way to win.

As a child, his small stature did not prevent him from spending hours playing sports, becoming good enough to play college baseball. As a politician, he

carefully has picked his way forward between the Old Guard and the reformers, until he became — at 40 — the youngest mayor in the history of the city after a City Council election Wednesday.

It is a comment on his considerable ambition that yesterday, his first day in the mayor's office, he was not satisfied by the feeling.

## PROFILE

"It's a little empty right now, because I want to be elected," he said. "Then it will feel full."

Pasculli, who will be interim mayor until November, has been driven all his life by a will to win. He has been praised by his supporters as a unifying in-

fluence, and damned by his enemies as a dealmaker who gave away too much in his quest for power.

AS A CHILD, his short stature and good academic record suggested a reclusive, book-filled life. But Pasculli, by his own admission, spent countless hours

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## Three council allies will carry on fight

Dispatch 3-14-88  
By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—With the death of Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti, the reform movement he represented lost more than just a ceremonial leader.

Throughout his aborted mayoral term, Vezzetti was criticized by political enemies as a weak-willed symbol who was manipulated by young advisers.

But Vezzetti, for all his organizational shortcomings, was

As one member of the rival Young Dems political club said of Vezzetti: "I was hoping he wouldn't run for (mayor) for them in '89. He could get the vote out like nobody else."

AS UNCERTAINTIES about the legality of the selection of

Please see REFORM Page 12

## REFORM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Vezzetti's successor, Patrick Pasculli, continue this week, the reform movement will strive to pick up the pieces left by Vezzetti's March 2 death. After a few days of shock and indecision, the movement quickly took several steps to insure its survival.

The mayor's face already graces campaign-style posters distributed at last week's City Council meeting, emblazoned with the message, "Don't let his dream die." The reform Board of Education slate, running in the April 5 election, was the first slate to declare itself as it went public last week.

And perhaps most significant are the actions of its three council representatives, Helen Cunningham, Joseph Della Fave and Thomas Newman. Almost within hours of Vezzetti's death, the three council members had decided to "take the high, moral road," as one of them said, refusing to cut deals with mayoral aspirant Pasculli.

The three agreed that only one of their own should have been selected to serve until November, when a special election will be held. "We believe it is our responsibility — and certainly our intention — to see to it that Tom's policies and programs come to fruition," Della Fave

said last week. "We are supporting each other."

The three Vezzetti supporters had little real chance of attaining the mayor's office, given that the other six councilmen were, in varying degrees, critics of Vezzetti.

But the Vezzetti group's refusal to cut a deal — even with Councilman Robert A. Ranieri, himself a mayoral aspirant who strove to ally himself with them at the last moment — may bode well for the reform movement come November.

"We kept our consciences clear," Della Fave said. They also retained their unity and paved the way for a stormy campaign for the mayoralty in November and again in April, when the next four-year mayoral term comes up for a vote.

THE REFORM movement's actions since Vezzetti's death already have sparked criticism from the Young Dems, allies of Pasculli.

"They should let the dead rest," one Pasculli insider said last week.

Those close to Pasculli accuse the reformers of using Vezzetti's death for political purposes, taking advantage of the grief of residents.

Reform members counter that Vezzetti — a tenacious, some-

times cantankerous opponent of the Young Dems and the Old Guard — would have approved of their actions.

Reformers hope that, by remaining unified in their opposition to Pasculli's administration, they can mold the sort of coalition of worried tenants, long-time residents and liberal political activists that brought Vezzetti into the mayor's office in 1985.

The task will be difficult, because, even in life, Vezzetti failed to transfer much of his popularity to those he supported in other elections. Also, the reformers are up against a well-organized opponent in the Young Dems, which seems to be moving closer to the Old Guard supporters of former Mayor Steve Cappelletto, who Vezzetti unseated in 1985.

But Pasculli has a difficult eight months ahead of him. For starters, tenant activist Ira Karasick said yesterday he will probably sue the council over its closed-session voting on Pasculli's appointment last week.

Other problems, such as a crushingly expensive revaluation that was completed this month, loom threateningly on the mayor's horizon.

Flushed with confidence over Pasculli's problems and determination to carry on Vezzetti's work, reformers feel they will have a legitimate opportunity to win back the office in November or April. "God knows — as well as Tommy knows" — Della Fave said at Vezzetti's funeral, "we have plenty of work ahead of us."

## Inauspicious beginning

J.S. 3-15-88

By choosing a mayor in a manner that a public advocate attorney charged was illegal, the Hoboken City Council got the post-Thomas Vezzetti era off to a bad start.

Tomorrow the council will get a chance to choose a mayor again. This time it must make sure that what is supposed to take place in public does not get pushed behind closed doors.

Patrick Pasculli may very well be named mayor again. But whoever is chosen mayor may not rejoice at the opportunity, if they look seriously at the city's problems.

For example, the revaluation of property in Hoboken is a big source of tension in the city, but attempts to scrap the revaluation entirely are likely to be futile, and postponing it might make things worse eventually.

In addition, the city is suffering from inadequate municipal services and a school system wracked by severe failings.

The state's "distress index" of municipalities, as reported by Joseph Albright in his column on Page 2, ranks only four municipalities in the state with more quantifiable distress than Hoboken.

The city's problems would pose a formidable challenge for any mayor or group of municipal officials. But the council and the mayor it chooses should resolve to obtain appropriate legal advice about conducting business in public, and try to meet the challenge they face in an open manner.

## Russian baseball trip's deep in red

Continued from Page 1

get lots of letters from worthwhile philanthropies. I tell them that we are going to play a role in it. But I am probably more effective in raising money from other people than I am in writing checks."

Laurie Fabiano, personal aide to former Mayor Thomas Vezzetti, traced the misunderstanding from a vague presentation by Goldfein to the parents and coaches a number of months ago.

"At one of meetings, Mort said 'We want you to be involved and we want the kids to be involved in the fund-raising, but we will see to it that the costs are covered.' And I guess the parents took that the wrong way," she said. "Mort is still as active as any other member of the board is active. If anybody was under the assumption that Hartz Mountain was picking up the tab from the beginning, then that wasn't the case and nor would it be what anybody would want."

But Hartz's participation isn't the only problem the organizers are facing. The team had originally made arrangements for airfare with a British airline, but those plans fell through, according to Culhane. The team is currently negotiating with Pan Am and British Airways for a special package that would also include parents and supporters, but not at the cost of team funds. The cost of a Pan Am direct round-trip flight to Moscow is \$1,035 per person.

The team will leave the country on August 15 and return 15 days later. After playing a round of games against clubs in Moscow, the squad will catch another plane to Tblisi,

more than 2,000 miles away, where they will conclude their schedule.

Culhane said that flight expenses account for 80 percent of the total cost.

"We will start the money blitz next month with letters to all local people," said Culhane. "And we will have a big fund-raiser of sorts in June at Liberty State Park's railroad terminal. We'll raffle some things off and have some sports celebrities make appearances. But what really worries me is this airfare business. We have to get that out of the way."

Culhane added that he's trying to get the team turned into a non-profit organization so all contributions are tax deductible.

To help chair the fund raising problems, the team has hired Terry Lazin, a New York attorney. She will also take a 10 percent cut of what she raises, according to coach Joe Reinhard.

"We haven't raised much yet and that's because everyone is waiting to see who will go first," said Reinhard. "But once a big corporation makes a contribution then the others will probably follow through."

Once inside Russia, the Hoboken squad, which will be decked in red, white and blue uniforms, will square off against older opponents. The average age of the Soviet players is 22, while the Hoboken team is made up of fifteen 15-year-olds and two 14-year-olds.

"I don't think being bigger counts as much in baseball as it does in football and basketball," said Reinhard. "Our kids are getting bigger every day. We're not small. We've played bigger guys before."

## Russian baseball trip is deep in red

By Sebastian D'Elia

J.S. 3-15-88

Almost six months after announcing plans to send the Hoboken Sandy Koufax baseball team to Russia, team organizers have raised just \$5,000 of the estimated \$130,000 needed for the two-week trip in August.

The team's coaches and parents assumed that Hartz Mountain Industries would pick up the tab or at least a great deal of it. But after meeting with Hartz Vice President Morton Goldfein two weeks ago, the team learned that the company will be merely a part of the larger financial picture.

The concept for the trip was developed by Goldfein, after he read a story about a Russian claim to have invented the sport. The invitation to the Soviet Union was a result of Sen. Frank Lautenberg's human rights mission to Russia and Poland last August. He was accompanied by Goldfein.

In the press conference announcing the trip at Hoboken City Hall on September 22, Goldfein was also tabbed as the chairman for the fund raising efforts.

"They went from being in the front of the line to saying 'Well, we'll just help you out,'" said Bill Culhane, one of the team's three coaches.

"We learned this a couple of weeks ago

See RUSSIAN — Page 6.



## Waterfront agreement drafted

By Janet Wilson 3-9-88

A draft agreement among the city, NJ Transit and the Port Authority for development of Hoboken's southern waterfront has been drawn up. It is not clear, with the death of Mayor Thomas F. Vezetti last week, if the agreement will be concluded.

Under the agreement, NJ Transit would add its shoreline property to adjacent pieces already owned by the city and rented by the P.A. and all three entities would select a private developer for a mixed-use project.

City Law Director William Graves in letters sent yesterday to NJ Transit and the P.A. notes that "a great deal of discussion and negotiation would be necessary" for a final agreement.

The city and the P.A. have been negotiating in vain for the last three years for a waterfront project on three city-owned piers and attached land rented by the P.A. south of Fifth Street.

Under the new agreement, the Erie-Lackawanna Terminal at the base of Hudson Street and land south of it owned by NJ Transit would be added to the city-owned pieces.

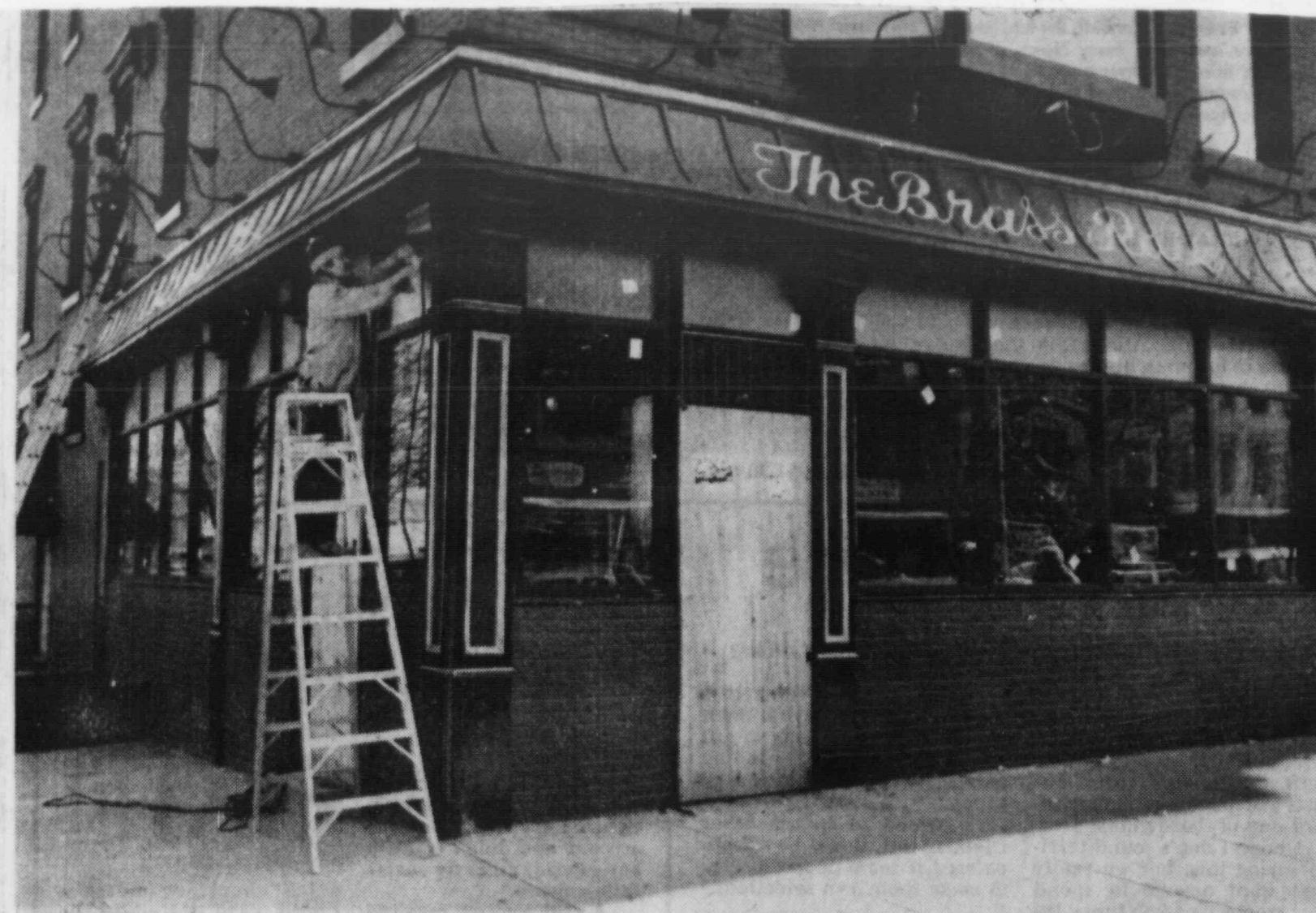
Then, all three public entities, as partners, would select a private developer and receive profits.

Under the agreement, Hoboken and NJ Transit would sell or lease the required land to the selected developer, and the P.A. would perform any necessary demolition and build sewer lines, decking and any other required infrastructure.

P.A. staff would also serve as the day-to-day agents of the three-way partnership.

A representative of the gov-

See HOBOKEN — Page 8.



The Brass Rail restaurant in Hoboken is undergoing some loving restoration after a fire almost made it a memory.

## Brass Rail hopes to recreate mural

By Patricia Scott J.J. 3-11-88

Berek Don is on a quest. His search began six months ago. He's had some success but more frustration.

"We had luck finding a lot of people who care about it intensely and vaguely remember," explains Don, a Bergen County attorney-turned-restaurantier. "But we're still searching for someone with a magic memory."

Don is seeking Hudson County residents who recall — even in the most hazy way — any details of the handsome 35-foot mural that stretched behind the bar of Hoboken's Brass Rail Restaurant at 135 Washington St.

The beloved mural, which patrons gazed at through the bottom of their beer mugs for more than 50 years, had figures of trains and cars, people and railways, painted on what had become a dusty-brown background marked with intricate lettering.

For dock workers exhausted after a grueling day on the piers, for Reebok-clad Yuppies wiped out from their PATH commute and in need of a quick "Stoli and water" before heading home, the mural represented calmness and serenity at the end of a frenetic day.

"People would come in and sit at the bar, unwind with a drink and look," remembers Don. "The mural just defined the Brass Rail and, really, Hoboken. Everyone loved the mural."

But the impressive painting, a signature of the Hoboken watering hole, was totally destroyed in last summer's fire.

Only the charred wall remains; no trace of the original mural exists.

The Brass Rail comprised a critically

acclaimed French restaurant on the second floor and an always-packed neighborhood tavern/informal restaurant on the ground level.

The corner site — boarded up and victimized by graffiti-mongers since the blaze — is now heading toward rebirth. Work crews have removed girding and old boards and tiny twinkling lights were switched on in the second-floor windows. Spanking-new picture windows offer a vista of Washington Street, and pedestrians wandering past yesterday paused to ask about reopening plans.

The Brass Rail should be back in business by mid-May, Don bought the site from its original owner, Michael Peters, who has since moved to Ireland, and has spent a small fortune restoring it.

"I don't even want to think about what we spent. I can't admit it," says Don. But he does admit that costs have already gone well over \$100,000 just on interior refurbishing.

The entire kitchen area was gutted and destroyed, and a group of rare birds that belonged to Peters was killed.

On the plus side, the huge wooden bar was saved and needs only reconditioning and cleaning. Best of all, Don has in his possession a 1930s photograph of several smiling Brass Rail bartenders, their arms linked, standing in front of the mural.

The photo hung on a wall near the bar's side entrance, and city firefighters were able to save it as they fought the flames.

"This photo was a godsend," says Don. "It gave us an idea of where to start and some direction. What we really need now are local people who loved the place and have definite memories of the mural. I

need them to come forward and call me."

Don will hire local artists to recreate the mural from scratch.

The restaurateur said Hoboken residents have been calling him all week — but only to make reservations for dinner.

"That's been very gratifying," he said. "We get four or five calls a day, just people asking when we'll open again and adding their name to our dinner list. It gives us a good feeling to know the reopening is eagerly awaited."

Don wants to preserve the decor and style of the Brass Rail as well as its name. He is keeping on staff the bar's manager and at least three of the employees who worked under Peters.

The attorney, who owns a Long Island steak restaurant named Bobby's Rubino's, has hired European-trained chef Stephan Kopf to serve as the Rail's executive chef. Kopf was most recently a sous chef at Lutece in Manhattan, where he worked with four-star chef Andre Soltner for five years.

"The Brass Rail was finally getting the recognition and praise it deserved when the fire occurred," said Don, noting that New Jersey Magazine has rated the restaurant highly and raved about its food and service only a month before the site was gutted. "We want to keep everything that was good about it and work to make it all even better."

Residents who can offer information about the mural — or who would like to make reservations for a special dinner in May — can call Don weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 947-4100.

"We desperately want to hear from people," he said. "Even if the memory isn't absolutely clear, any input will help."

## Hoboken waterfront agreement drafted

Continued from Page 1

error has been negotiating the agreement for the last month and a half, according to several sources.

City officials met with the P.A. in January and agreed in principle to the three-way partnership.

John Donovan, P.A. spokesman, confirmed that the bi-state agency has been involved in discussions with the city. The city has agreed to prepare a document outlining how the partnership would work, he said.

"The Port Authority has not yet seen it," he said, "but does look forward to receiving it."

No one from NJ Transit could be reached to comment on the draft or confirm its contents.

Law Director William Graves mailed the draft along with cover letters to Phil LaRocca, director of World Trade & Economic Development for the P.A., and to NJ Transit Commissioner Hazel Gluck, who also heads the state Department of Transportation.

It is unclear whether the agreement, hammered out while Mayor Thomas F. Vezetti was still alive, will be carried out if a new mayor is named.

Council President Patrick Pasculli, considered the leading contender to replace Vezetti, said he was "taken aback" that the agreement had become public.

"Especially in this void we have, I don't think it's appropriate," said Pasculli.

Graves points out the agreement would have to be approved by the mayor and Council, the P.A. commissioners, and NJ Transit's board.

He and others said they were not necessarily opposed to such an agreement, because it could generate crucially needed revenues for the city to offset steep tax hikes.

But he also said he might prefer short term options such as leasing Pier A, one of the city's piers, to the P.A. for a ferry line.

In return, the P.A. might turn over nearly \$5 million in

insurance interest and proceeds from a 1980 fire on Pier B immediately, rather than continue legal appeals.

An administration member who did not want to be identified said the letters had been mailed out because "we're proceeding with the next step. We're not letting this just die. The new mayor can pursue it or not pursue it."

## Flowers to show pride of Hoboken residents

By Patricia Scott 3-17-88

Plant a flower. Better yet, plant lots of flowers and stop by now and then to add to the garden.

That's the message the Hoboken Community Development Agency is hoping to get across, as the CDA plans its first "Preserving Hoboken Pride Week," April 2 to 9.

CDA spokeswoman Ann Banyra said Elysian Park is the focus of the spruce-up campaign.

Officials are asking that residents develop an interest in park beautification projects and begin an ongoing attempt to beautify the city's parks.

Festivities will kick-off April 2 when the CDA sponsors a flower-planting event at Elysian Park, asking residents to drop by to do some gardening.

Later in the week, a formal groundbreaking at Elysian Park will symbolize the beginning of park renovations.

Pride Week will culminate April 9 with a musical festival in the park featuring local performers and an art show, said Banyra.

Banyra is asking that any interested city residents who would be willing to donate two hours of time to the flower-planting event on April 2 contact her weekdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 420-2215.

## The right to vote is not unlimited

By John Petrick J.J. 3-15-88

Former Hoboken campaign worker Antoinette Calabrese has been sentenced to two years probation for her January guilty plea to one count of voter fraud.

Calabrese, a campaign aide for city Councilman Steve Capiello, was indicted last year on charges she voted twice in each of six elections using her married name and maiden name.

In addition to the probationary sentence, Superior Court Judge Joseph Thuring on Friday fined Calabrese \$250.

According to officials, Calabrese cast double ballots in the elections of November, 1984; November and May of 1985; November of 1986; and last June's primary and city runoff.

## Pasculli sending 3 key nominees to city council

By Dominick Calicchio

Hoboken Interim Mayor Patrick Pasculli will ask the City Council to consider his nominees for three key administration positions when the council holds its caucus at 7 tonight in City Hall.

Eugene O'Connell, assistant corporation counsel for Jersey City, is the mayor's nominee to replace city Law Director William Graves, who was fired last week, Pasculli said.

O'Connell was involved in much of the litigation surrounding the Newport development in Jersey City, Pasculli said.

Peggy Thomas, assistant director of the city's Community Development Agency, is the nominee to replace Michael Coleman as that agency's director, Pasculli said.

Coleman was also fired last week.

Joseph Lisa, a local accountant and former City Council budget auditor, is Pasculli's choice to replace Catherine Rush as finance director, the mayor said. Rush had been appointed to the position only last month.

The removal of Graves, Coleman and Rush marks the first personnel changes Pasculli has made since becoming mayor by a City Council vote one week following the death of Mayor Thomas Vezetti.

He'll serve until a special election is held in November to decide who'll complete Vezetti's term, which expires in 1989.

Vezetti died in St. Mary Hospital at 12:03 a.m. March 2 after suffering a massive heart attack an hour earlier in his home.

Upon his selection as mayor, Pasculli became free to replace Vezetti's appointed officials with his own candidates, pending City Council approval.

Earlier reports indicated that Pasculli asked the three to resign, but Coleman said yesterday that that wasn't the case.

"Interim Mayor Pasculli did not ask me to quit," he said.

"In fact, he did not ask me anything at our meeting. He told me that he was removing me from my position immediately," Coleman said.

"If he had asked me to resign, I would have refused his request."

Neither Graves nor Rush could be reached for comment.

Pasculli's comments yesterday seemed to corroborate Coleman's version of events.

"I said to them I should be given, as the mayor, the full authority to make appointments in those positions," he said. Pasculli then told them he was replacing them, he said.

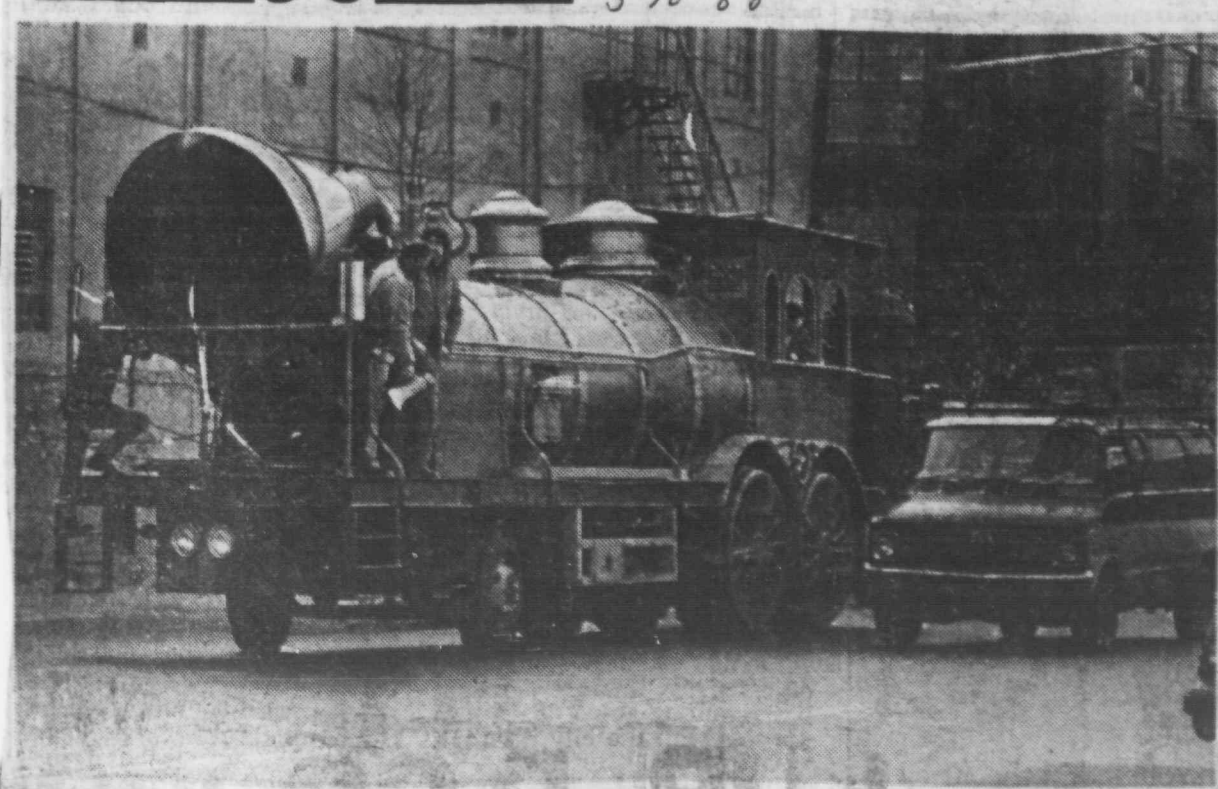
Graves, Coleman and Rush were instructed to assist in the transition of their departments, the mayor said.

Pasculli said Laurie Fabiano, Vezetti's chief aide, will take the next few weeks off to recuperate following Vezetti's death.

He and Fabiano will discuss her job status upon her return, Pasculli said.

## Training ground

3-16-88



An old-fashioned engine makes tracks yesterday on Willow Avenue in Hoboken.

DON MCCOY THE HUDSON DISPATCH

## First slate announces for school race

By Patricia Scott J.J. 3-14-88

Less than a month before Hoboken's school board elections, battle lines are finally being drawn among the 13 contenders for three seats.

Though school board candidates cannot legally file as an organized slate, it is customary for united candidates to announce as a group and run under a banner name.

The first such organization — the Coalition for Better Schools and Lower Taxes — announced its candidates and platform yesterday. The Coalition is comprised of Gerry Costa, Vivian Flora-Distaso and Felix Rivera.

Costa was a founding member of the city's liberal education organization Committee for a Quality Education.

CQE has not yet announced support for any candidate.

CQE took a beating in last April's school board election when CQE candidates Steve Block, Mike Rossano and Carlos Perez were defeated by School Board President Richard England, Mario Mercado and Geraldine Pantoliano. The late Mayor Thomas Vezetti had worked on behalf of the CQE candidates. CQE spent more than \$11,000 in last year's race.

Though the Coalition for Better Schools and Lower Taxes

has ties to CQE, Costa said the candidates represent a "new approach." The three candidates said, if elected, they will focus on ridding the school system of politics and of the fundamental educational deficiencies.

Costa, who was the first director of the Hoboken Head Start program, is a lifelong city resident and a developmental psychologist with the Association for Retarded Citizens of Hudson County. He is also on staff with the Community Mental Health Center of Christ Hospital, chaired the city's Task Force on Child Sex Abuse and was a member of the Family Life Education Committee of

the Hoboken Board of Education.

Vivian Flora-Distaso, a Third Ward resident, is a teacher at St. Ann's Church and has served the Family Life Committee of Hoboken's school board. She is client service associate with Nielsen Television Ratings, and has worked in the past as assignment editor at Channel 68 News.

Felix Rivera ran unsuccessfully for the Board of Education last year as an independent. A former city police officer, he is now a police officer for the Port Authority, and was appointed last year by Vezetti to a post on the city Housing Authority.





Students from the Academy of the Sacred Heart take advantage yesterday of the new practice field at Fourth and Jackson streets in Hoboken.

AGREEMENT REACHED

Dispatch 3-12-88

## Kids get ballpark

Field finally available in baseball's birthplace

By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—As the city Little League baseball teams conduct their tryouts today, they will enjoy the use of a real baseball field to practice on for the first time in at least 10 years.

Under a deal hammered out by City Councilman Joseph Della Fave and the city's Housing Authority, Little League teams will practice on the authority's manured field three times a week until June.

"It's a blessing," said Joseph Cicala, president of the Little League Coaches and Managers Association here. "This will be the first time any of our teams will be able to practice on a field without rocks and bottles."

Little League and Minor League teams have practiced on garbage-strewn lots, Hudson River piers and even inside the city's sewage plant

property because the city offered no other suitable facilities. The Little League field at Fifth and Hudson streets is booked solid for games 10 months of the year, making it impossible for teams to get practice time there. Yet this city is a natural home for baseball—it is the site of the first baseball game, played June 19, 1846, when the New York Nine defeated the New York Knickerbockers, 23-1, on the grassy Elysian Fields, overlooking the Hudson River.

For Della Fave, the agreement—which was reached last month—is a product of more than a year of negotiations designed to help find city kids places to practice. Because of field renovations and scheduling conflicts, the Housing Authority could not agree to provide its facilities last season.

"WE HAVE always had a seri-

ous problem with recreation space in this city," Della Fave said. "Hopefully, this is one small step in improving that."

Niel Mosco, the modernization coordinator of the Housing Authority, said he also was trying to schedule field time for baseball teams from Sacred Heart Academy.

"We're trying to cooperate and get everybody some time on the field," Mosco said.

In June, the Housing Authority's own league—composed of some 12 teams representing families from the authority's 800 residential units—will take over use of the field full-time, Mosco said.

Today, about 250 children are expected at the authority field at Fourth and Jackson streets for the Little League tryouts, according to Cicala. That figure is more than double last year's turnout, he said.

## Hoboken council to re-elect mayor

Continued from Page 1

did not violate the Sunshine Law, but he said it will repeat the vote for mayor because of the lingering questions.

"In order to avoid problems and going to court, we should just do it over again," he said.

Roberts said he will sponsor the resolution to name Pasculli mayor for a second time. Pasculli said last week that the council should do whatever

needs to be done to correct the situation.

Farina and Roberts are both members of Hoboken Young Democrats, a political organization allied with Pasculli. They said they do not think the council's vote for Pasculli will change.

But other political observers said the fragile coalition that named Pasculli mayor might have dissolved since last week's vote.

The council is split into three camps: Pasculli allies Roberts, Edwin Duroy and E. Norman Wilson; Vezzetti allies Joseph Della Fave, Helen Cunningham and Thomas Newman; and Steve Cappiello and Robert Ranieri. Cappiello and Ranieri voted for Pasculli last week.

Cappiello declined to comment yesterday on whether he would vote for Pasculli again. Ranieri said that "anyone who has four votes, I'll be the fifth vote." He did not say directly if he would vote for Pasculli again.

It is unclear whether any of Pasculli's actions as mayor in the past week are valid, since his election may have been illegal. Karasick said he will challenge Pasculli's actions in his legal brief.

Pasculli has been moving quickly to seize the reins of power. He fired three top city administrators last week and has reportedly promised to name several allies to other key positions.

and personnel matters, but elected officials are not covered under the personnel exemption, according to Susan Oxford, an attorney for the state public advocate. She said there is a "strong argument" that the deliberations on picking a new mayor should have been public.

Oxford said the council also violated the Sunshine Law by voting in closed session. The law prohibits public bodies from voting behind closed doors.

But Councilman David Roberts argued that the council did not really vote while in closed session. "We were just attempting to see if there was a consensus," he said.

Mark Fleming, an attorney for the state attorney general, who is an expert on the Sunshine Law, said it is hard to determine whether the council violated the law. "You don't really have a clear argument on either side," he said.

Fleming said the law has a provision to cure violations and the council could repeat its vote for mayor. "But many people argue that the cure has already been tainted by the violation," he said.

City Clerk James Farina maintained that the council

See HOBOKEN COUNCIL—Page 6.

## Hoboken council must vote again

By Jim DeRogatis

The Hoboken City Council tomorrow will repeat its vote to name a mayor because of concern that last week's vote violated the state Open Public Meetings Act.

Five members of the council voted last week to name Patrick Pasculli mayor until a special election is held in November to fill the term of the late Mayor Thomas Vezzetti.

But Ira Karasick, an attorney and Vezzetti ally, is filing a lawsuit charging that the council violated the state Open Public Meetings Act or "Sunshine

See editorial on Page 16.

Law" during last Wednesday's meeting.

The council went into closed session twice to discuss naming one of its members mayor. After coming out of closed session the first time, Council President Pasculli announced that no one had received enough votes to be named mayor.

The second time the council returned from closed session, it took a public vote and Pasculli was named to Vezzetti's chair.

The Sunshine Law allows public bodies to go into closed session to discuss litigation

## Developer unveils ambitious plan for northern Hoboken waterfront

Jersey Journal March 11<sup>th</sup> 1988

By Jim DeRogatis

Idle shipyards on Hoboken's northern waterfront will be converted to an office and shopping center ringed by a giant parking lot if the Planning Board approves a proposal by developer Anthony Dell' Aquila.

Dell' Aquila's attorney, Frank Leanza of Hackensack, unveiled plans yesterday for 343,000 square feet of office space and 138,000 square feet of retail space in existing buildings on waterfront property stretching from 12th Street to the Weehawken border.

The plan also includes a proposal for 1,874 parking spaces at the Hudson River's edge and in a five-block-long lot that will ring much of the project, forming a barrier to the surrounding neighborhood.

City development officials are expected to object to the amount of parking. Development guidelines under consideration by the Planning Board would prohibit any parking on the waterfront, since it is a low-efficiency use of land and contributes to Hoboken's severe traffic congestion problems.

City officials have been waiting to view Dell' Aquila's plans since he purchased the old Bethlehem Steel/Hoboken

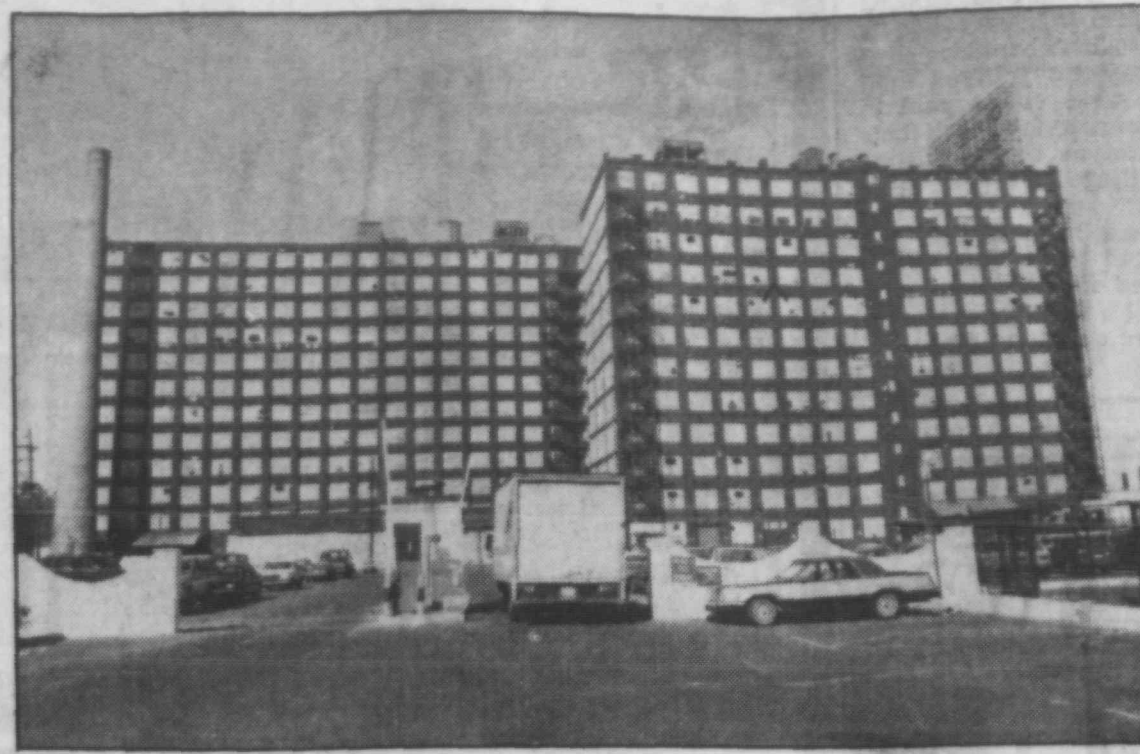


Photo by Ed Peters

Hoboken developer Anthony Dell' Aquila plans to build an office and shopping center on waterfront land surrounding the old Standard Brands building at 15th and Hudson streets. The building would continue to serve as a center for light industry.

Shipyards through the federal Bankruptcy Court in 1985. The developer owns a total of 64 acres on the waterfront, including the landmark brown and yellow Standard Brands building at 15th and Hudson streets and the old Franklin Baker building at

15th and Bloomfield streets. The first phase of the development involves only the rehabilitation of existing structures. It will be the second largest rehabilitation project on Hudson County's waterfront, after the Harborside Financial Center in Jersey

City, a waterfront warehouse that is being renovated for office space.

Structures included in Phase One of the development include:

• Five low-rise brick

See DEVELOPER—Page 10.

## Developer unveils ambitious plan for northern Hoboken waterfront

Continued from Page 1

buildings inside the Hoboken Shipyards that were abandoned since the shipyards closed. The buildings will be restored for use as office space and shops.

• A two-story repair shop that stretches along Hudson Street from 12th Street to 14th Street. The building will be renovated to house a number of small shops and boutiques.

• A three-story pipe shop just behind the repair shop at 13th Street. Dell' Aquila is negotiating with a large supermarket operator which would occupy the ground floor, Leanza said.

• The Standard Brands building. Leanza said the building will continue to be rented to light industries. Dell' Aquila made his fortune in the garment industry and has several of his own businesses based in the building.

• The renovated Franklin Baker warehouse. Dell' Aquila is negotiating with several office tenants to occupy the site, Leanza said.

The developer received a \$1.7 million Urban Development Action Grant in 1983 to restore the building for light industry, but he violated the terms of the UDAG by renovating the building for office space instead. The city is negotiating with Dell' Aquila for recovery of the funds.

Vehicular access to the site would be provided at three sites: 12th and Hudson streets, 14th and Hudson streets and 16th Street and Park Avenue. Dell' Aquila plans to start a ferry service from a pier at the foot of 14th Street.

The ferry would take commuters to Manhattan, as well as north-south along the Hudson River to and from the PATH station in downtown Hoboken. The city Zoning Board of Adjustment is considering an application by Direct Line Commuter Ferry to operate the



Photo by Daniel Dufka

The Franklin Baker building at 15th and Bloomfield streets would be rented out as office space under Anthony Dell' Aquila's development plan for Hoboken's northern waterfront.

trans-Hudson service. The first phase of the development could start "the sooner the better," Leanza said, and it would take about two years to complete. He could not give a cost estimate for the project, since Dell' Aquila is negotiating with many different tenants, some of whom may bear the cost of renovations themselves, he said.

City officials said they were not surprised by the first phase of the project, since it consists primarily of existing buildings and interim use of land for parking. But Dell' Aquila's long-term development goals remain a mystery.

The enigmatic developer rarely appears at public meetings and shuns contact with the press. Leanza and other associates have described him as an intensely private man with deep roots in Hoboken who hopes to leave his mark on the city's waterfront.

Leanza said Phase Two of the project will include a marina on the Weehawken Cove and luxury housing in newly constructed buildings on six waterfront piers, but he did not offer specifics.

"We want to wait for the project to be assimilated by the community before we begin the second phase," Leanza said. Phase Two is also being delayed because of questions about pending state regulations that would limit construction on waterfront piers, he said.

Questions also surround Dell' Aquila's relationship with Hoboken condominium developer Murray Connell. The site plans presented to the Planning Board were designed by Hoboken architects the Gleason Group and bear the name of Connell Contracting, Inc.

Connell had an agreement to develop Hoboken's northern waterfront in partnership with Dell' Aquila. The agreement has lapsed, although the two continue to work together, Leanza said.

"They're two Hoboken boys working together. They're good friends," was the only comment Leanza offered. City development officials said Dell' Aquila continues to seek a large outside developer to join him for the new construction phase of

the project. Leanza stressed the benefits of the development, which he said include greater taxes for the city, a broad spectrum of jobs for Hoboken residents and access to the waterfront.

"There will not be adverse impacts from this project," he said.

But the city planners have reservations about the number of parking spaces. Waterfront design guidelines proposed by the administration of the late Mayor Thomas Vezzetti would have prohibited any parking on the waterfront.

The guidelines have been under review by the Planning Board and have not been formally adopted. Traffic planners hired by the city have recommended against allowing cars on the waterfront, since they interfere with public access and cause traffic problems.

The Planning Board is expected to delay a vote on the proposal for several weeks until the city's traffic consultants can study its impact on Hoboken's already congested streets.

## 400 protest Hoboken's steep revaluation

By John A. Oswald

J.J. 3-16-88

Hoboken City Council members may wish they scheduled tonight's council session in a local gymnasium if the crowd that attended last night's meeting to protest the recent revaluation keeps its promise to attend.

As many as 400 people crammed into the Hoboken Elks' Club Headquarters last night after receiving flyers that day at their doorsteps or hearing about the meeting by word of mouth.

"I laughed when I saw the bill and then I almost cried," Mary Gespar, the meeting organizer, told the predominantly middle-aged, elderly audience.

People throughout the meeting expressed concerns that the recent citywide revaluation, which in some cases increased property values 12 to 15 times, would result in substantial, unaffordable tax increases.

Also echoed were the charges made at Monday's Hoboken City Council meeting that the firm hired to conduct the revaluation, Real Property Appraisers, did so improperly.

Several property owners complained that appraisers never visited their homes. When Gespar asked for a show-of-hands from people whose homes weren't inspected, more than half of the audience shot their hands into the air.

Real Property Appraiser officials are expected to attend tonight's council meeting to explain the methods used to arrive at property values during the revaluation.

Hoboken is withholding a \$26,000 payment to the firm pending the explanation.

People questioned the speakers lined up by Gespar what action they should take to protest what generally was criticized as a grossly inflated revaluation.

William Stack, a professional appraiser in private practice and brother of Gespar, recommended the audience contest the revaluation by filing an appeal with the Hudson County

Board of Taxation.

To cries for a tax boycott until the revaluation is discarded, Stack said that such a move would remove the homeowners' right to an appeal.

Stack described the revaluation as long overdue and said the only way Hoboken would discard the results would be "to show the revaluation was not done in a businesslike manner."

Many people leaving last night's meeting said they will appeal their increased revaluations.

Virginia and Anthony Zanetich, whose property was reassessed at \$1 million, said they are distressed by revaluation and worried their taxes may double.

Raymond McAllister said he was especially worried that Hoboken would pay a disproportionate amount for county taxes and described the new property values as "inflated and above market value."

"The tenants in this town should be equally up in arms because they will not be able to blame the landlords for a rent increase," said Samantha Cicimirska.

"This is a unified issue when for once landowners, landlords and tenants should be on the same side," she added. Gespar said she expects a central steering group will be organized following last night's meeting to lead the protest against the revaluation.





## Will voters go for stadium repairs?

By Patricia Scott

For more than two decades, some of the roughest physical contact at Hoboken High School football games has been between player and field.

The sorry state of the John F. Kennedy-Veterans Memorial Stadium and ballfield in Hoboken has been a thorn in the side of school board trustees and a major source of discontent for the parents of athletes.

The field has almost no grass, though tufts of weeds and sharp-edged rocks jut out of the dusty ground.

The field area has no bleachers, forcing school board trustees to consider renting bleachers for the upcoming baseball season.

Teenagers from the high school who want to refine their racing skills are forced to work out on a running track that is not regulation length. The worn-down track is one-fifth of

a mile, not the one-fourth of a mile required.

During football games, players who run too far past the end zones find themselves entering parts of the running track area, which involves special dangers for players wearing cleats.

"In just about every way you can think of, this field and stadium is a disgrace," said School Board Trustee James Farina, who is also city clerk and chairman for the past 12 years of the school board's Athletic Committee. "It says something terrible to have a place like this for our kids to play."

Compounding the pathetic condition of the field, officials said, is an even worse scene in the locker rooms.

Ancient lockers have either no doors or doors hanging off their hinges; the bathrooms are literally falling apart. There are no bathroom facilities of any kind for girls or

women, and no accommodations for the handicapped.

The 100-year-old field and stadium originally belonged to the county, but were purchased by the city school board in 1962. It stands just one block from the high school, at Jefferson and 11th streets, and is used by the high school's athletes year-round.

The school board recently conducted a survey at the field, led by George Weiner of the Gale Corporation. Results showed an estimated \$1 million-plus is needed.

The school board has appealed to the state in the past for money to put the field in top shape, but Green Acres money cannot be funneled into school projects and President Ronald Reagan has cut back on Parks Restoration Grant money. Hoboken was targeted to receive, officials said.

On April 5, city voters will cast ballots on whether money

will be used on field and stadium repairs.

The Board of Education, in its \$6.3 million five-issue bond referendum question, is asking voters to approve a plan to spend \$1,440,000 on complete renovation and improvement of the Kennedy Stadium field. A similar bond issue was soundly defeated in 1974.

The field project is just one part of the broader referendum issue, which will also ask voters to lay out \$219,000 for asbestos removal at grammar schools and \$1,768,000 for fire safety improvements and the upgrading of roofing and other structural problems at the eight schools.

"I can't say the field is more important than fire safety or other major concerns, and I'm not saying that," said Farina. "But I think it is crucial that we have a decent and attractive place for children in Hoboken to play."



Wrapped in tarpaulins, Maxwell's restaurant in Hoboken provides a scene for "Dream Street," a pilot episode for an NBC series. Outside, Police Lt. Gabe Ferraiuolo, left, and Officer Bob Goate, right, stand guard filming equipment.

'DREAM STREET'

## Eatery becomes stage

Hoboken provides set for TV show's pilot

By JEFFREY RUBIN  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—Swathed in black tarpaulins and raged by a protective band of cable-toting and denim-clad technicians, Maxwell's restaurant was a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma for several hours yesterday afternoon.

But the sporadic cries of "Quiet on the set" and "Cut" went a long way toward explaining the incongruous sight of a Washington Street restaurant besieged by tarpaulins, Maxwell's, which normally caters to a busy lunchtime crowd, was instead catering to the needs of a production crew in the midst of filming a fall pilot for NBC.

The one-hour series pilot, titled "Dream Street," will be filming in and around Hoboken through March 30, according to assistant location manager Joe Iberti. If the pilot episode is picked up by NBC, a dozen additional episodes may be filmed in Hoboken and other Hudson County municipalities.

"That's certainly what we're hoping for," said Steve Gorlick, an executive assistant for the state Motion Picture and Television Commission,

which acts as a liaison between municipalities and production crews. "But it's a big step from the pilot stage to the serious stage."

According to Iberti, this round of shooting will also be street scenes, Laundromat locales and residential interiors, all chosen to lend authenticity to a series about growing up in Hoboken.

"We go by the script, basically," Iberti said yesterday afternoon, emerging from a tangle of dozens of technicians and actors filming a noisy "nighttime" bar sequence inside Maxwell's. "Then we go around and knock on doors. We've been very welcome. The people of Hoboken seem to be very happy about it."

Production workers said "Dream Street" will tell the story of two Hoboken brothers and their friends, all of whom are faced with increasing responsibilities as they move from childhood to adulthood. The cast is comprised of new, largely unknown actors and actresses, so there were no groupies or autograph hounds outside Maxwell's yesterday.

However, local police and merchants are already gossiping about how fortunate Hoboken is to have been selected as the show's chief setting.

## Public tears into budget proposal of school board

Dispatch 3-16-88  
By CHRISTOPHER AVE  
Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—City taxpayers at a sparsely-attended Board of Education meeting last night lashed out at the panel's 1988 budget request, which if implemented could drive up taxes for the average homeowner by hundreds of dollars.

The \$28.4 million budget will go before voters in the April 5 board election. It calls for an increase of \$5.5 million in the amount taxpayers must pay over last year's budget.

"I think this budget is an abomination," Paul Cahill, a parent, said.

The meeting, in Hoboken High School's auditorium, was attended by about 40 people. Some suggested a simultaneous meeting in the Elks Lodge on Washington Street to protest a recent revaluation drew much interest away from the school board meeting.

Board members point to a \$3 million reduction in state and federal aid as the cause of much of the increase. But residents last night pointed out the board carried a \$1 million surplus in this year's budget—a surplus that did not come to light until after the board and the city agreed to cut that budget by \$1.25 million. The final budget for this year was a million dol-

lars more than the figure the budget voters rejected last year.

All three board candidates from the Coalition for Better Schools and Lower Taxes, a reform slate, spoke last night against the budget. Candidate Felix Rivera called the budget "unconscionable" and laid the blame on two political clubs, the Young Democrats and the Old Guard.

Gerard Costa, another candidate on the slate, asked the board for clearer budgetary information before such meetings, so the public would be able to ask questions intelligently.

Costa also noted the board's spending history, and said he was in favor of a defeat of the budget at the polls.

Councilman Joseph Della Fave also spoke against the budget. He noted the state and federal governments had reduced their contributions to the city's school budget. But he added that the board should have made cuts in anticipation of the cutbacks.

Della Fave also asked for another public hearing on the budget. He said the simultaneous revaluation meeting prevented many residents from attending.

Using this year's tax system, the board's budget proposal would increase taxes for the average homeowner by \$675 per year. The budget's effect under this year's revaluation is unclear because a final tax rate has yet to be struck.

## Politics surprises fired Hoboken aide

By Patricia Scott

Political insiders in Hudson County are accustomed to holding city jobs that largely depend on their alignment with the administration in power.

Catherine Rush, however, isn't.

A professional fiscal analyst hired only last month to serve as executive director of Hoboken's Finance Department, she was fired by interim Mayor Patrick Pasculli last Friday.

Her removal occurred only a few weeks after Pasculli joined the other City Council members in a unanimous vote approving her appointment.

Rush, a 30-year-old fiscal whiz with a background in financial planning and fiscal analysis, had been in her new job less than a week. She left a lucrative career as vice president of the New York City-based Public Resources Advisory Fund to take the Hoboken job.

She says she accepted the Hoboken post because she wanted to work in a hands-on position, and because she had recently had a baby and needed a job closer to her Hoboken home.

"I could not believe it when I got the word I was out," Rush said yesterday. "He (Pasculli) told me on Friday. We had a meeting, and he just told me

that he's replacing me, that he's talking to a lot of people and will be talking to more people. I couldn't believe it."

Pasculli said he approved Rush's appointment last month out of respect for the office of mayor. He said he felt that, as mayor, Vezzetti had the right to fill certain positions with his own candidates.

The interim mayor said he decided to remove Rush from the post based on the same principle.

Pasculli is expected to name local accountant Joe Lisa, a former budget auditor for the council and a strong Pasculli ally, to replace Rush.

The post, with a salary in the mid-40s, was given to Rush

by an enthusiastic and unanimous 9-0 City Council vote.

Rush may have been appointed under the direction of Vezzetti, but her appointment was, at the time, lauded by Pasculli.

"I can't explain why things would change like this," Rush said, noting she is "a complete newcomer" to Hudson County's political workings. "I don't get it. I'm just completely surprised and disappointed."

Rush said she cannot return to her former job because of the demands it made on her time. She had hired a full-time babysitter to care for her child

See FIRED — Page 6.

## Fired Hoboken aide surprised by politics

Continued from Page 1  
while she was working in Hoboken.

"Now I have the babysitter but no job; I have to rearrange everything fast," she said. She is hoping to find another full-time fiscal post soon.

Rush called in sick to City Hall yesterday, but said she will finish out at least this week, removing her personal possessions and going about everyday business in City Hall.

"There is still all the regular business to attend to and, possibly, to work with my replacement if he (Pasculli) chooses someone soon," she said. "It isn't immediate."

Rush's professional background was lauded yesterday by City Hall employees who remain fervently pro-Vezzetti, and by department directors. "She was the first person in maybe 20 years whose job didn't depend on politics," said one admirer. "She didn't know anything about it, and didn't care. She just did her job very, very well."

William Graves, director of the Law Department, who is also being squeezed out to make way for Pasculli appointee Eugene O'Connell, praised Rush's professional ability. "She was excellent," said

Graves. "And on the job one week."

Rush has extensive experience as a financial and planning consultant with municipal and state government offices.

She has done work for the state Department of Environmental Protection, the New Jersey Highway Authority, the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority, and done municipal fiscal work in Buffalo, N.Y., and Alexandria, Va. She has also worked in structuring debt issues at Drew University and earned a master's degree in public administration and public affairs in 1983 at Princeton. Her B.A. degree was earned at Washington State University in 1980.

As director, Rush would have been responsible for all financial planning and analysis, city investments, bond issues and state and federal funding applications, and overseeing the city comptroller and tax collector.

Rush said she had been particularly looking forward to overseeing the total revamping and computerization of all municipal fiscal operations.

"This was a tremendous surprise and a very unpleasant one," she said yesterday. "I actually couldn't believe it."

Karasick said he would probably decide tomorrow whether he would file a suit.

Admitting "technical errors" in council procedure, Pasculli called Karasick's challenge a "willful action to obstruct the orderly transition of government." Pasculli also said William Graves, who Pasculli fired as law director on Friday, should have told the council of the requirements of the act before a closed session was called.

Pasculli continued his business yesterday, asking the council to accept his nominees for replacements for Graves and for Community Affairs Director Michael Coleman and Finance Director Katherine Rush, who also were fired Friday.

As expected, Pasculli nominated Assistant CDA Director Peggy Thomas as Coleman's replacement. Pasculli also nominated a former Jersey City assistant corporation counsel, Eugene O'Connell, as law director, and local accountant Joseph Lisa as finance director.

The council has the power to thwart Pasculli's requests, but the mayor said he was "very confident" that a majority would accept the nominations.

Still undetermined is a council replacement for Pasculli, who held an at-large seat. That seat must also be filled by the council. Pasculli said he had not decided whom to support for the position, adding that several people had expressed interest.

## Relief may be coming

Continued from Page 1

would pay fixed-income homeowners' taxes. The homeowners would pay a set amount to the bank, with the balance due upon the resident's death or sale of the home.

State aid to New Jersey cities has decreased steadily during the Kean administration. Kenna, a Democrat, admits that it will be difficult to convince the Republican administration to provide Hoboken and Jersey City with property tax relief.

"The taxpayers are going to have to rise up and make sure their needs are known in Trenton," Kenna said. "We are talking about preserving the middle class in Hoboken and Jersey City."

## There may be relief

By Jim DeRogatis  
Dispatch 3-16-88

Hudson County's delegation to the state Legislature is exploring three options to relieve homeowners and tenants of the burden imposed by revaluation.

Property values in Hoboken and Jersey City have risen dramatically in the 18 years since the last revaluation, and many property owners are facing steep tax hikes. Fixed-income homeowners and senior citizens could be forced to sell their homes, because of the larger tax bills.

Local government does not have the power to freeze taxes or offset the effects of the revaluations. Tax relief must come from the state.

Hoboken Assemblyman

Bernard Kenny Jr. said Hudson County legislators are exploring three forms of relief from the revaluation, including:

- Phasing in the revaluation over a period of three to five years. The difference in taxes would be made up by state aid to distressed cities.

- Deferral of taxes for fixed-income senior citizens or handicapped homeowners. The state would pay the difference in taxes and collect the balance upon the resident's death. Sen. Thomas Cowan of Jersey City has already drafted a bill setting the plan in motion.

- Revenue annuity. This plan would establish a sort of mortgage whereby banks

See RELIEF — Page 10.



# Residents shouldn't have to pay to park

J.J. 3-15-88

Once again, the residents of the City of Hoboken must pay for the out-of-towners. With the high cost of property tax and rents, homeowners and residents shouldn't have to pay to park their vehicles in the street. I understand that the cost of the permit is only \$5, but it's not the cost as much as the principle.

Drive around the city and see all the out-of-state plates with the resident parking stickers on such vehicles. The excuse you'll hear is that they probably own a condo. But if their residence is in the State of New Jersey, then why don't they have a New Jersey registration? Could it be the high cost of insurance on vehicles registered in the State of New Jersey? "Another case of living here but not paying here."

The City of Hoboken should stop bleeding the homeowners and residents for out-of-towners. Each property owner should be issued as many stickers as there are residents in his or her building, providing that such owner and/or residents have a registered New Jersey vehicle.

Instead of the city worrying about who is parking on the streets, they should clean them for a change, especially the western section of the city, and/or stop the utility companies and contractors from digging the street up and then repairing it in such a way that the patch only lasts approximately two weeks. — JIM GILBRIDE, Hoboken

people, half for me and Jerry McCann's a developer is man's best friend. The time to end this erratic swing of ideals, emotions and psychologies of the past 50 years is now.

As a resident of Jersey City for all of my 34 years, the decline in the quality of life is disheartening and embarrassing. All of those who believe that Jersey City is on the way back should take a second look. Our deficiencies in education, crime control, city overspending and city services cannot hide behind the facades of new developments and condos.

All throughout history when problems such as our city faces now have arisen, people have always looked for that unfamiliar face in the crowd to step forward and take charge. But, the question facing us today is does such a person exist. Fortunately, the answer is yes.

Richard Boggiano's accomplishments speak for themselves. His experience as president of the Hilltop Neighborhood Association encompasses the qualities that his city is looking for in its future leader. Richard Boggiano's concerns stretch far beyond the Hilltop area, touching all sections of our city.

His leadership will return Jersey City to the basic foundation by our founding fathers, a government of the people, by the people and for the people. — GARY E. GROM, Jersey City

public about drug abuse. We also act as a vehicle for gaining the necessary legal tools required to effectively combat the problem of drug abuse.

As members of the New Jersey Narcotic Enforcement Officers Association (NJNEOA) we are excited about the attorney general's Herculean effort to do the job against substance abuse. Those of us who have spent our lifetimes in fighting drugs know we have seen initiatives come and go. We have, for many years as an association, been in the vanguard of drug enforcement ideas and programs. We have, for many years, given assistance to all whose fight was against drugs, for the right reasons and for the right goals. But, time after time when the spotlight was removed from drugs and drug enforcement, our association was left in the dark, and our members continued to fight harder and spread our message further.

We now have the good fortune to have an attorney general who did his homework, who saw the needs, who met with us, who called upon us, and never once dictated to us, but listened and learned from us and then invited us to be a part of a truly exciting and worthwhile quest, the Statewide Action Plan for Narcotics Enforcement.

The NJNEOA is both proud and grateful to the Attorney General for his recognition of our association, as well as including us as a participating agency in our state's program against drugs. — LEO J. UEBELEIN, past president, New Jersey Narcotic Enforcement Officers Association, Newark

## Hoboken holding appraiser's check

J.J. 3-15-88  
By Earl Morgan

Hoboken's City Council plans to hold up a \$26,000 payment to Real Property Appraisers, the firm that performed the recent citywide property revaluation, and wants representatives of the firm to attend tomorrow night's council meeting to explain, in the words of Councilman Dave Roberts, the "inflated" values placed on some properties in the city.

Councilman Roberts sponsored the resolution requesting the principals of Real Property Appraisers to attend the meeting and explain the methods used to arrive at property values during the revaluation. Councilman Steve Cappiello echoed the sentiments of several other council members when he said that while some evaluations seemed fair, there are parts of the city where property values increased 12 to 15 times.

"I understand homeowners only have 10 days to contest the revaluation or it stands," Cappiello said. "I think we ought to stop the check on this."

Councilman E. Norman Wilson said he is sure the Real Property officials will attend the meeting because the council is holding up a \$26,511.53 payment to the firm. "When we do that, someone from the company usually shows up," Wilson said.

At Cappiello's suggestion, the city tax assessor will also be asked to attend.



Photo by Dorab Khandalavala

Mayor Patrick Pasculi addresses the Hoboken City Council at last night's caucus.

In other business, the council is scheduled to consider a choice for an interim appointment to Pat Pasculi's at-large council seat. Pasculi was chosen interim mayor last week by the city council.

Pasculi will also send the names of new appointments to fill the posts of corporation counsel, community development director and finance director. The interim mayor plans to meet with the current directors in those posts today and ask for their resignations.

"I want to give them a reasonable amount of time to get their personal and professional lives in order," Pasculi said.

He warned, however, that if the directors refuse to resign or ask for an unreasonable amount of time before they vacate their offices he will invoke a statute that allows him to replace department heads with a 20-day notice.

Pasculi last night introduced Eugene O'Connell, Jersey City assistant corporation counsel, as his choice to replace law director William Graves; Peggy Thomas, assistant director of the Community Development Agency, to replace the agency's current head, Michael Coleman; and Joe Lisa, his choice to replace Catherine Rush as finance director.

While addressing the council, Pasculi took time to chide Graves for not seeing that the council was "fully briefed" on the procedure for appointing a new mayor and for not walking the council "step by step through its deliberations."

The council was criticized for going into closed session to discuss the Pasculi appointment. The meetings have been termed a violation of the state's Sunshine Law, which prohibits closed meetings for the purpose of naming someone to an elected office. Asked to comment on the charge, Graves remarked that "the client always

See HOBOKEN — Page 6.

### AMENDMENTS

## Baer to supply punch

### 'Sunshine law' complaints up

J.J. 3-16-88  
By JEFFREY HOFF  
Staff Writer

Charges leveled by a Hoboken attorney that the City Council's secret meetings last week to select a mayor were illegal added to the rising number of complaints that public bodies are breaking the state "sunshine" law.

In addition, Assemblyman Byron Baer, D-Englewood, who drafted the Open Public Meetings Act, recently has introduced amendments to the law that would require prior publication of agendas for almost all regular meetings of public bodies.

The state Public Advocate's Office has received an average of 10 complaints a month from people charging that a public body failed to abide by sunshine law by improperly meeting behind closed doors or not properly publicizing a public meeting.

"We've been dealing with a far greater number of Open Public Meetings Act complaints recently," said David Sciarra, an attorney in the Public Advocate's Office. He said his office has pursued suits in about 3 to 4 of each of the 10 complaints they receive from citizens around the state.

"It's my sense that public agencies have been extremely sloppy in the manner in which they had been meeting," Sciarra said. "It's difficult to say whether the violations are intentional. But clearly there has been a lack of attention to the Open Public Meetings Act."

Sciarra's office has been involved in two prominent cases involving the sunshine law.

The state Supreme Court recently found that the Atlantic City Housing Authority made key decisions during closed sessions in December. The Public Advocate's Office also issued a lengthy report concerning closed meetings of the Highway Authority, in which decisions to raise Garden State Parkway tolls were made. Baer said these meetings sparked some of the amendments he is proposing.

In the Hoboken case, local lawyer Ira Karasick complained Friday that last week's council meeting where Patrick Pasculi was selected as mayor was illegal. Pasculi agreed Monday to hold a new vote in public, and Karasick said yesterday he would not file suit.

Karasick continued to argue, however, that the council's closed meeting to select a mayor to replace Thomas F. Vezetti — who died March 2 — was illegal and cannot really be corrected simply staging the vote in public.

"It still seems the public is being cheated if they are just watching a rerun of secret deals," Karasick said. The issue is especially serious when it involves selection of a public official who otherwise would be elected, he added.

Please see SUNSHINE Page 24

### SUNSHINE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

He cited a recent state Supreme Court case involving Gannett newspapers and the Manville Board of Education, in which the court found in such cases "reasons for allowing public scrutiny of the action taken are even more compelling."

Meanwhile, broader concern with enforcement of the sunshine law has spurred Baer to introduce amendments. Currently, only the agendas of special meetings and not many regu-

larly scheduled meetings must be published in local newspapers.

"If you have a meeting and nobody knows what is going to be coming up, it defeats the purpose of having an open meeting," Baer said. He also is proposing amendments that would allow citizens who file suit against public agencies for violations of the sunshine law be allowed to recoup lawyers' fees.

## Revaluation will raise rents

Continued from Page 1

we have now, the landlord can take the difference between '72 and the present, divide it by 12 months and the number of units, and pass that along to tenants," Arroyo said.

Arroyo said Hoboken tenants currently pay about half of a landlord's taxes. Tenants will be paying an even greater portion of the taxes after landlords pass along their rent increases.

Jersey City's rent control laws do not allow landlords to automatically pass along their tax increase to tenants, according to Charlotte Halley-Mizzi, the administrator of Jersey City's Rent Levelling Office.

However, landlords can file a hardship application with the Rent Levelling Board to win approval for a rent hike. Halley-Mizzi said she does not anticipate an increase in the number of hardship applications, but other city officials predicted a dramatic jump.

Halley-Mizzi noted that the city's rent control law applies only to buildings with five units or more. Landlords of buildings with four units or fewer are free to raise tenants' rents as they please, without city approval.

As an example of the impact the revaluation will have on tenants, a four-unit building in Jersey City that was assessed at \$15,000 in 1987 paid \$2,730 in taxes, based on the tax rate of \$182 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

The building may have increased in assessed value 20 times with the recent revaluation and now be assessed at \$300,000. Jersey City officials project a tax rate of about \$30 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. That means the building's owner could be paying \$9,000 in taxes in 1988.

That \$6,270 tax increase, divided by 12 months and four units, means tenants in each apartment could be asked to pay an additional \$131 rent a month.

The tax increase would have less of an effect on larger buildings. An eight-unit apartment building in Hoboken with an assessed value of \$25,000 in 1987 paid about \$5,250 in taxes, based on the tax rate of \$210 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

The assessed value may have increased to \$500,000 with the revaluation. Hoboken offi-

cials project a \$20 tax rate per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, meaning the building would pay about \$10,000 in taxes in 1988.

The \$4,750 tax increase, divided among eight units, would mean an additional \$49.50 rent per tenant each month.

City officials say there is a strong need for some sort of relief from the revaluation, especially for tenants in smaller apartment buildings.

"The effects of this are unconscionable," said Hoboken tenant advocate Thomas Oliveri. "It means a lot more rent for tenants. Some people will be forced from this city."

Jersey City Tax Assessor Peter Casamassino said the landlords are "caught between a rock and a hard place." Many cannot afford to pay the additional taxes, so they must pass them along to their tenants, he said.

"There is definitely a need for state aid to offset the effects of the revaluation," Casamassino said. "The governor said he has been holding surplus funds for a rainy day. Well, it's raining now in Jersey City and Hoboken."

## Revaluation will raise rents

By Jim DeRogatis

J.J. 3-16-88

Renters may not get tax bills in the mail, but they will probably bear the brunt of any tax increase their landlords receive because of property revaluations in Jersey City and Hoboken.

Both cities recently completed court-ordered revaluations of property for the first time since 1970. Buildings have been undervalued in many areas, but the revaluation is designed to bring the assessed value of each property up to its current market worth.

Homes and businesses in some sections of Jersey City and Hoboken have increased in value 20 times or more. Tax rates in both cities will decrease proportionately, but Jersey City homeowners whose property increased in value more than six times and Hoboken homeowners whose prop-

erty increased more than 15 times in the revaluation are likely to experience dramatic tax increases.

Fixed-income homeowners who cannot afford to pay their new tax bills may be forced to sell. But tenants in multi-unit buildings will also be hurt.

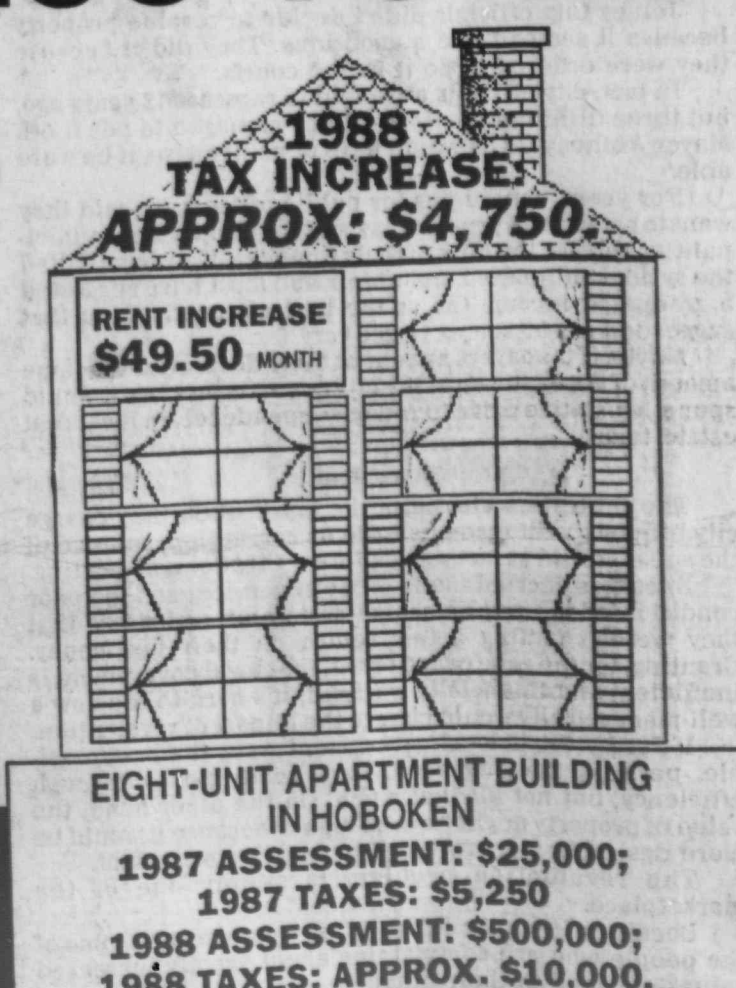
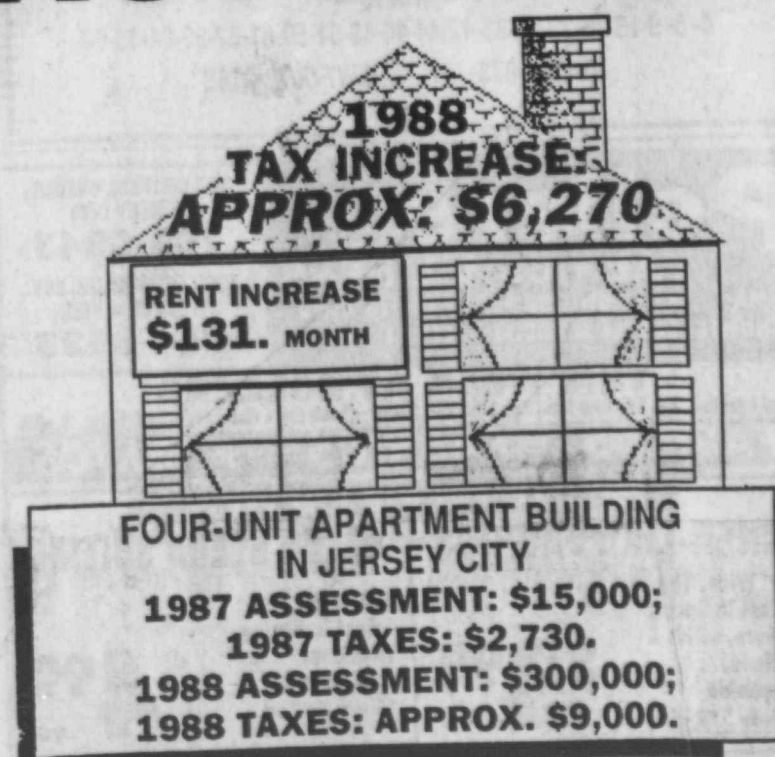
Landlords in Hoboken can pass their tax increases along to their tenants. Many tenants face rent increases ranging from \$50 to \$200 a month, in addition to the annual 4 percent cost of living increase allowed by law.

Jersey City rent control laws offer tenants in buildings with five units or more some protection, but tenants in smaller buildings may also absorb their landlords' tax increases.

Hoboken's rent control law allows landlords to divide a tax increase by the number of units in their building and pass it along to the tenants, according to city Rent Levelling Officer Lourdes Arroyo.

"Right now, tenants pay the difference between the landlord's 1972 taxes and the present taxes. Under the formula

See REVALUATION — Page 10.





# Hoboken taxpayers irate at \$28 M school budget

By Patricia Scott  
3-16-88  
Hoboken residents grappling with nightmarish revaluation statements and burdened with the highest taxes in New Jersey aired their angry opposition last night to the Board of Education's proposed \$28 million budget plan.

About 50 persons — including three school board candidates seeking election on April 5 and a City Council member — showed up at the lengthy hearing held at Hoboken High School.

Under the proposed spending plan, residents would pay an additional \$5.6 million in taxes next year, with 60.2 percent of the total budget — \$17,113,818 — being raised through city taxes.

Ten speakers addressed the board, each voicing displeasure, angry disbelief even fury, over the proposed spending plan. Several audience members heckled the board and laughed at several statements made by trustees and by board President Richard Engard Jr.

Among the speakers who attacked the board's budget as exorbitant and ridiculous were Gerard Costa, Vivian Flora-Distaso and Felix Rivera, running as a united coalition in the school board race.

10h THE JERSEY JOURNAL, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 1988

## Hoboken taxpayers irate at \$28 M school budget

Continued from Page 1

um is not a tool to be used as a campaign platform," Rivera agreed to face trustees but turned his head frequently to speak directly to the public.

Rivera attacked the spending plan as "an unconscionable farce" and urged voters to reject the trustees by casting votes for change in the upcoming election.

"You put those people up there," he told the public, pointing to the board members, who sat shaking their heads. "Only you can take them down. You have more power than they do."

Another pointed exchange broke out an hour later when

candidate Vivian Flora-Distaso blasted the budget and called the tax increase "unjustifiable in light of the declining quality of education." She also claimed that city-wide test scores had improved slightly only because students were allegedly prepped in specific areas of testing before mandated tests.

District School Superintendent Walter Fine, who rarely speaks out during board business, angrily denounced Distaso's claims and, his voice booming, called her "unfair and ignorant."

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By Bill Campbell

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See Political Whirl on Page 2.

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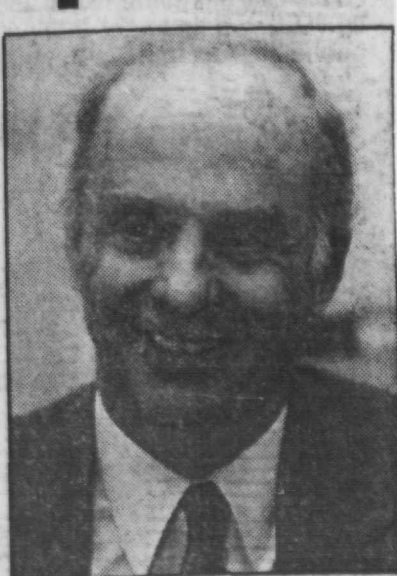
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Please see DEVELOP Page 10

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## UPFRONT

## 'Reval' foes misdirected

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The question? How can property owners escape the ravages of real estate taxes, in general, and revaluation, in particular?

Surprisingly, no one at last week's stormy meetings in Jersey City even brought it up as a possible solution.

Instead, speakers blasted the Jersey City administration and the firm conducting the revaluation.

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## Political whirl

By Peter Weiss



revaluation because property values have risen so dramatically.

When your taxes go up 500 percent, as some of the speakers claimed was happening to them, outpourings of anger and frustration are natural.

However, the anger is misdirected. Instead of complaining to City Hall, the hundreds of people who turned out to vent their spleen should have gone to the State House or, at least, the offices of Hudson County members of the state legislature.

Jersey City officials didn't decide to revalue property because it seemed like a good idea. They did it because they were ordered to do it by the courts.

In fact, city officials were told to reassess 12 years ago, but three different administrations managed to put it off. Mayor Anthony Cucchi would have done likewise, if he were able.

For years, candidates for public office have said they want to reform the property tax system, upon which municipalities rely for the bulk of their finances. They have called the system antiquated and unfair and most have suggested a graduated income tax as the best alternative, but that suggestion never seems to get very far.

Maybe if taxpayers appear at their doors with the same amount of anger shown at the city council meetings it would spur a legislative drive to reduce dependence on local real estate taxes.

## Aerosol enters new age

### Firm in Hoboken is making history

Dispatch 3-10-88  
By DANIEL J. WAKIN  
Associated Press

HOBOKEN—Imagine spraying ketchup on a hamburger or spritzing mustard on a hotdog with an aerosol-like can.

A company here wants just such containers to become a culinary commonplace in the United States.

Enviro-Spray Systems Inc. also hopes the technology will help turn it into a profitable concern.

The 8-year-old company, which went public in June, is launching lines of sprayable ketchup, tomato sauces and mustard made by a French company in the United States. Mayonnaise, chocolate and apple sauce are waiting in the wings, said company President Gordon L. Banks.

"It's the beginning of something very, very important," he said recently from the Eastern Packaging Exposition and Conference in New York City.

Essentially, the cans resemble aerosol sprayers but do not mix other substances with the product to be dispensed. Inside the can is a bag with sodium bicarbonate and a tube containing citric acid, explained the company's assistant general manager, Marc Hanover.

As the food manufacturer inserts the bag into the container, the tube bursts, causing the citric acid to drip out and react with the sodium bicarbonate. The result is carbon dioxide, which then expands and puts pressure on the product.

When a button is depressed, a thin stripe of ketchup, for example, is forced out.

The company holds a patent on the process.

"With our system, the way you put something in is the way you get it out," said Banks.

The GrowPak pouches mean containers are tamperproof and the food needs no refrigeration, has a longer shelf life and is more convenient to dispense, Banks said. And no fluorocarbons — identified as harmful to the protective ozone layer in the atmosphere — are introduced into the environment.

Banks said he hopes such advantages will convince consumers and restaurants to buy GrowPak-packaged products and help bring the company to swift profitability.

According to company figures, Enviro-Spray had a net loss of \$2.2 million on sales of \$872,000 for the six-month period ending Dec. 31, compared to a \$2 million loss on \$334,000 in revenues for the period a year previous. The higher loss for the later period resulted from a discontinued operation, Hanover said.

Banks sees the company entering the black in 1989.

"When people get their hands on these cans, they really love them," he said.

Whether they will be willing to spend two to three times more for them — \$2.50 to \$3 for a 9-ounce can, as Banks described their cost — is another question.

"I doubt people would be willing to pay that price," said Beth Adams, spokesman for the Pittsburgh-based H.J. Heinz Co., a leading U.S. ketchup producer. Adams said she never had heard of the process.

"It just seems like a strange idea," she said, adding that consumers may have a difficult time accepting a food product in a type of container that usually houses hairspray, carpet cleaner or disinfectant.



# Hoboken taxpayers irate at \$28 M school budget

By Patricia Scott  
J.J. 3-16-88  
Hoboken residents grappling with nightmarish revaluation statements and burdened with the highest taxes in New Jersey aired their angry opposition last night to the Board of Education's proposed \$28 million budget plan.

About 50 persons — including three school board candidates seeking election on April 5 and a City Council member — showed up at the

lengthy hearing held at Hoboken High School. Under the proposed spending plan, residents would pay an additional \$5.6 million in taxes next year, with 60.2 percent of the total budget — \$17,113,818 — being raised through city taxes.

Ten speakers addressed the board, each voicing displeasure, angry disbelief, even fury, over the proposed spending plan. Several audience members heckled the board and laughed at several statements made by trustees and by board President Richard England Jr.

Among the speakers who attacked the board's budget as exorbitant and ridiculous were Gerard Costa, Vivian Flora-Distato and Felix Rivera, running as a united coalition in the school board races. Councilman Joseph Della Fave, a consistently vocal critic of the board's spending policies, similarly blasted the budget and said the mon-

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## Hoboken taxpayers irate at \$28 M school budget

Continued from Page 1

um is not a tool to be used as a campaign platform," Rivera agreed to face trustees but turned his head frequently to speak directly to the public.

Rivera attacked the spending plan as "an unconscionable farce" and urged voters to reject the trustees by casting votes for change in the upcoming election.

"You put those people up there," he told the public, pointing to the board members, who sat shaking their heads. "Only you can take them down. You have more power than they do."

Another pointed exchange broke out an hour later when

candidate Vivian Flora-Distato blasted the budget and called the tax increase "unjustifiable in light of the declining quality of education." She also claimed that city-wide test scores had improved slightly only because students were allegedly prepped in specific areas of testing before mandated tests.

District School Superintendent Walter Fine, who rarely speaks out during board business, angrily denounced Distato's claims and, his voice booming, called her "unfair and ignorant."

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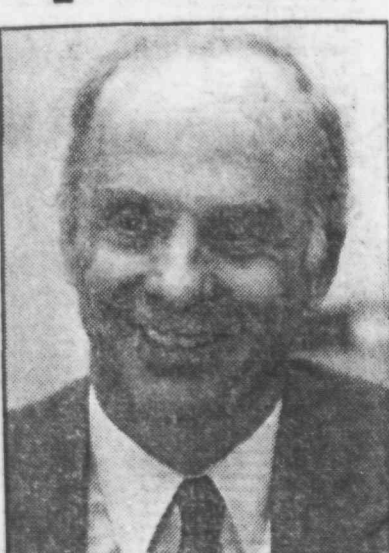
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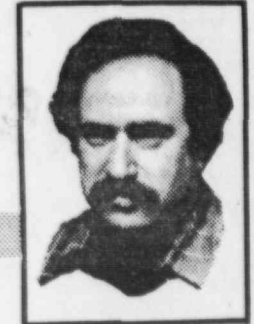
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By Peter Weiss



revaluation because property values have risen so dramatically.

When your taxes go up 500 percent, as some of the speakers claimed was happening to them, outpourings of anger and frustration are natural.

However, the anger is misdirected. Instead of complaining to City Hall, the hundreds of people who turned out to vent their spleen should have gone to the State House or, at least, the offices of Hudson County members of the state legislature.

Jersey City officials didn't decide to revalue property because it seemed like a good idea. They did it because they were ordered to do it by the courts.

In fact, city officials were told to reassess 12 years ago, but three different administrations managed to put it off. Mayor Anthony Cucchi would have done likewise, if he were able.

For years, candidates for public office have said they want to reform the property tax system, upon which municipalities rely for the bulk of their finances. They have called the system antiquated and unfair and most have suggested a graduated income tax as the best alternative, but that suggestion never seems to get very far.

Maybe if taxpayers appear at their doors with the same amount of anger shown at the city council meetings it would spur a legislative drive to reduce dependence on local real estate taxes.

## Aerosol enters new age

### Firm in Hoboken is making history

Dispatch 3-10-88  
By DANIEL J. WAKIN  
Associated Press

HOBOKEN—Imagine spraying ketchup on a hamburger or spritzing mustard on a hotdog with an aerosol-like can.

A company here wants just such containers to become a culinary commonplace in the United States.

Enviro-Spray Systems Inc. also hopes the technology will help turn it into a profitable concern.

The 8-year-old company, which went public in June, is launching lines of sprayable ketchup, tomato sauces and mustard made by a French company in the United States. Mayonnaise, chocolate and apple sauce are waiting in the wings, said company President Gordon L. Banks.

"It's the beginning of something very, very important," he said recently from the Eastern Packaging Exposition and Conference in New York City.

Essentially, the cans resemble aerosol sprayers but do not mix other substances with the product to be dispensed. Inside the can is a bag with sodium bicarbonate and a tube containing citric acid, explained the company's assistant general manager, Marc Hanover.

As the food manufacturer inserts the bag into the container, the tube bursts, causing the citric acid to drip out and react with the sodium bicarbonate. The result is carbon dioxide, which then expands and puts pressure on the product.

When a button is depressed, a thin stripe of ketchup, for example, is forced out.

The company holds a patent on the process.

"With our system, the way you put something in is the way you get it out," said Banks.

The GrowPak pouches mean containers are tamperproof and the food needs no refrigeration, has a longer shelf life and is more convenient to dispense, Banks said. And no fluorocarbons — identified as harmful to the protective ozone layer in the atmosphere — are introduced into the environment.

Banks said he hopes such advantages will convince consumers and restaurants to buy GrowPak-packaged products and help bring the company to swift profitability.

According to company figures, Enviro-Spray had a net loss of \$2.2 million on sales of \$872,000 for the six-month period ending Dec. 31, compared to a \$2 million loss on \$334,000 in revenues for the period a year previous. The higher loss for the later period resulted from a discontinued operation, Hanover said.

Banks sees the company entering the black in 1989.

"When people get their hands on these cans, they really love them," he said.

Whether they will be willing to spend two to three times more for them — \$2.50 to \$3 for a 9-ounce can, as Banks described their cost — is another question.

"I doubt people would be willing to pay that price," said Beth Adams, spokesman for the Pittsburgh-based H.J. Heinz Co., a leading U.S. ketchup producer. Adams said she never had heard of the process.

"It just seems like a strange idea," she said, adding that consumers may have a difficult time accepting a food product in a type of container that usually houses hairspray, carpet cleaner or disinfectant.



# Coleman should stay at Hoboken CDA

J.J. 3-16-88

Pasculli, tell us it isn't so!  
We read in the Jersey Journal that Michael Coleman, the director of Hoboken's Community Development Agency, is about to lose his position in the City Administration because he exercised his right as a citizen of Hoboken to participate in the democratic process of free elections. The story that Michael Coleman will lose his job because he supported Helen Manogue against Norman Wilson is a sobering reality about political freedom in Hoboken.

Come on, Pat Pasculli, prove to us that this story in the Journal is wrong! Demonstrate that the Mayor's office is not bought or sold through back room deals that require unconscionable ethics. One would hope that a mayor is a leader who does not base government employment on a person's polling record but on the person's experience and qualifications. Is Pat Pasculli to be mayor of Hoboken or is he to be in charge of deal cutting and political appointments for a select few? Is the Mayor of Hoboken a token to control city jobs or is the Mayor a person to provide vision and leadership for our city?

How can we expect people to do responsible work in this city if a part of their employment is based continually on positioning themselves to be on the right side of an election? How can teachers teach or public servants serve if they believe their job depends on the coat-tail of the next general to lead the banana republic of Hoboken? We want a democracy, not a puppet dictatorship.

The citizens of Hoboken must realize the kind of government we have. If patronage style political leadership is the price to be selected mayor, then the citizens of Hoboken must realize the way political leadership arises. If our neighbors cannot exercise their democratic right to participate in free elections without reprisal, then we must challenge this bondage. If ad-

ministration jobs in Hoboken are granted as political favors and not on qualifications, then we must denounce the victimization of our neighbors.

As the Pasculli Administration exercises its political clout we will again know whether we have returned to an oppressive victimization of our community or whether we can have a government that is open to all regardless of the way one exercises their political freedom. — REV. GEORGE B. CURTIS, Rector, All Saints Episcopal Parish & Day School, Hoboken

## Graves blames council

J.J. 3-15-88

By Patricia Scott

The controversy surrounding last week's Hoboken City Council session could have been avoided had the council consulted with attorneys in the City Law Department before the meeting.

"They never came to me for a legal opinion or for advice," said Law Director William Graves. "They didn't approach me (for information) on how to proceed with the naming of a new mayor in any way."

Graves said he had no idea the council members planned to alternately open and close the meeting as they did.

When the council met last Wednesday night, it entered into closed deliberations for 45 minutes, opened the meeting to the public and later returned again to closed sessions for more discussion. By the end of the lengthy closed meetings, Patrick Pasculli had eked by with the five votes he needed to be named mayor.

Graves said he thought the council had approached Assistant City Clerk Robert Drasheff for information about how to proceed in the event that part of its discussions might need to be closed. Drasheff thought members had consulted with Graves.

In fact, no council member sought a legal opinion from any in-house source.

The state Public Advocate's Office said the council violated the Sunshine Law in the way it held the meeting. In addition to meeting privately to discuss matters that should not be discussed in closed session, the council failed to secure copies of printed resolutions stating that it was about to enter closed session, Graves said.

Such resolutions must be on hand and available to the public before the closed portion begins.

MAYOR LOSES VOTE

## Raia pick surprises Pasculli

Dispatch 3-18-88

By JOHN CURTIS

HOBOKEN—Mayor Patrick Pasculli declared yesterday that a bizarre coalition of old guard politicians and self-styled reformers dealt him a double defeat at Wednesday night's City Council meeting.

The coalition, in naming Robert A. Raia council president and putting Frank "Pupi" Raia in Pasculli's vacant council seat, took the mayor by surprise, showed its independence and denied him his choices for two key positions. Raia's election also gives him an edge if he chooses to run for the at-large seat in a special election to be held in November.

"I got hit with a torpedo last night," Pasculli said yesterday. He said he suspected something was up when Raia informed him he had the votes to win the president's seat.

"I guess something took place which allowed the Vezzetti block of council people to vote with Mr. Raia and Mr. Cappiello," Pasculli said.

Raia and Councilman Steve

Cappiello both denied any deals had been struck between the two factions. Pasculli had supported Councilman E. Norman Wilson for council president and Maurice Fitzgibbons, director of the county's office of Heritage and Cultural Affairs, for the vacant council seat.

Raia's selection changes the balance of forces on the council, but some, including Pasculli, see Raia as a wild card and are not sure which faction he will end up supporting. When launching his political career with a challenge to Cappiello in the 3rd Ward last year, Raia was supported by the late Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti and his backers on the council, as well as Pasculli and Councilman David Roberts. After Cappiello defeated him last year, Raia was perceived as the heir apparent to Cappiello in the 3rd Ward.

"The jury is still out on Pupi, depending on the positions he takes," Pasculli said.

Although allied in the past with council members Helen Cunningham, Thomas Newman and Joseph Della Fave, who have tried to limit development and



Hoboken City Clerk James Farina, left, administers the councilman's oath to Frank Raia, right, in City Hall yesterday, as Nicholas Melchionne holds the Bible. Behind Melchionne are his aunt, Eleanor Taylor, and Raia's fiancée, Karen Kurash.

create plans for affordable housing, Raia is a developer, and believes development can solve many of the city's problems.

"We are going to try and move the city with development," Raia said. "I think it's a good thing you have a developer

on the council, one that knows about building."

Newman, Cunningham, and Della Fave could not be reached for comment.

Raia said he sees the city's problem not as one of building affordable housing, but of preserving existing multi-family dwellings.

## Hoboken lawyer to drop suit vs. city

Dispatch 3-16-88

By CHRISTOPHER AVE

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—A local lawyer who challenged the legality of Mayor Patrick Pasculli's selection last week said yesterday he will not pursue a lawsuit on the matter.

The decision by Ira Karasick follows Pasculli's decision to ask the City Council, which selected him by a 5-3 vote last Wednesday, to vote again during its meeting tonight.

Karasick, a lawyer who was an ally of Mayor Thomas F. Vezzetti, said Sunday he was considering filing suit to contest the election on the grounds that

State reports more complaints on 'sunshine law' — Page 23.

the council violated the state Open Public Meetings Act when it considered and voted on the selection behind closed doors. The council's decision to vote again, Karasick said yesterday, negates the need for the lawsuit but not the harm done by the private council discussions.

"I think, at least, enough of the public's right would be vindicated" by the new vote, he said.

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## SUIT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

said. "But it doesn't fully cure the wrong that was done to the public."

Karasick maintained his opinion that the council should have conducted all discussions on the matter of appointing an interim mayor in public. The Mayor's Office became vacant when Vezzetti died in office March 2.

Despite his feelings about the vote, Karasick conceded that a lawsuit "would only be of nuisance value."

He said he resented state-

ments made by Pasculli branding Karasick's concern "politically motivated."

"Every time you speak up to uphold a public right, they use that as an excuse to cover up all kinds of shenanigans," he said.

The council also will consider a new council president and a new council member to fill out Pasculli's term. Sources said Pasculli will ask the council to accept Maurice Fitzgibbons, the city's Democratic Party chairman, as his replacement on the council.

## Hoboken doesn't act on 14th Street ferry

By Jody Rolnick J.J. 3-19-88

The Hoboken Zoning Board of Adjustment postponed action on an application for a ferry from 14th Street property owned by developer Anthony Dell'Aquila and on an application by a Stevens Institute of Technology fraternity to build an addition to their Hudson Street frat house.

Direct Line Commuter Ferry wants to run a ferry from a pier at the foot of 14th Street to Manhattan and along the Hudson River from the downtown Hoboken PATH station. It is part of Dell'Aquila's plan to develop 64 acres along Hoboken's northern waterfront.

Board members are awaiting a traffic study from the developer, and they postponed action until the study is in their hands. The application has already been postponed once because the board requested more information about Dell'Aquila's overall development plans.

The board also postponed action on variances requested by the Stevens chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon at 528-530 Hudson St. The fraternity hopes to build a structure at the rear of their property on Court Street to house their kitchen facilities and party room separately from their sleeping and studying quarters.

Action was postponed once because some neighbors said they had not had access to the site plans. The board again postponed a vote on the variances Thursday until the applicants can present information on the maximum number of fraternity members allowed to live in the house.

## ANGRY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

you bald-headed bastard," yelled City Housing Inspector Jude Fitzgibbons at Councilman Steve Cappiello who voted for Raia. Jude's brother Maurice, who had been seen as the favorite for the position.

Both Pasculli and Raia will serve until a special election in November.

Most of last night's meeting was taken up by heated discussions of the reassessment, which will go into effect with this fall's tax bill. Many speakers last night blamed city officials for not cutting municipal and school board budgets enough to offset the effects of the revaluation.

"You've got your damned politics and who the hell suffers? We do!" screamed John Ciriello, a retired schoolteacher to thunderous applause.

City Tax Assessor Woodrow Monte made a presentation before the public was scheduled to speak, recommending that unhappy taxpayers appeal their assessments to Real Property Appraisers, a local firm in charge of the revaluation.

Because it has been 18 years since the last revaluation, the tax burden has been shared unequally among city residents. Owners of condominiums have paid taxes on 12 percent of the value of their homes and businesses on between 14 and 15 percent while other residents have paid taxes on only 6 or 7 percent of the value of their homes.

The revaluation raises all assessments to 100 percent of true value, equalizing the tax burden and sharply increasing taxes for owners of non-condominium housing.

Monte said the city would make no extra money on the reassessments. But before Monte was finished he was shouted down by the boisterous crowd.

After order was restored more than a dozen homeowners and tenants told the council horror stories of skyrocketing assessments that threaten to drive them from their homes.

Pasculli, who spoke to the public after he was sworn in again, called for state tax reform and increased funding from state and federal sources. He also said he would direct the city Community Development Agency to create a fund to assist those on fixed incomes.

Pasculli said he would demand cuts in the municipal budget. He also called on all homeowners to complain to RPA and to vote against the Board of Education budget which would require a \$5 million increase in taxes.

## Reassessments anger Hoboken

Dispatch 3-17-88

By CHRISTOPHER AVE

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—More than 250 angry homeowners and tenants crammed into the City Council chambers last night to blast the city's new reassessment, which will increase taxes for some residents by hundreds of dollars.

The council last night also voted again to name Patrick Pasculli mayor, replacing Thomas F. Vezzetti who died in office

March 2.

The council had voted Pasculli into the office last week, but the selection was questioned on the grounds that council discussions on the matter were held in private.

In a surprise move, the council also named local developer Frank "Pupi" Raia to serve in Pasculli's vacant council seat, a move which provoked one irate public response. "I'll get you,

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## 2 schools have lead dangers

By Patricia Scott J.J. 3-17-88

Two Hoboken grammar schools have potentially dangerous levels of lead sediment in their water systems, school officials said yesterday.

The lead-tainted water could pose a threat to the health of more than 700 students if precautions are not taken.

The 472 students in Kealey School at Fifth and Adams streets, and the 238 children at the David E. Rue School at Garden and Third streets, have been consuming water daily from bathroom sinks and water fountains that have lead sediment nearly at or higher than the state Department of Envi-

ronmental Protection's safety limit.

The DEP and federal Environmental Protection Agency allow lead content in water to be .050 parts per million.

But at Rue School the lead content in water is .051 ppm and in Kealey School it is .046 ppm, School Board Secretary Tony Curko said yesterday.

The other five public grammar schools, Hoboken High School and Veterans Memorial-Kennedy Stadium all checked out safely. Each has a lead content in the water of .02 ppm or less.

The water samples were sent last week to Garden State Laboratories for chemical analysis.

Water from the city's private schools has not been checked.

Principals of the affected schools said they were unaware of the lead contamination findings, but expressed concern.

"This is the first I'm hearing about it," said Kealey Principal Elizabeth Falco. "I knew they had sent the water out for testing, but we didn't know they got results."

Curko, meanwhile, directed all school engineers and custodial workers to turn water valves on at the eight schools and Kennedy Stadium for a full 10 minutes every morning at 6

See 2 SCHOOLS — Page 6.

## The Harbor plans to expand its services

Dispatch 3-12-88

By CHRISTOPHER AVE

Staff Writer

HOBOKEN—The Harbor, a drug and alcohol treatment clinic on the city's gritty northern border, has a new director and plans for two new programs beginning April 1.

Thomas Graham, who for five years was deputy director of the state Division of Alcoholism,

started his new job this week as director of The Harbor. He is expected to serve temporarily until the new treatment programs are implemented fully.

Graham's arrival follows a rough period at the clinic. Last summer, the Board of Directors hired Irwin Scheintaub, a Seacucus health-care specialist, as director. But Scheintaub was asked to leave several months

later amid rumors of differences over policy.

Graham, just hired as program director for a private health-management firm, took The Harbor job after the clinic retained the firm to provide increased services. He dismissed the troubles as minor.

"When I came here, this ship was running fine," he said.

"There are absolutely no problems."

Graham, a Jersey City native who has worked in the health-care field for 17 years, says he is exhilarated by the prospect of returning to a more direct, hands-on experience.

He said he is most excited by the new programs. The clinic now offers a basic, 28-day in-patient treatment, which includes

interaction with Alcoholics Anonymous and other groups that offer therapy.

Under one of the new programs, patients will be able to enter an out-patient program that combines intensive lectures and therapy with group interaction. A key bonus of the new plan, Graham said, is that it allows working people to keep their jobs during treatment.

The second new program will be an assessment center in which employers, family members and friends of suspected addicts may contact to ask for help in determining the person's problems.

The clinic will hire five to seven additional workers to staff the two programs. Graham said, bringing The Harbor's total staff to 55.