

Township tenants request monitoring unit investigate 'unconscionable' rent increases

By R. R. Faszczewski

Citing rent increases of up to 38% since 1981, Clark tenants Monday night again asked members of Township Council to consider some type of regulatory mechanism to monitor the rent increases imposed by Clark landlords.

The township's rent control law, which had been amended in early 1982 to allow rent boosts up to 8% a year, was repealed last November after residents mounted a petition drive and had the question of rent control placed on the ballot.

Township voters at that time decided they did not want the law and it was repealed.

However, according to the president of the Clark Tenants Assn., Herman Kagan of 221 Lexington

Bld., the landlords last year were allegedly satisfied with the 8% per-year increase.

Mr. Kagan said there have been horrendous boosts in rents since the repeal of the law, with leases going from one year to six months in duration as of Jan. 1 of this year, with increases of 10% for the first six-month lease, and then, instead of jumping to only 10% for the second six-month lease, raises in rent went to 20% for a six-month lease.

Now, the tenant leader said, notices have been sent out that all six-month leases would be renewed at the 20% rate.

He urged the Governing Body to set up a committee to get all the facts from the groups concerned and set

up some type of type of monitoring mechanism so tenants will not be charged unconscionable increases.

Another tenant, Jean Paris of 197 Lexington Blvd., urged the councilmen to introduce a rent-stabilization ordinance.

She cited a 38% boost in rents over two years, and said homeowners had been persuaded their taxes would go up because rent control was on the books.

However, she said, residents have found out their taxes have gone up even more without rent control than with it. She further pointed out the tenants had presented Council with figures for the rate of returns of landlords, and the Governing Body had refused to consider the figures presented.

One of the leaders of the petition drive to put rent control on the ballot, James E. Kehoe of 41 Wendell Pl., urged the councilmen to set up a property tax rate control committee because his taxes had gone up 31% over last year.

Mr. Kehoe added there was a state law under which tenants could appeal to the courts for a remedy against a landlord if they felt their rent increases were unconscionable.

The township attorney, however, told Mr. Kehoe he believed the only way tenants could appeal what they considered an unfair increase, besides through the enactment of rent control, was by withholding their rents and fighting the landlord in court when he brings suit against them for

non-payment of rent.

Another tenant, Phillip Hannibal of Hillcrest Village, said his rent had gone up by \$128 a month in a six-month lease.

Mr. Hannibal said one of the problems was no one had a definition of an unconscionable rent increase and it is often up to the judge to decide based on his personal feelings about rent control.

Citing the fact the councilmen Monday voted to set aside an emergency appropriation of \$215,304.60 for the refund of taxes to Hyatt Clark Industries, Inc. for 1982 taxes as the result of a tax appeal settlement, Mr. Kehoe replied the township had been spared the expense of an \$800,000 appeal settlement in Lexington Village because the

rent control law had been repealed.

Another tenant leader, Sanford Krasky, told the councilmen the so-called tax "experts" had made promises taxes would go down after the repeal of rent control and this promise had not come true.

Mr. Krasky disputed Mr. Kehoe's claim of a possible tax abatement suit from George Sanguiliano said the township had suffered a total loss of \$446,000 on the tax appeal case, amounting to a cost of about 16 tax points or \$80 a year on the average home in Clark assessed at \$50,000.

In other action, the councilmen:

--Adopted a \$25,000 bond ordinance for road reconstruction and surface drainage improvements on Lexington Blvd. from Emerald Pl. to the Garden State Parkway.

--Okayed on second reading an \$85,000 bond or-

derance for the construction of storm-drainage improvements and the reconstruction of a portion of State St.

--Introduced an ordinance which would provide a \$25 fee for the viewing of video tapes by defendants or their representatives in drunken-driving cases because of the greater volume of arrests being made in such cases.

--Adopted a resolution prohibiting stopping and standing at all times on the north side of Gibson Blvd. from 275 feet from the intersection of Brant Ave. to 23 feet west of that point.

--Approved a \$14,845 annual salary for principal clerk typing/permit clerk, Olga Sachenski, effective July 1 of this year.

--Authorized a partial

payment of \$12,370.52 to Rajoppi Contracting, Inc. of Union for the construction of the access road and parking area for the Hutchinson St. Little League.

--Approved a partial payment of \$23,661.60, less a retainer of \$2,366.16 for the improvement of Post Rd. and a partial payment of \$7,670 less \$767 retainer for the improvement of Post Circle to Allen Blacktop Corp. of Plainfield. According to Fourth Ward Councilman John Bodnar, Jr., the contract would be forced to do work satisfactorily because the amount of the maintenance bond would be held until the township approved the project.

--Cancelled their August executive and regular meetings.

Rinaldo blasts Dems' 'gerrymandering'

The recently-proposed Congressional redistricting plan, which came out of the New Jersey Legislature after the United States Supreme Court threw out the redistricting plan signed in law by Democratic Gov. Brendan T. Byrne shortly before he left office is the "illegitimate son of the monstrosity the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional," according to Rep. Matthew J. Rinaldo, whose district includes Clark.

Rep. Rinaldo added there is no more continuity of social and economic interests, compactness or respect for county borders than was in the illegal plan the Demo-

cratic majority rammed down the throats of the people of New Jersey last year.

"He said evidently those who devised the new plan evidently do not understand, or have elected to disregard, the Supreme Court decision.

The Democrats evidently did not recognize the Supreme Court stated there must be good faith in the design of any redistricting plan. In fact, Justice John Paul Stevens went so far as to characterize the design of the plan as "a monstrosity," the representative pointed out.

"The new plan is worse than the last plan. It is the

epitome of political greed. It totally destroys Union County, and spreads the state's five Republican representatives over parts of 15 counties with approximate-ly twice as much square mileage to cover than the nine Democratic incumbents. They obviously don't want a bipartisan plan, and it is arrogant and deceitful to call the new map non-political. It is nothing but retaliation against the Republicans for going to court to have the Democrats' old plan thrown out as unconstitutional. Apparently they don't respect the law and want to put their own priorities first. They have ig-

nored the needs of the people of New Jersey who want fair and compact Congressional districts that truly represent their interests," he added.

"The plan cuts Union County into four parts and also dismembers Hudson County into parts of four Congressional Districts. The Democratic mayor of Jersey City, Gerald McCann, is outraged. Elizabeth Democratic Mayor Thomas Dunn, one of the parties who brought this matter to the Supreme Court, told me, and I quote, 'the new plan is obviously an other political ploy to dissect the interests of

Union County and in particular the city of Elizabeth. It metastasizes. Union County by once again attempting to isolate Elizabeth,' the official declared.

"The plan is an atrocity and will be repudiated by the courts just like the one before it. It has no redeeming social values, and I am not surprised the Democratic leaders in the State Legislature want it passed in a hurry," he said.

"There are other plans that are fair and sensible. They protect the one-man, one-vote requirements of the Constitution while respecting county boundaries and local interests. All I

want is a fair plan. I don't want any more gerrymandering, and as long as the Democrats continue to gerrymander, they will not succeed. I'm going to continue to fight for a fair plan that is in the best interest of the people in this state," the representative concluded.

Clark Rotary Club seats new officers

At the annual picnic of the Clark Rotary Club, held June 25 at the home of Leslie Bartell, the incoming officers of the club were installed by Dr. Jim Collins of Dunellen, the new district No. 751 governor.

Installed were George R. Roache, the president; John Voynick, the vice president and chairman of the club service committee; Charles Walano, the secretary; Philip Vecchione, the treasurer; Jack Ford, the chairman of the vocational service committee; Manfred Schneider, the chairman of the international service committee, and Edward Raslowsky, the chairman of the community service committee.

The ceremonies were opened by outgoing president, Edward Olsen. He welcomed the 50 people present and introduced the outgoing district No. 751 governor, Clifford Peake.

Mr. Peake thanked the club and officers for supporting his year as governor, and presented to past presidents, Mr. Walano; Frank Naples, Peter Overton and Mr. Olsen plaques in recognition of past service as presidents of the Clark Rotary Club.

The outgoing district governor then presented to Mr. Olsen his Past President's Pin with a diamond.

After thanking the club members for their help during his year, Mr. Olsen gave gifts to his vice president, Mr. Roache; secretary, Mr. Walano, and treasurer, Mr. Vecchione.

Special Rotary medals were presented by outgoing president, Olsen, to Matthew Minicino, Mr. Bar-

rell and Henry P. Townsend for their contributions during the year. Not forgetting Mrs. Judy Olsen, his wife, he presented her with a gift for her support during his term.

Introduced next was the new governor of district No. 751, Dr. Collins. He wished the club and the new officers a successful year. He then called forth the incoming officers and performed an initiation ceremony.

The picnic committee was made up of Anthony Giovanni, Mr. Bartell, Frank La Scala, Mr. Minicino, Mr. Naples, Mr. Olsen, Salvatore Tosto and Mr. Walano. The ladies, the Rotary Annes, supplied pies, cakes and pastries.

Rotary is a service club, with members from professional or managerial ranks. Its object is that of service as a base of enterprise, it seeks to foster high ethical standards in business and the professions, it encourages the dignity and worth of an occupation and its opportunity for service.

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Clark pool cuts fees

The Clark Township Council Monday night approved the following schedule of fees for membership in the Clark Municipal Pool, effective Friday, July 29: Family, resident, \$145, and non-resident, \$161; husband and wife, resident, \$123, and non-resident, \$131; individual, resident, \$78, and non-resident, \$86, and senior citizen, resident,



RIGHT IN FOCUS - Louis De Rosa, left, the principal of Clark's Arthur L. Johnson Regional High School, congratulates Gail Giacobbe, right, a teacher at the school and the recipient of WNET/THIRTEEN's Utilization of Television in Education Award.

Television cites Johnson teacher

WNET/THIRTEEN's annual Utilization of Television in Education Award, presented to teachers in the tristate area for effective and imaginative use of television in the classroom, was given to Gail Giacobbe of Clark's Arthur L. Johnson Regional High School and Rosemary Steinbaum of Gill Saint Bernard's School in ceremonies at THIRTEEN's New York Broadcast Center on June 8.

To qualify for the award, teachers are nominated by their colleagues for creative activities pursued by their

\$35, and non-resident, \$40.

According to the chairman of the Council Swimming Pool Committee, First Ward Councilman Raymond Krov, the pool will offer about a 25% rate discount for those who become members during August.

students as a result of exposure to televised educational programs.

Projects are evaluated for applicability to the curriculum, adaptability to other classrooms and ability to challenge students. They critically analyze television programs.

Since the award's inception three years ago, projects have included video dramatic presentations, a search or fund-raising projects, and museum and gallery tours.

Gail Giacobbe's students enhanced their listening comprehension, built vocabulary and increased the facility in everyday French conversation by acting out skits from "Parler Moliere."

The annual award presentations provide an opportunity for teachers to exchange ideas about how best to incorporate television into the learning experience.



LINEUP OF CHAMPIONS - Clark Mayor Bernard G. Yarusavage, left, and Mrs. Marlene West, the president of Clark's Arthur L. Johnson Regional High School Athletic Booster Club, front, second from right, congratulate award recipients at the club's recent dinner. The awardees shown are Kim Lesniowski, Lynn Krohn, Cynthia Galzowski, Christopher Apellari and Christine Cwikla.