

RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

154 Ogden Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07307 201-876-1980

www.riverviewneighborhood.org



January 2011

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Next RNA Meeting:

Tuesday, January 11th at 7:30 PM

Location: Harbor View Health Care Center
1st Floor Cafeteria
178 Ogden Avenue

Agenda:

- Police & Mayor's Action Bureau
- NoGasPipeline.org will be our guest

Membership Dues

Membership dues and donations help sustain the RNA. Annual dues are \$10 for residents and \$15 for those outside RNA boundaries. Please contribute at an RNA meeting or make checks payable to Riverview Neighborhood Association and mail c/o RNA, 154 Ogden Ave., 3E, Jersey City, NJ 07307.

Greetings!

Our next regular meeting will be Tuesday, January 11th at 7:30 at the Harbor View Health Center (corner of Ogden & Franklin).

Gas Pipeline Presentation at RNA Meeting

Spectra Energy has proposed running a major natural gas pipeline through Jersey City to serve the needs of New York City. The [proposed route](#) will run north from Staten Island, through Bayonne and into Jersey City along the Western edge of downtown, turning east at 14th Street before crossing the Hudson River. An organization called [NO Gas Pipeline](#) was formed to educate the public about this proposal and to fight its construction. **Founders Dale Hardman and Stephen Musgrave will give a presentation about the proposed pipeline and answer your questions at our meeting on January 11th at 7:30PM** at the Harbor View Health Center so we can all learn about this proposal. All are welcome to attend. For more information visit www.nogaspipeline.org.

City Awarded NJDOT Grant for 100 Steps

The NJ Department of Transportation, Division of Local Aid and Economic Development recently awarded Jersey City \$300,000 from the Transportation Trust Fund for the "Franklin Street Steps" project (aka the 100 Steps). The City had applied for \$345,000 and had stated in their grant application that they would put up an additional \$55,000. Jennifer Morrill, press secretary to Mayor Healy, is quoted in the [Jersey Journal article](#) about the grant as saying the City will not be putting in any money.

As you may recall, **the developer of The Cliffs, (100 Paterson - located at the base of Mountain Road), was to have built the Steps at their "sole cost and expense"** in return for the variances that were granted that enabled them to build the project. **By accepting the grant, the City will now be responsible for constructing the Steps** and seeking out competitive bids under the provisions of the Local Public Contracts Law.

In a recent meeting attended by RNA, George Garcia, the attorney for The Cliffs, said the Steps are now estimated to cost anywhere from \$450,000-\$550,000. They had set aside \$250,000 for design and construction of the Steps and says it has spent \$90,000 to date. The increase in cost, which has not been documented, is purportedly due to changes requested by the City engineers. **Under the terms of the NJDOT grant, the City will now be responsible for building the Steps rather than the developer.** The City Attorney and the developer are working to determine how they can legally transfer the balance of the remaining monies set-aside by the developer, about \$160,000 (unaudited) to the City and what modifications need to be made to the Developer's Agreement to account for these changes.

While RNA is pleased that efforts have been made to move the construction of the Steps forward, many concerns remain. The NJDOT grant terms are extensive and place a lot of oversight and responsibility on the City (including addressing any cost overruns) **and the developer will be off the hook**; the legality of the developer transferring funds to the City for this purpose; a performance bond is in place that could have covered the cost rather than use taxpayer money. Last, we would like legally binding assurances that the City is committed to this project, will put forth a timeframe for construction and will explain how cost overruns, if any, will be addressed.

Much Fun at RNA Annual Holiday Party

RNA's annual holiday party was held on one of the coldest nights of the year, but that **did not stop dozens of members and friends from coming out to celebrate.** All enjoyed a wonderful meal from Rizzo's on Central Avenue, fabulous desserts made by our members, and were entertained with holiday songs by members of the McNair High School Glee Club. Some lucky attendees won great gifts and prizes in our raffle (no charge - just one ticket for each attendee) including gift cards from Palisade Wine and Liquor and chocolates courtesy of RNA member, Maria Tuzzo. **And our members gave back too - our food drive collected many bags of non-perishable food items that were donated to St. Lucy's Shelter on Grove Street. Thanks to all who attended and contributed in every way. Happy New Year!**

SNOW, SNOW, SNOW



While we did not have a white Christmas, a huge blizzard came through on Dec. 26 & 27th, dropping over 26" of snow and creating even deeper drifts. **While the snow was certainly beautiful, the City response was not.** Many streets in the Heights and throughout Jersey City remained unplowed or underplowed long after the storm had ended. **RNA worked diligently to bring attention to the most critical needs in our area. We contacted City officials to get Ogden Avenue plowed so that ambulances and other services could get to and from the Harbor View Nursing Home and that area residents who needed to get to dialysis and other critical appointments could get there safely. Unfortunately, even with our best efforts it still took a long time to get the area cleared.** In addition, the City does not appear to place any priority on sidewalks that it is responsible for (along Mountain Road, adjacent to City parks like Riveview Fisk and Pershing Field) even while holding residents accountable for clearing their own sidewalks. In addition, bus stops were not cleared and piles of snow were plowed into or blocked crosswalks making passage unsafe for pedestrians. The response to this storm was much worse than that of last February's storm and we call on the City to do a post-mortem on its response and work to improve it for the safety of all residents in the next storm.

Trees Planted in Riverview Park

Residents may have noticed **several new trees were planted by the City in Riverview Park in mid-December.** These were planted to help offset the loss of the many dead trees that were removed over the summer. Some appear to be autumn blaze maples but we are trying to confirm that with the City. While we had asked to be included in the choice of the trees, we were not but appreciate that the City did follow through with replacing the trees. We are seeking information on their care to ensure that these trees will survive.

Christmas Tree Pickup

Residents who need to discard their Christmas trees should note the following. **Trees should be placed out at the curb on Wednesday evenings between 7:00PM & 10:00PM for pickup each Thursday in January.** Trees must be free of all ornaments and lights and should NOT be in a bag. Wreaths and artificial trees are not collected with Christmas Trees and should be placed with the regular garbage. The City warns that any resident "who leaves their uncollected trees lying on the streets are subject to tickets and fines".

Upcoming Events

Saturday, January 22nd:
Art House Productions, 5th Annual Snow Ball, 8PM,
fundraiser/gala/dancing. For information visit www.arthouseproductions.org

For more events please visit our [website](#).