

RNA*For a Better Life in the Heights*

September 2003

**RIVERVIEW****Neighborhood Association**

469 Palisade Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07307(201) 386-9481

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION or ELECTED OFFICIAL

COMMUNITY UPDATES**“THE BATTLE of JERSEY CITY HEIGHTS”**

Millennium Towers: The mighty towers have fallen!! The developer's appeal has failed! Join RNA and The Coalition for a Better Waterfront victory celebration-fundraiser bash on September 12th at The Skyline, 16th floor meeting room, in Hoboken at 7:30 pm. If you are unable to attend, your tax deductible contribution can be sent to: Riverview Neighborhood Association, 469 Palisade Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07307.

520 Palisade Ave: The major site plan review for the conversion of the old firehouse first floor to a retail outlet store will be September 9th at the Planning Board. The new occupant is “Tatak Pilipino”, an importer of arts, crafts and manufactured goods from the Philippines. Tatak Pilipino is currently operating a store at 535 Newark Ave.. Issues concerning deliveries/shipping, the apparent addition of a structure that is not shown on building plans and the type of use permitted on the second and third floors have been addressed and should be included in an affidavit from the developer.

234-236 Ogden Ave.: In November 2002 local residents appealed to the Zoning Board to prohibit the construction of a roof top tennis court and won. The Superior Court has now remanded the owner's appeal back to the Zoning Board for a new hearing scheduled for Sept. 18th. Everyone is urged to attend this hearing.

360 Ogden Ave.: Construction of a two tier stilted deck at the base of Historic Holland Street has resumed and is being appealed for violations to the Palisade Preservation Overlay District and other zoning ordinances. This will also be heard before the Zoning Board on September 18th.

Letters to the Editor

In the past six weeks numerous letters have been received for publication. The following three have been selected: 1) outrage and fear over gang violence, especially in light of another recent stabbing in the park, 2) The role of historic preservation in revitalizing our City and, 3) zoning laws and the lack of adherence impacting the quality of life.

Friday night, June 27, gangs agitating in Riverview Park. Saturday night, June 28, gangs 75 strong battle on Palisade Avenue in front of Riverview Park. Wednesday evening, July 9, gangs exit Riverview Park working their way down Griffith to see 40 youth beat up on one. Friday evening, July 11, gangs fight it out in Riverview Park. Saturday night, July 12, gang-related stabbing in Park.

Situation in a nutshell: Sunday night, July 13, young man attempting car break-in on Ogden Avenue is threatened with a call to the police. Young man laughs, lights cigarette, strolls on.

Where are the authorities? You mean the police? Well, they arrive later, not as the first line of defense, not as a deterrent, as an afterthought, with the ambulance, to cart off the night's torn faces and fractured skulls.

Why aren't the police at the Park daily, patrolling, arresting the law's abusers, making the weight of their office felt? Don't know. One doesn't like to think it's incompetence, that an officer's statement that the day shift has no idea what's happened during the night shift is just a misstep, not the usual state of affairs. Nor does one like to think it's indifference. One doesn't like to, but that's exactly how it reads.

The Heights, the police have informed us, is like Yo, The Third World.

Setting aside the unconscious racism of that statement and the dismissal of an entire hard-working neighborhood with a single hackneyed phrase, what does that have to do with anything? The whole nation is battling gang culture and its corrosive affect. The success of that battle depends on the outrage and moral stamina of each community that fights it. Each community depends on their police. So can we count on ours? Sorry, not this week.

"Anybody who lives here deserves what they get." A nasty sentiment, arrogant and unhelpful, and a favorite with Heights cops. If the gangs are a wholesale terror, then the police are harrowing in a different way for it seems that they feel qualified to judge who among us deserves a conscientious police presence and who does not. Apparently Riverview Park and its neighborhood did not make the cut.

Signed,
Exasperated

“Historic Loew’s Theatre”

August 29, 2003

Dear Editor,

Over the last few years, when I have had free time, I’ve volunteered with the Friends of the Loew’s and helped in the group’s efforts to renovate and operate the landmark Loew’s Jersey Theatre at Journal Square. At first volunteers helped scrape old bubblegum and years of dirt from auditorium seats. Recently, I volunteered as an usher and helped guide people to those same seats.

I began working with FOL because I like history and wanted to help preserve the Loew’s. But my continued involvement is because of the group’s clear and practical approach to dealing with an enormous project on a tiny budget.

By volunteering with FOL, I’ve been a witness to two extraordinary turn-arounds: First, I’ve been part of the process that took the Theatre from a state of virtual abandonment to being operational. Second, I am seeing nightlife return to Journal Square every time FOL presents a program.

Obviously, it is important for the Friends of Loew’s to continue to attract new volunteers. But I know from my personal experience that it is important for individuals to take part in a project that is so dramatically making a difference in their community. I’d like to invite anyone interested in Friends of Loew’s to get more information and take a tour of the landmark Theatre by calling (201) 798-6055.

Sincerely,
Margi Daly

“HCA update on 101 Marshall Lawsuit”

August 03, 2003

Citizens of Hoboken and Jersey City:

The Hudson County Alliance ("HCA") is a grass roots organization that was formed to protect public health, safety and the quality of life from harmful development.

We have spearheaded litigation to stop the construction of Gateway One Towers, two seventeen-story buildings at 101 Marshall Street in southwest Hoboken. We have been joined in this litigation by the City of Jersey City and the City Council of Hoboken (which is suing its own zoning board). We are currently before the Appellate division with briefs due in mid-August.

Although the buildings are nearing completion, the

fight is not over. We urge you to support our efforts so that developers and zoning boards will learn that they cannot ignore the zoning ordinances established to protect the citizens from harmful development

The history of the case is as follows: The legal fight against Gateway was filed in Superior Court last July. The Gateway project is denser, 13 stories taller, and covers more land than is allowed by Hoboken's zoning law. To build a project that deviates from the limits set by law, zoning variances are required, but these variances cannot legally be granted if they result in public harm.

Our lawsuit asserts that, in granting 15 variances to Gateway, the Zoning Board exceeded its authority and failed to take into account the harm to the residents of Hoboken and Jersey City and that, through lack of proper notice, Jersey City and area residents were denied the right to attend zoning hearings and to be informed about and to protest that harm. This harm includes worsened flooding and sewage backups for low-lying areas of Hoboken and Jersey City and blocked Hudson River views for residents of Jersey City Heights. Indeed, a nearby project on Harrison Street was recently denied zoning variances because of the same health and safety issues that should have defeated the Gateway Project.

On August 21, 2002 Superior Court Judge Arthur D'Italia denied the joint request for a stop work order and dismissed most of the complaints filed. The HCA, Jersey City, and the Hoboken City Council are appealing the judge's decision.

Both HCA and the City of Jersey City have refused to accept a financial settlement because of the important public interest issues at stake, including Gateway's threat to public health and safety, and the violation of the public's right to have and participate in a lawful public zoning process. More information regarding the Gateway case may be obtained online at http://www.hobokencitizens.org/HCALET_09-15-02_07.htm.

Although Gateway is largely built, HCA is still demanding that the building be torn down. If a developer can so egregiously circumvent the zoning process and get away with it by buying off the governments of affected municipalities with small settlement payments, then zoning is dead and we all suffer. Moreover, there are precedents where courts have ordered buildings or parts of buildings to be torn down.

We feel that is important that you be informed about the lawsuit and its progress. We also hope that you will consider helping us to insure that our government acts in accordance with law and the public interest. If you would like to make a contribution to HCA to help fund our legal efforts, please contact us at 201-714-9376 or mail donations to: HCA, PO Box 2023, Hoboken, NJ.

Sincerely,
Eric Volpe, President
The Hudson County Alliance

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

There was no representatives from the police department for updates and activities.

One first time attendee came to seek help to restore their private driveway/curb cut which the city has suddenly deemed illegal. Since the first of the year many local residents along Ogden Avenue have been informed by City inspectors that their private driveways are illegal and can no longer be used. This homeowner has lived in the home for twelve years and bought the property, in part, because it had its own driveway. A discussion followed on the responsibilities of purchasing a home with driveways/cub cuts and what documentation is needed in approaching the proper city agencies in situations like this.

Another member reported that some new residents were barbecuing on their front porch with the open flames shooting up to the second floor porch. Also relayed were incidents of illegal barbecuing in Riverview Park.

There was a brief update on the Wilson roof top tennis court and the conversion of the ground floor space to retail at the old firehouse at 520 Palisade Avenue.

A report by the treasurer, Roger Heitman, showed that the annual Park Fair & Flea Market was a success even though the event was forced to be held on the rain date. Final figures will be available when all the outstanding bills are received.

A vote was taken and unanimously passed to suspend the August meeting due to the large number of members that would be on vacation.

Maria Tuzzo

**RECYCLE THIS NEWSLETTER,
PASS IT ON TO A FRIEND!**

‘TALKING POLITICS’

Channel 51

Mondays at 9:30 p.m. and Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.
Interviews with former Jersey City mayor Anthony Cucci, who is and elected member of the Board of Education, and Charles Catrillo, who is running for Hudson County Executive on the Republican ticket.

BULLETIN BOARD

VISIT *savethepalisades.org*

POLICE BEAT: 201-547-5477

Report any problems, safety concerns or knowledge of a criminal or suspicious activity to the police radio room at the above number. Leave your name, telephone number, street address, the nature of the problem, an accurate description of the individual(s) and/or vehicle involved and date and time of the message. All call will be strictly confidential. To report drug dealing, contact the **Narcotics Unit** at **(201) 547-5391**. Call **911** for all health, safety or criminal emergencies.

RECYCLE GARBAGE & DISPOSABLES - IT'S THE LAW!

The **Incinerator Authority** recycles the following materials:

PAPER: newspapers, magazines, junk mail, school and office paper, computer paper, telephone books, cardboard/corrugated boxes, cereal boxes, pasta boxes, laundry detergent boxes

PLASTICS: milk cartons, drink boxes, plastic milk containers, food containers, household cleaner containers, laundry detergent bottles, shampoo bottles

GLASS: soda bottles, beer bottles, food jars, liquor bottles

CANS: aluminum, tin, steel (no chemical or paint cans)

WEDNESDAY is our neighborhood pick-up day for recycling.

For more information, call **(201) 432-4645**.

Contribute to Your Community Newsletter

Send your articles, opinions, announcements, poems and recipes to: RNA, 469 Palisade Avenue or to: *RNA@gitch.net*.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Support RNA by paying your annual membership dues of **\$7.00 per person** at the next RNA meeting or sending a check, payable to RNA, to 469 Palisade Avenue.

Membership entitles you to the monthly newsletter and voting privileges, if you live on **Ogden** or **Palisade Avenue** between **Cuneo Place** and **Congress Street** within the RNA boundaries.

COME TO THE NEXT RNA MEETING
SEPTEMBER 9TH AT 7:30 PM
AT THE HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE FACILITY



VERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
9 PALISADE AVENUE
JERSEY CITY, NJ 07307

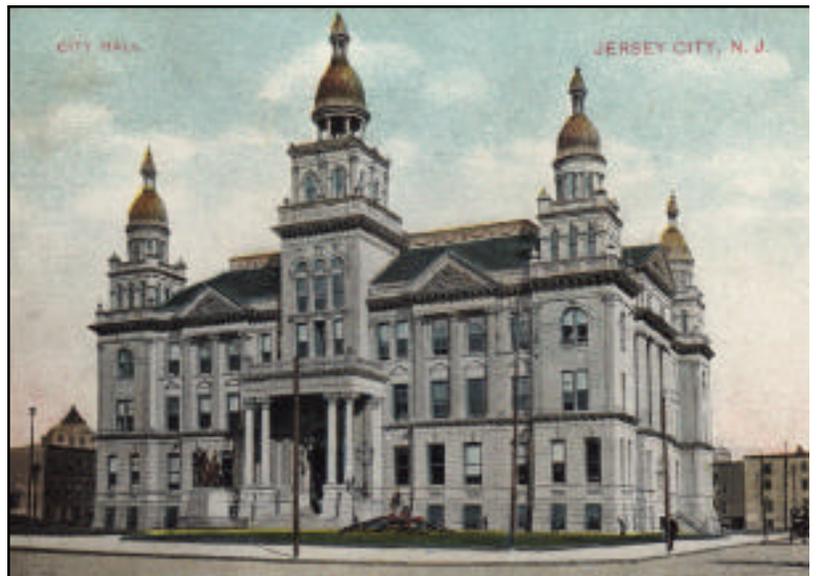
COMING EVENTS

NA MEETING:

Tuesday, September 9th at 7:30 pm
Location: Harbor View Health Care Ctr.
178 Ogden Avenue

AGENDA:

- 1) Police Report
- 2) Gang violence and drugs in our parks and streets
- 3) Planning of Fall Events:
 - annual fall cleanup of Riverview-Fisk Park
 - annual fall cleanup of Holland Street



City Hall, 280 Grove Street, Jersey City
1908 postcard