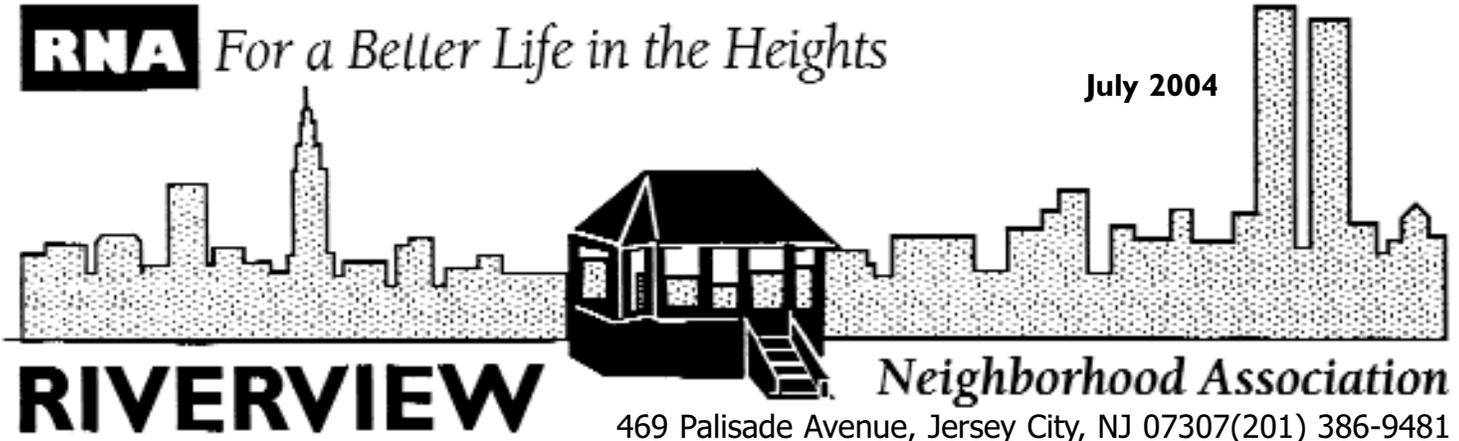


RNA*For a Beller Life in the Heights*

July 2004

**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

“Eminent Domain” to be used by the N. J. Schools Construction Corp. for new schools in the Heights.

Armed with over \$1 billion dollars and the right to use “eminent domain” to seize private property, the New Jersey Schools Construction Corp. (NJSCC) has begun to exercise a mandate to build more than thirty new schools in Jersey City. The first targeted block to be destroyed is on Kennedy Boulevard and Columbia Avenues, between Lincoln and Bowers Streets. Using eminent domain, the NJSCC is proposing to bulldoze the Hudson Farmers Market, a dozen private homes and a minority owned business that employs more than 300 blue collar workers. It later came out that our local Board of Education and New Jersey State did not even know about the garment business that employed over 300 people. If this block, which is the very model of stable, successful mixed-use, could be targeted, no neighborhood is safe.

Our immediate neighborhood is not safe. In reading through resolutions passed by the Jersey City Board of Ed there are two proposed sites within the boundaries of the Riverview Neighborhood Association (RNA). There is a third site only one block away.

The obvious problem is that in Jersey City, because our school system is still run by a State-appointed Schools Superintendent, all key aspects of this process are controlled by the State. So far, local elected officials have been given little input. And except for poorly publicized meetings of the Facilities Committee, which are typically held at inconvenient hours in the late-afternoon of work days, the process has been inaccessible to the general public. A secondary problem stems from the fact that it is generally left to the sole discretion of the State-appointed Schools Superintendent and his aides to determine the shape of new school facilities. When faced with a choice of building low-rise and sprawling out or building higher and more compactly, they have so far chosen sprawl, which means far bigger pieces of land must be cleared and, consequently, more homes and businesses destroyed.

At a community meeting arranged by local activists and attended by the State-appointed Schools Superintendent and NJSCC officials, as well as Councilpersons Gaughan and Healy, Assemblypersons Quigley and Manzo, and State Sen. Sacco, the absurdity of targeting the Hudson Farmers Market block in the Heights and the depth of community opposition was made clear. After the meeting, NJSCC officials indicated that they would drop consideration of the site. That’s the good news. The bad news is that neither the Board of Ed nor NJSCC officials could give a coherent description of the criteria they use for recommending and evaluating potential school sites. Many other questions also went unanswered, such as: Can the State’s requirements for daycare be better served by continuing to use the small day care centers that dot our neighborhoods? Why does the Board of Ed refuse to build

higher and avoid unnecessary sprawl? Can existing school plots be better utilized? Why can’t destruction of homes and businesses be avoided by using soon-to-be closed parochial school sites?

By any standard, \$1 billion is still a lot of money. In theory, if spent wisely, this funding could benefit our public school students. But if not planned carefully with community input, such a mammoth construction program will shred the very fabric of our City by causing widespread and ill-considered demolition of neighborhoods. Unfortunately, in Jersey City right now there is no clear process for careful planning, let alone a mechanism for meaningful community input into planning for these new school facilities.

Community Updates

Cliff-Side Project: RNA is expecting to receive new and revised information from the developer before our July 13th meeting. It is very important that all property owners located on the east side of Ogden Ave., between Griffith and Franklin Streets stay informed as this project starts to move forward.

234-236 Ogden Ave: In June the Superior Court ruled to uphold the 7/13/03 Zoning Board’s decision that a rooftop recreation area is not a permitted use in a R-1 neighborhood. On 6/30/04 Zoning Director, Tony Lambiase, issued a violation to the property owner, Norman Wilson, for “Continued use of lights is a violation of Board of Adjustment decision.”. The owner has 20 days to appeal the violation. Even though a violation has been issued for the lighting, the owner has continued to flood the neighborhood and the interior of homes at night with the lights on his rooftop!! To lodge a complaint call: 1) Police radio room 547-5477, 2) Mayor’s Action Bureau 547-4900, 3) Zoning Officer 547-4832 and 4) Mayor’s Office 547-5200.

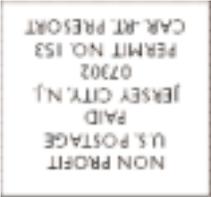
Super Stop N Shop: The July 15th Zoning Board hearing for this proposed “Big Box” multiple use project has been postponed because of an incomplete application by the developer. No new hearing date has been set.

Thanks to Everyone!

**For your help and support with RNA’s
20th Annual Park Fair and Flea Market**

Despite the rainout on June 5th, everyone regrouped on June 12th to make the Park Fair a success! The support of our local merchants is greatly appreciated: Goerhrig’s Bakery, Palisade Lumber, Signs & Graphics and Silon Hardware. RNA would like to acknowledge the support and cooperation of the following City officials and agencies: Councilman Bill Gaughan, the Department of Cultural Affairs, Parks Department and the North District Police.

COME TO THE NEXT RNA MEETING
JULY 13TH AT 7:30 PM
THE TAKING OF HOME AND BUSINESS PROPERTIES IN
OUR IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORHOOD BY
"EMINENT DOMAIN" FOR NEW SCHOOLS.



RIVERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
469 PALISADE AVENUE
JERSEY CITY, NJ 07307

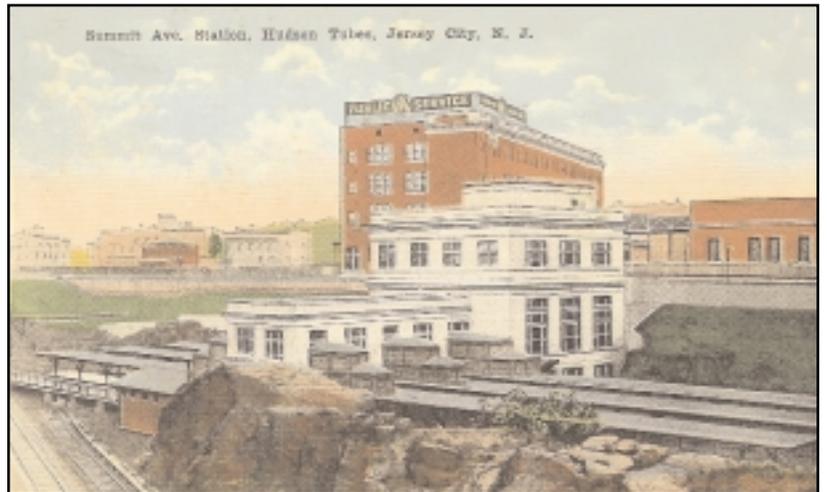
COMING EVENTS

RNA MEETING:

Tuesday, July 13th, at 7:30 pm
Location: Harbor View Health Care Ctr.
178 Ogden Avenue

AGENDA:

- 1) Police Report.
- 2) Guest speakers concerning the plans by the New Jersey State School Construction Corp. to use "eminent domain" for the building of new schools in the Heights.
- 3) New information on the start of the Cliff-Side project.



"Summit Ave. Station, Hudson Tubes, Jersey City, N.J." 1920 postcard. (The "Hudson Tubes" are now known as the PATH. This station was located in the Bergen Arches railroad cut through the Palisade Cliff. The station would now be below the elevated intersection of State Highway 139 and Summit Avenue.)