

# **CITY OF JERSEY CITY'S ABANDONED PROPERTIES INITIATIVE**



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# Background

- ▣ About 800 vacant properties in Jersey City
  - Properties are monitored on an on-going basis by Code Enforcement.
  - Comprehensive files are maintained on all vacant properties.
- ▣ Properties are scattered throughout the City
- ▣ Highest concentrations are in lower income sections of the City.
- ▣ Low income sections are most impacted by foreclosures and high risk loans.

# Abandoned Property Conditions

- ▣ Most properties are in need of moderate to substantial rehabilitation
- ▣ Some properties need to be demolished.
- ▣ Some properties are located in areas where significant federal, state & local resources have been invested.



# Monticello Avenue Main Street



# Ocean Avenue Redevelopment Area



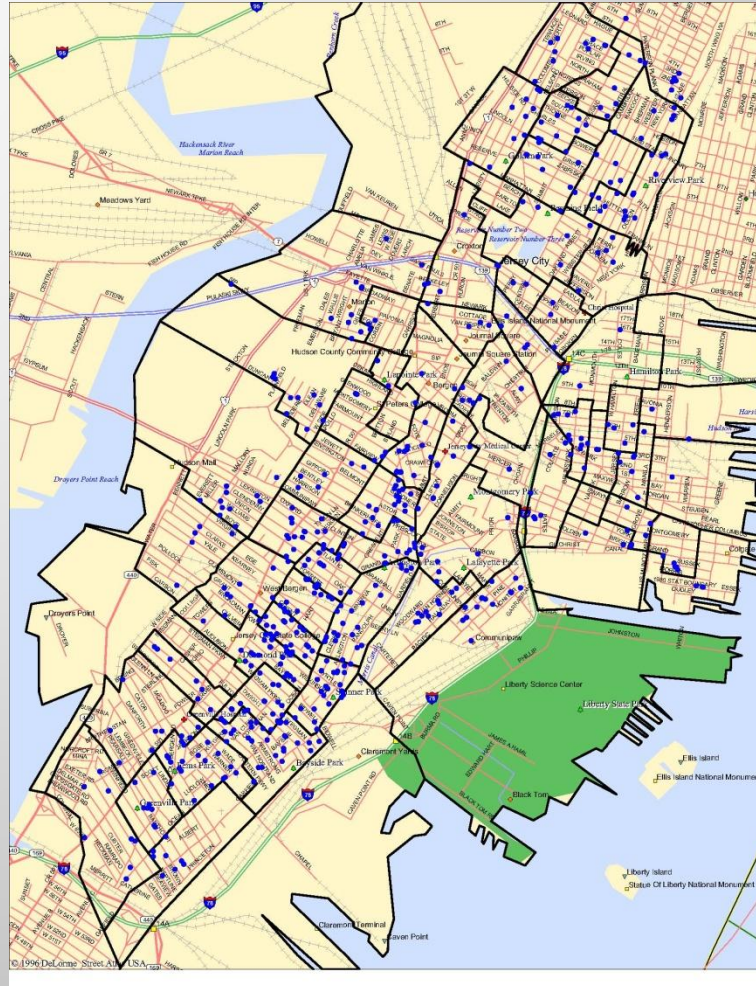
# MLK Redevelopment Area



# 671 Palisade Avenue



# Abandoned Properties Map



# Actions Taken by the City

- ▣ Mayor's Quality of Life Task Force consists of:
  - Municipal agencies and divisions
    - ▣ Ex: Police, Fire, Code Enforcement, Community Development, Public Works, Mayor's Action Bureau, Incinerator Authority, Health & Human Services
  - Private organizations
    - ▣ Ex: PSE&G and United Water



# Focus of Task Force

- ▣ Close illegal rooming houses and apartments
- ▣ Address vacant property issues by ensuring the following:
  - Securing of property
  - Removal of weeds and debris
  - Removal of squatters and animals
  - Maintenance of quality of life for residents

# Developed a Vacant Building Registration Fee Ordinance

- ▣ Ordinance took effect on October 15, 2011
- ▣ All property owners have received notices to date.
- ▣ Property owners must pay a \$250.00 fee initially and \$500.00 subsequently

# Vacant Building Registration Fee Ordinance

- ▣ Enables the City to obtain relevant information about property owners.
- ▣ Allows the City to issue summonses to owners who fail to register their property.
- ▣ Compels owners to take action to get their property back into use.
- ▣ Helps to generate revenue to cover some costs associated with monitoring vacant properties.

# Status Since Implementing the Vacant Building Registration Fee Ordinance

- ▣ 441 properties have been registered.
- ▣ This represents a 55% compliance rate thus far .
- ▣ To date, \$110,250 have been collected.
- ▣ Over 175 summonses have been issued – of which seventy (70) have been disposed. An additional 105 summonses are pending.

# Published List of Abandoned Properties

- ▣ November 11, 2011 the City published a list of the 40 most egregious abandoned properties.
- ▣ Published second list of sixteen (16) problem properties on April 3, 2012.
- ▣ Initial criteria for selecting properties:
  - 1) Received significant complaints due to illegal activity. (Public Nuisance)
  - 2) Owners failed to take action in spite of previous City intervention.

# Additional Strategies

- ▣ Held a “Great Vacant Building Count” on March 8, 2012.
- ▣ Additional counts will be held in subsequent months on the 8<sup>th</sup> of designated months.
- ▣ Collaboration between various City departments, autonomous agencies, block associations and grassroots organizations.
- ▣ Systematically assess the City’s vacant housing inventory.

# Conclusion