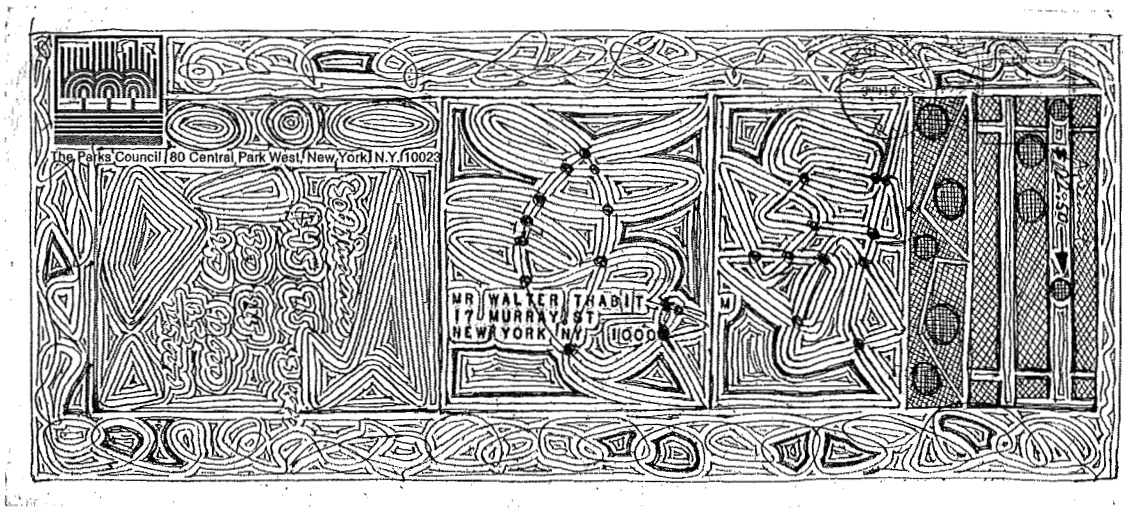


Cooper Square Committee Chronology

A listing of Cooper Square events and activities - including
victories and defeats - from March 1959 through March 2005.



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COOPER SQUARE CHRONOLOGY

The Cooper Square Chronology was initiated by Thelma Burdick in March, 1959, and recorded significant events up to March, 1968. For years, it was the bible of the organization, allowing us to keep the important dates straight. Unfortunately, it has never been updated till now, and it might still be waiting to happen if there hadn't been a renewed interest in the Cooper Square story. Writers and advocate planners have interviewed old timers like myself and Frances Goldin, and after hearing of an interesting incident, then ask, "And what year was that?" Too often I didn't have a clue. So I finally decided to bring the chronology up-to-date. It has been hard work, but worth every minute.

I'm not the only contributor to a chronology of events. Marci Reaven, doing a PhD. dissertation on Cooper Square has also put one together for her personal use, and I have used it to fill out some uncertain items as well as a few whose significance I missed. Also, Valerio Orselli, Cooper Square's Director for over 20 years prepared a specialized chronology of 40 membership meetings held around the issue of the rehabilitation program, the Mutual Housing Association, and the revised Cooper Square Plan. It is included here, starting in November, 1984, running through April, 1993. He also reviewed the manuscript, and made appropriate suggestions. Frances Goldin edited the manuscript and helped with the inclusion of many forgotten but important items.

It is my hope that this updated chronology will not only allow me to answer the memory questions, but will help researchers and writers as well as Cooper Square members and staff to appreciate the breadth and scope of the Cooper Square experience.

March 17, 1959

The Committee organized itself to protest the plan developed by the City's Committee on Slum Clearance. That plan would have displaced 2,400 tenants, 450 furnished-room occupants, 4,000 homeless men and over 500 businesses. It would have built 2,900 units of cooperative housing at an average carrying charge in 1959 of \$25 per room per month and a buy-in of \$650 per room. Among those involved in the earliest stages were Thelma Burdick, Frances Goldin, Esther Rand, Staughton Lynd, and Walter Thabit.

April & May 1959

The Committee conducted a survey of the 4th Street block to test the accuracy of the survey made by Helmsley-Spear for the City. 263 tenants were interviewed, Only 12 indicated they would leave the neighborhood if housing they could afford was constructed. Over half were paying less than \$40 per month for their apartments. Almost one half were living on less than \$60 per week income. And almost one half had been living in Cooper Square 15 or more years.

June - Dec. 1959

A positive Alternate Plan began to develop in the minds of the Committee based on the principle that redevelopment of the neighborhood should benefit the people of the neighborhood, not hurt them.

August, 1959

Publication date of The Forgotten Man In Housing, by Assemblyman Sammy Spiegall, who wrote about the hardships inflicted on site tenants in Title I and public housing project areas. His book was an inspiration to the Cooper Square Committee as was the assemblyman's support in its struggle.

Jan. 15, 1960

The Committee met with Mrs. Hortense Gabel (then assistant to Mayor Wagner) and was encouraged by her to proceed with the Alternate Plan and to raise money to get the help of a professional planner who would develop the plan in such a way as to get the attention of City officials.

Jan. & Feb. 1960

Dr. Barry of the City Missions Society helped the Committee get started on fund-raising by securing small grants from the Taconic Foundation and the Ascoli Fund, (Later grants from the Kaplan and Norman Funds made the preparation and publication of the Committee's plan, as well as much of its future work, possible.)

May 31, 1960

The newly organized Housing and Redevelopment Board recommended to Mayor Wagner that the Slum Clearance Committee's plan for Cooper Square be re-examined and the area be included in the Community Renewal program of the City Planning Commission.

January - July 1961

More than a hundred meetings went into the preparation of the Alternate Plan. Key to its development was a Charles Abrams/Walter Thabit walk through the site at which it was decided that it shouldn't all come down. An Artists Committee, a Single Persons Committee, the Businessmen's Committee, Tenants groups, etc. all pointed up the needs of special groups in the area. Meetings were also held with the City Planning Commission, the H.R.B., the Housing Authority, the Borough President, the Mayor, Mrs. Gabel, the Dept. of Welfare, and the Committee on Inter-Group Relations to gain acceptance of the principles of the Plan.

July, 1961

The Alternate Plan for Cooper Square was presented to City Officials, the press, individuals and organizations. There was excellent response from the latter, but no response whatsoever from the City officials or agencies. See map following.

August 24, 1961

A Dept. of City Planning Intradepartmental Memorandum critical of the Alternate Plan was prepared by Mssrs. Kristoff, Monson and Isler. While it contained some positive comments on the plan, it also stated "The theory that a tenant has an indisputable right to be relocated in new housing within the area from which he has been displaced at prices he can afford is not to be found in the law nor has the city ever implicitly or explicitly committed itself to such a course of action. It is not even good planning." Thus, the Alternate Plan concept that site tenants should be the beneficiaries of urban renewal produced panic in the halls of this real estate dominated City Planning Commission.

Sept. - Oct. 1961

The Committee organized a City-wide sponsors group and attempted to get a response for the Plan from the City. Within a few months of the preparation of the Alternate Plan, a digest was prepared. At the same time, a list of Honorary Sponsors, about 50 individuals and organizations, was developed. The names and associations are now in the Cooper Square Chronology file. Finally Mr. Felt, Chairman of the City Planning Commission admitted that the principles of the Plan were good and agreed to say as much at a press conference.

Oct. 24, 1961

A Press Conference was held. Sponsors praised the Plan and Mr. Felt made a statement saying the Plan was commendable and that he would be greatly disappointed if the Cooper Square area were not included in the 1962-63 Community Renewal Study Program.

May, 1962

The Cooper Square Committee is informed that the Houston Street site will be used as a relocation resource for the Lower Manhattan Expressway. Protests were quickly organized.

June 1962

Cooper Square was named as one of the Urban Renewal Study areas and the Community Renewal Program staff began its Building and Household surveys. The Committee, however, was disappointed in the CRP's so-called Citizenship Participation. No consideration was given to the Alternate Plan and no discussion of it with the Community Renewal staff seemed possible.

Jan. 1963 - May 1963

The Committee had many meetings with the C.R.P. (Community Renewal Program) study staff, but it was not until May 21st that the CRP study staff related their study and findings to the Alternate Plan and promised that its principles would be a part of the pre-designation statement for Cooper Square.

March, 1963 – Rehabilitation Study

It was at this time that the Cooper Square Committee decided to prepare its own rehabilitation plan and program, based on satisfying the needs of the tenants presently living there. Its planning consultant, Walter Thabit, was employed to do this work. It was decided to concentrate the effort on a single block between East 5th and East 6th Streets, between Second and Third Avenues. During the summer and fall of 1963, every building on that block was surveyed and rehabilitation costs estimated (estimates were similar to those made by the CRP staff). (Block drawing showing interior apartment plans follow.) The effort petered out as rehabilitation costs were considered high and funds to continue the effort were not forthcoming.

The rehabilitation issue was again raised on April 15, 1969, this time with the objective of preserving the old law tenements. Ron Adams, a member of the Cooper Square Housing Committee, felt that the buildings had historic value and should be preserved. He felt that Thabit, who had come up with high rehabilitation costs, was against rehabilitation. The discussion petered out as it was already clear that clearance was not soon likely for Fourth Street.

March, 1963

Drawing shows new plans for Cooper Union buildings surrounding Astor Place. Thabit memo on September 10, 1963 indicates plan is disruptive of the community, suggests that Cooper Union expand to the west.

June, 1963 – Opening of Second Avenue office.

The community office was opened on the second floor of 69 Second Avenue, on the corner of E 4th Street. Part-time paid staff was also hired at that time.

July 1963

Although the Committee had been led to believe that it would be permitted to see and react to the pre-designation statement before it was printed, it found out that it had been bypassed and the statement had been prepared by the City Planning Commission.

Aug. 14, 1963

The City Planning Commission's pre-designation statement was made public. It linked the larger St. Marks area with the Alternate Plan area, thus destroying the principles of the Alternate Plan. The larger area contained 11,000 additional families and no provisions were made for re-housing the thousands to be displaced. Tenants were expected to pay increased rents to cover the costs of improvements.

Sept. 23, 1963

A Hearing on the Pre-designation statement was held by the City Planning Commission. About 200 site tenants attended and 50 people spoke opposing the Commission's proposals. Many of those appearing in favor of the proposal, nonetheless, also spoke in favor of the Alternate Plan.

November, 1963 – Vacate order on 9, 15, 17 East First Street

Responding to a three-day vacate order from the Department of Buildings to tenants of 9, 15 and 17 East First Street, declaring that the building was unfit for human habitation, the Cooper Square Committee interceded on behalf of the tenants, won deferments, provided substantial volunteer assistance, and obtained city cooperation in the satisfactory relocation of 27 tenants over a one month period.

Dec. 11, 1963

The Planning Commission designated the Cooper Square area, linked with the larger St. Marks area, from 14th Street to Delancey Street, from 1st to 3rd Avenue, as suitable for urban renewal.

Jan. 15, 1964

Hearing was held before the Planning Commission re: funds (\$550,000) to set up 5 offices throughout the City to get rehabilitation started. The Committee spoke against the proposal for such an office for Cooper Square, deeming it premature. Since there was still no accepted plan nor safeguards for a rehabilitation program, it could see such a proposal only adding confusion and increasing rents.

Jan. - June 1964

The Committee concentrated its efforts against the linkage of the two areas and against the planned HRB (Housing and Redevelopment Board) site office. In the midst of this activity the Committee was notified by Mr. Mollen of the H.R.B. that there was to be a hearing on June 25th to determine the type of housing to be put up on the Houston-Chrystie St. block. That block was the very heart of the Alternate Plan. On it was to be built the major portion of the low-cost housing, providing the on-site relocation for the tenants from the redevelopment blocks to the north. However, Assemblyman Louis DeSalvio had requested the block for middle-income housing.

November, 1964

The hearing re: housing on the Houston St. block was held on June 26, 1964. Thirty-three people spoke for the Committee's proposed use of the block and three or four for Mr. DeSalvio's plan, two of whom were prospective builders. The Bd. of Estimate postponed voting until the July 23rd meeting, then it was laid over to Aug. 25th, then Sept. 24th, then Oct. 22nd. Finally on Nov 19th, the Bd. of Estimate referred the matter back to the Housing Authority, which in essence killed low-rent housing on that block, paving the way for the middle income housing sponsored by Louis DeSalvio and the San Genaro Association. During this time the Committee held a variety of demonstrations to protest the delay and to win back the site for low-rent housing.

Dec. 1964 - Feb.1965

The Committee held a series of meetings with the Housing Authority, the Planning Commission, the H.R.B., and finally the Mayor on both the separation of the two areas and our plans for the Houston St. block.

January 7, 1965 – Start of Health Planning Efforts

The first indication in the files is a letter sent by Walter Thabit to Michael Jaroff of the US Public Health Service outlining the Committee's interest in health matters and expressing interest in a grant from the agency to pursue this interest. By November 1965, a Cooper Square Health Demonstration Project had been organized, with participation of a dozen or more health providers. They were being asked how they would participate in the grant proposal and in program activity. In July, 1966, preliminary findings of a resident interview survey were circulated; the report on findings was issued in November, 1966. A second grant was applied for on September 29, 1967, but was never approved.

Feb. 11, 1965

The Bd. of Estimate held a hearing on applying for Survey and Planning funds for the Cooper Square area. Again the Committee was on the opposing side, saying that the application for funds should not be made before the problem of housing on the Houston St. block and the problem of separation had been resolved.

February 23, 1965

In September, 1963, Cooper Union outlined its plans for expansion east of Third Avenue. The community was not receptive to these ideas, believing that Cooper Union should look to the west for expansion sites. A February 23rd paper, prepared by Walter Thabit, reviews the progress of talks in preparation for another meeting to be held in the immediate future.

March 1965

An article by Mary Perot Nichols appeared in the Village Voice exposing an arrangement between Assemblyman DeSalvio and Robert Moses, who promised DeSalvio the Houston St. site for middle-income housing if he (DeSalvio) soft-pedaled his opposition to the Lower Manhattan (Broome Street) Expressway.

April 21, 1965

The Mayor announced that he had directed the Housing Authority to re-submit its plan for the Houston St. block to the Bd. of Estimate.

May 21, 1965

Hearing was held before the Bd. of Estimate on the Housing Authority's re-submission of its application for public housing on the Houston St. block. 15 people were ready to speak and the Committee also had 18 statements or telegrams from others supporting the application, but they were not necessary. Manhattan Borough President Constance Baker Motley, whom the Committee had met with previously, asked the Bd. to approve the application which clearly stated that the public housing must re-house the Cooper

Square people. The Bd. of Estimate approved, ending an 11 month fight on the part of the Committee to get the block again reserved for the Alternate Plan. A major victory for the Cooper Square Committee.

May 1965 –Oct 1965

The Committee's efforts were concentrated on the expanded site issue and against the site office. Numerous complaints that the site office had been encouraging landlords to improve properties and increase rents, but was not helping tenants, impelled the Committee to redouble its efforts to get the site office closed.

Oct. 7, 1965

Mr. Lindsay, candidate for Mayor, endorsed the Alternate Plan for Cooper Square, a commitment engineered by our then paid director, Bill Tatum. But after his election, the Committee could not get a meeting with him until - - -

October 12, 1965

On this day, a busload of angry residents from the Cooper Square Committee picketed Robert C. Weaver of the Housing and Home Finance Agency in Washington, D.C. demanding more active participation by local groups in the urban renewal process. Through their picket signs, with their chants and songs, and over nationwide TV that night and the next morning, they demanded a real voice in the urban renewal decisions being made for their area. The picketing was supported by congressmen William Fitts Ryan and Leonard Farbstein. On this day, also, our Chairwoman, Thelma Burdick, walked on a picket line for the first time in her life.

May, 1965-1966

The Cooper Square Committee initiated its "warpath" campaign to convince the city to keep its promises. Wigwams were erected on Christie Street on the block south of Houston Street and campaign members wore feathers in their hats. A postcard mailing campaign was also initiated, sending hundreds of postcards to City Hall with a green feather attached to make our point.

May 11, 1966

The Committee and advisors, sponsors and foundation people met with Mayor Lindsay. He reiterated that he was for the Alternate Plan, also for separation of the Cooper Sq. and St. Marks areas, and that Mrs. Flatow should see about getting the site office closed.

June/July 1966

Within this time period, Cooper Square picketed the site office. Before the office opened, epoxy was put in the site office lock, the police were called and the picketers were arrested. The group was represented in court by Leonard Sandler, pleaded not guilty, and the case was dismissed.

July 20, 1966

Since the Mayor's directives had not been carried out, the Committee had an overnight "Sit-In" in Mrs. Flatow's office. Mr. Nathan, newly appointed head of the H.R.B., came to talk with the Committee promising some action if the Committee would give him a few days to study the situation.

July 25, 1966

The Mayor Issued a news release stating that the Survey and Planning application had been withdrawn and the site office closed. Another hard won victory.

Aug. 8, 1966

Mr. Nathan came to tour the area and meet with the Committee, advisors and sponsors. He promised that a new Survey and Planning application, based on the Alternate Plan, would be prepared and that the Alternate Plan would be the basis for renewal of the area.

At around this date, Jason Nathan's home was picketed as was a talk he made at the New School.

Sept. 20, 1966

The Mayor announced the 3 Core Areas Plan for the city (South Bronx, Bedford Stuyvesant, and East New York) would receive all the available housing subsidy money, and that Cooper Square, along with 9 other projects, would be delayed or postponed indefinitely.

October 26, 1967 – CSC Incorporates

On this date, the Cooper Square Committee was incorporated as the Cooper Square Community Development Committee and Businessmens Association, Inc.

Sep 20, 1966 - Dec 1967

The Committee struggled to keep alive and to keep the needs of the Cooper Square area conspicuously before the city. On November 5th, 1967, the Cooper Square Committee held a speak-out in front of 2 Lafayette Street to protest the lack of real citizen participation in renewal.

Dec.18, 1967

The Committee received a letter from Mr. Hazen of the H..D.A. saying that he would have something to discuss with the Committee after the first of the year.

Jan. 17, 1968

The Committee met with Mr. Hazen and Eli Post and was told that the H.D.A. hoped to

get money from the capital budget of the City to do a small beginning on some housing outside the three Core areas, and that Cooper Square would be one of them. The Committee was agreeable if a realistic, proportionate part of the Alternate Plan could be done and if its professional planner, Mr. Thabit, could be a part of the development team which would be put into the Lower East Side.

January, 1968

During this month, the Cooper Square Committee withdrew its participation in the Lower East Side North Planning and Development Corporation, a group started by several churches and other organizations which seemed intent on controlling how and where development took place on the Lower East Side. Principals in this effort were Donald E. Weedon and Arthur Simon (of the Trinity Lutheran Church). They refused to support the Alternate Plan for Cooper Square and were less than democratic in how they intended to run the organization. The entire episode lasted no more than six months.

March 1968

The Committee was under the impression that Mr. Hazen, Mr. Post and the Committee were in agreement until it got reports of two Broome St. Expressway relocation meetings at which the Houston St. block was proposed as one of the relocation areas for the Expressway relocates. The Committee was then very apprehensive about all that had taken place since the first of the year and had called for a meeting of the Mayor, Messrs. Nathan, Hazen, Post and Callander of the H.D.A., Mr. Elliott of the Planning Commission, and Mr. Walsh of the Housing Authority to clarify the issues, to come to a common agreement, and to get a commitment for the implementation of a portion of the Alternate Plan.

October 1968

A letter dated September 30, 1968, signed by David S. Olinger, Deputy Commissioner of the Housing and Development Administration, confirms the sub-contract of Walter Thabit with Abeles, Schwartz and Associates, Planning and Development Consultants, to perform planning, renewal and community services for the Cooper Square portion of the Lower East Side Development area. Mr. Thabit was to work closely with the Cooper Square Committee and other interested groups, through the Committee, in developing his specific proposals.

The letter also states that "it may be assumed that approximately two million dollars will be available for acquisition, demolition, relocation and related costs for sites within the Cooper Square area included in the Early Action phase of the Lower East Side Development program, as developed by Walter Thabit."

1968 – Artists Committee Is Activated

Since its inception in 1959, the Cooper Square Committee had planned for low rent artists housing on the site adjacent to Marble Cemetery between 2nd and 3rd Avenues. During early 1969, the Artists Committee, Helen DeMott, Chairwoman, sought information on the current living arrangements of artists and their housing needs. Preliminary designs of artists housing on the 2nd Street site were prepared in 1970 by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, with the help of Arthur Drexler, architectural Director of MOMA. There was also discussion

with the artists living in lofts on the Bowery about how they could be relocated.

Rehabilitation estimates of repairing the Wyoming building were also prepared. As of October, 1971, no agreement was reached, either on rehabilitation of the Wyoming or its approval as a relocation resource for Bowery artists. Yet the struggle for artists housing and legitimization of loft living goes on.

February 17, 1969

Initiated in December, 1968, the Cooper Square survey of 355 residents was reported on. It showed that half the people were earning \$5900 or less, and that 62 percent could only afford housing at \$14-\$19 per room. Of the total, 58 percent came from 1 or 2 person households; 17 percent from households with 5 or more.

February 19, 1969 – R-10 Zoning

City Planning Commission hearing on R-10 Zoning for lower Third Avenue, from 15th Street to St. Marks Place as well as parts of Second Avenue. The change would raise permitted densities from 100 units/acre to 400. Cooper Square lined up 62 speakers to oppose the rezoning (only two spoke for), which was prompted by the desire of luxury developers to profit from the rise in land values accompanying the change. Among those opposed were many neighborhood and lower east side organizations, Bella Abzug, Ada Louise Huxtable, and the Urban Underground. The proposal was dropped due to the tremendous opposition, but resurfaced the following year in modified form.

The proposed change was now restricted to the Third Avenue frontage, from 14th Street to St. Marks Place. The rehearing was held on May 13, 1970, at which the original opposition resurfaced, but was added to by heavyweights in the city power structure including the Commerce and Industry Association, Councilwoman Carol Greitzer, Architects Renewal Committee in Harlem, the Urban Underground, Paul O'Dwyer, Ed Koch, Percival Goodman, District 65, Elinor Guggenheimer and a host of others. Nevertheless, the CPC adopted the change on August 12, 1970. Beverly Moss Spatt, member of the CPC, dissented. On September 17, 1969, the Board of Estimate held its own hearing, and on October 8th, voted to kill the rezoning plan.

But the plans of real estate moguls dies hard. As late as 1973, the NY State Division of Housing and Community Renewal approved a permit for a Mitchell-Lama housing project at 9th Street and Third Avenue, but it was dependent on the site being rezoned to R-10. Efforts were still being made – unsuccessfully – to rezone the area as late as 1975.

Mid 1970 – Cooper Square contract is approved

The Cooper Square office is at last staffed by paid personnel. The Cooper Square Committee has been named a PAC (Project Area Committee), and is charged with looking out for the interests of tenants and the community, and to assist the city in its relocation activities. In April, 1971, the contract is up for renewal, and a hearing before the Board of Estimate is scheduled for April 22nd.

May, 1969 – end, 1972 - Sponsorship

Shirley Boden of AMIH (Association for Middle Income Housing) starts negotiating an agreement on behalf of Methodist Society sponsorship of Cooper Square housing. Earlier meetings with HDA, NYC Housing Authority, UDC and other developers were also held in an effort to select the most desirable developer. Altogether, at least 7 drafts of a memo of understanding between the City Society and the Cooper Square Committee were passed back and forth during negotiations. This effort lasted till the end of 1972, and proved unsuccessful. The Methodist Society withdrew its application, upset by unrealistic demands, primarily pursued by two dissident members of the Cooper Square Steering Committee

August, 1969

The Cooper Square Early Action Plan is published. See next page.

Sept. 24, 1969 – Arrests at CPC Hearing

Consideration by the CPC of the HDA Early Action Plan had been held over for several meetings of the Commission, but at this hearing, Cooper Square insisted that the CPC vote on the plan. The CPC refused, citing a court injunction obtained by Community Board #3 which claimed it had not seen the plan. Frances Goldin held the podium for 30 minutes and refused to leave until the CPC acted. She was finally arrested by order of Chairman Donald Elliott, followed by a struggle with the police as she refused to release microphone attached to the podium. Ernesto Martinez followed Goldin to the podium, also insisting that the CPC act. He was also arrested, and five women and two men came to his defense, and all were arrested, Reeni Goldin, Frances' daughter among them. On October 21st, the State Supreme Court ordered the CPC to re-hear the issue.

January 7, 1970

On recommendation of the HDA, the City Planning Commission approved the Early Action Plan for Cooper Square. Along with Board of Estimate approval, following, the culmination of nine years of effort.

Feb 13, 1970

On recommendation of the HDA, the Board of Estimate approved the Early Action Plan for Cooper Square.

June, 1970

At this time, the future use of the Church of All Nations building was in doubt. The cost of rehabilitation was put at \$2 million while the condemnation award was seen as far less than that. There would not even be enough to construct a new building. The City Society seemed less interested in continuing to serve the changing community.

October, 1970 – Bowery Planning

The Cooper Square Bowery Mens Committee began around October 1970 concerned with the relocation rights of the permanent residents of the Houston Hotel taken by the city. Initial efforts sought to assure that the facilities in the Houston Hotel were adequate and that the men were provided with basic needs. On November 24th, a meeting with the hotel residents was held, and needs assessed. On September 29, 1971, the need for a storefront offering medical and social services to the men on the Bowery was discussed. The idea was approved by the Cooper Square Committee, and the Bowery Planning Task Force was organized in early 1972. At about this time, the Bowery Residents Committee was formed (a spin-off from Cooper Square's Bowery Mens Committee) and permitted to use the site of Sammy's Bowery Follies as their storefront headquarters. John Tusa, Executive Director of Cooper Square at the time, was selected as its original Executive Director.

In April, 1973, the Thabit firm's Bowery planning report, The Bowery Planning Problem, was issued, and distributed widely among the interested parties. A basic finding of the report was that 25 percent of Columbus Hospital and 10 percent of Bellevue hospital beds were occupied by homeless men. Meetings of the Bowery Planning Task Force and efforts to close the Mens Shelter on East Third Street continued to 1975 and beyond.

December 1, 1970 – First meeting of LES Joint Planning Council

At this first meeting, five groups were represented, including Esperanza, Coalition, Cooper Square, Chinatown Advisory Committee and Action for Progress. By February 27, 1971, ten groups had joined into the Lower East Side Joint Planning Council with Ernesto Martinez as spokesperson. Motions were passed on the Allen Street proposal, the Pueblo Nuevo plan and the organizational form of the Council. Meetings were held regularly from that point on, dealing with the development plans of the member organizations as well as area-wide issues. Voting was restricted to one vote for each member organization on November 22, 1971. The Council continued to deal with development issues throughout the Lower East Side through 1972, supporting and approving some and rejecting others. The file is empty till Summer 1983, when the JPC successfully fought (1) a city plan to tear down 16 tenements and replace them with artists housing at \$60,000 a pop, (2) the victory of the Cooper Square Committee over JASA's racist tenant occupancy policies and (3) helped local communities to be refunded by the State Division of Housing and the Community Development Administration. In February, 1984, Peoples Press, a JPC monthly newspaper was published, detailing its fight against greedy landlords, the urban homesteading controversy and other issues.

January, 1971

As early as January, 1971, Cooper Square began serious discussions with the UDC. These discussions continued for almost three years; at least six versions of a memo of agreement was negotiated along the way. At one point, Cooper Square agreed to reverse its 60% low, 40% moderate rental housing to 60% moderate and 40% low.

February 5, 1971 – Agreement with HA

At a meeting on this date, the HA agreed to include commercial space,

community space, preserve the air rights over planned school space, mix of building heights, and look into the possibility of designing 10% of the units for artists.

February, 1971

Cooper Square Early Action sites (except for Site 3) are acquired by the HDA.

March 16, 1971 – Architect Selection

Shortly after this date, a letter was sent to 25 architectural firms requesting an expression of interest in being the architects for the Early Action Plan of the Cooper Square Committee. The letter was sent by the Cooper Square Committee Architects Screening Committee, Helen DeMott, Chairman. On May 12, 1971, a preliminary screening of the 18 firms responding, resulted in a short list of 10 firms that were selected for interviews, with the remainder in various hold or rejected categories. Interviews with the firms selected and discussion with the agencies involved continued into 1972, at the early part of which Woods/Weintraub Associates and John Johannsen were selected as architects for the Early Action Plan. Unfortunately, within weeks of being selected, Shadrach Woods died, and his leading architect, Roger Cumming, was selected to continue as the architect for the project.

Late 1970 – late 1971

In late 1970, in consideration of all the unpaid work he had done for the Cooper Square Committee, Walter Thabit asked the Committee for a \$3,000 grant to help his rocky finances. Because a few members cast doubt on the value of his services, he withdrew the request. In July, 1971, he asked the Committee to support the effort to get a new contract or an amended contract from the HDA to be able to continue to provide services to Cooper Square. This request drew a sharp attack against Mr. Thabit by Steering Committee members Esther Rand and Helen DeMott, who led the fight to destroy the Cooper Square Committee. They claimed that Mr. Thabit was overpaid and wasteful of the planning funds they had, and that the request should be rejected. At the November 2, 1971 Steering Committee meeting, Thabit announced he would undertake no more work for the Committee unless asked and unless it was agreed to by a great majority on the Cooper Square Committee.

1971 – Steering Committee Activities Not Otherwise Reported

At least 35 Steering Committee meetings were held during the year. Objections were made to the installation of meters on the side streets, the Esperanza plan was criticized, meetings were held with other lower east side groups on a common list of priorities, an overpass over Houston Street is discussed, house meetings held in buildings to be taken, the 2nd St. courthouse looked at as possible theater relocation, sharply criticized Local 32B acts of sabotage against Cooper Square buildings, Bowery Mens Committee active, drug problems in some buildings, 2nd Street play yard advanced, efforts to get a small school as part of our project make progress, fought successfully to limit contract budget cut to 15%, a health committee is up and running, supported Strykers Bay contract at Board of Estimate, dealt with mail boxes broken in 14 buildings, approved lead paint testing in apartments with children, requested rooming house remain open, problems with security in AIRs on Bowery addressed, discussed personnel

problems, discussed mutual housing company possibility for Cooper Square, how to activate the membership, possibility of including a day care center in our project.

March, 1971

Housing Authority agrees on concept for public housing in Early Action Plan.

March 31, 1971

Drawn from the quarterly progress report, Cooper Square Committee, Jan 1 – Mar 31, 1971. At this point, Cooper Square membership amounted to 560 persons, of whom 285 lived in the urban renewal area. It had a staff of six. A principal activity during this period was assistance to tenants and city staff in the filling out of SOR (Site-tenant Of Record?) cards for Sites 4 and 5 which were taken by the City on February 8th. There was mutual agreement that the process worked very well. Also taken February 8th was the Wyoming building, designated for use as artists housing. As of December 7, 1971, some 118 tenants out of the original 498 tenants have moved out since title vesting. How to re-house the Bowery population, pressure to keep repairing and re-renting vacant apartments, reprinting 500 copies of the Early Action Plan. During 1971, some \$17,000 was spent by the Committee.

May 13, 1971 – Letter of Agreement, Cooper Square and HDA

The letter includes steps to be taken by the HDA to temporarily relocate the Church of All Nations, to renovate the Wyoming Building for use by artists, give special consideration to the relocation of Houston Hotel residents, to consult and work with the Cooper Square Committee on relocation from Sites 1 and 2, and a number of other items related to the site plan, parking, a pedestrian bridge, artists housing, a small school and other items.

October, 1971

HDA and Cooper Square sign agreement on concept plan to be followed in the development of the Early Action Plan.

December, 1971

The relocation analysis of the 49 residents of the Houston Hotel (for homeless men) was completed and reported on this day. Half the men are between the ages of 55-69, with the rest younger or older. 31 percent were employed; all have lived in the hotel for an average of five years; none have lived in the hotel for less than a year. For those younger than 55, average income is \$3,000. For those over 55, average income is \$2,500 or less.

1972

Val Orselli becomes the Director of Cooper Square, and continues to serve till 1977.

March, 1972

Tenant selection procedures for filling vacant apartments were discussed. An

opposition slate to the Nominating Committee's selections – including Esther Rand – is nominated from the floor.

April 13, 1972

Amendments to the constitution are introduced to the Steering Committee on this date.

May 29, 1972

On this date, the election for the Steering Committee for Cooper Square was held, with the tenants slate winning the chairmanship and most other positions by a vote of 170 to 89 or similar majorities. Esther Rand sided with the opposition slate, continuing her attack against the organization..

October 30, 1972

This was the publication date for Cooper Square Progress, a report by planning consultant Walter Thabit, still under contract to Abeles Schwartz. The report notes that basic agreements have been reached on the development of Stage 1 of the Alternate Plan, both with the HDA and the NYCHA. By November 1, 1971, agreement was to be reached on the choice of architects (finally selected in March, 1972).

In addition to work on the plan, the report also reviewed housing activity on the larger surrounding area, noting the availability of sites as well as plans for luxury development that threaten the continuation of the low/moderate income nature of the neighborhood.

January 6, 1973

On this date, the amended constitution of the Cooper Square Committee was adopted at a general membership meeting called for that specific purpose. A further amendment was introduced on April 20, 1976.

January-March, 1973

During the first quarter of 1973, only 11 apartments were rented, the slow pace due to the failure of the city to clean up vacancies or to make repairs. Cooper Square was then made responsible for maintaining site housing since city employees were withdrawn. Most of the attention during the quarter revolved around maintenance of the site properties.

It was also decided to request the UDC to work out an agreement with Cooper Square on the development of Sites 1 and 2. In June, 1973, the architects proposed to prepare a site plan which the UDC would pay for, but the UDC had little interest in the idea.

January, 1973 – Health Related Facility

The February 16, 1973 meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the HRF (Health Related Facility) was held, with eleven persons attending. Most of the time was taken up in asking questions and getting answers from Mr. Howard Moses of the Health and Hospitals Planning Council, after which it was decided unanimously that the MBP (Manhattan Bowery Planning Task Force) submit its

proposal for an HRF to the group. Following submission of the MBP proposal and further clarifying notes, six of the 12 members were opposed to its establishment on the grounds that the area is already overburdened with such facilities, while four were for it. The discussion dragged on through October 1973, but was never approved nor did it materialize.

September, 1973

Roger Cumming, successor to Shadrach Woods (deceased), with Val Woods (Shadrach Wood's wife) is approved to continue as architect for Cooper Square. At about that time, John Johannsen, the second architect selected to work on the Early Action Plan, withdraws.

October, 1973 – UDC to move ahead

After a meeting with Frank Kristoff of UDC, he feels free to recommend a 60% moderate, 40% low rent project for Cooper Square. Discussions on a memorandum of agreement are already being held by December 12, 1973. But by January, 1974, UDC seemed unable to make a commitment, angering Cooper Square. Edmund Davis, attorney, is assisting Cooper Square in its housing sponsorship quest at this time. He resigned in January 1974 to become counsel to the State Division of Housing.

December 12, 1973

Renting vacant apartments continued to be a problem throughout 1973 and beyond. As of 12/12/73, there were 39 vacant apartments, 18 of which were set aside for renting by the Committee, nine held for site emergency, and 12 in such poor shape that they were to be boarded up. A year after a fire in 63 E 4th Street resulted in a loss of amperage to the building and a rent strike by the tenants, an agreement was finally reached between the tenants and the HDA relocation staff to restore 20 amp service to the building, which would meet most needs. At the same time, rent strikes were ongoing in both 9 E 3rd Street and 13 E 3rd Street.

April, 1974

Memorandum of Agreement basically worked out with UDC and Cooper Square Committee. UDC employs Roger Cumming to prepare concept plan for Sites 1 and 2.

July 31, 1974

Candidates for lawyers to serve Cooper Square including Richard Levenson and Martin Berger were interviewed by the Steering Committee on this date. No conclusions were reached.

October, 1974

Concept plan completed, receives community approval in principal, and receives UDC staff approval. Meeting with Ed Logue, President of UDC, is set, but never materializes. Within a month or two, it becomes clear that the UDC is in no position to develop housing in Cooper Square or anywhere else. UDC shelve project indefinitely, and within a few short months thereafter, ceases operations.

December 29, 1974

A very festive and successful Three Kings party was held in Cooper Square. Dozens of residents helped put the affair together including businesses, groups, families and children. Prizes, presents, games and other fun filled the room. For many years, the Fiesta de Navidad became an annual affair.

February, 1975

Cooper Square seeks new development vehicle through the State Division of Housing. It submits plans, data, and \$250 filing fee. Begins search for developer.

February, 1975 – December, 1976 – PAC Funding

At the Planning Commission hearing on funding for PAC groups, the citywide PAC Coalition strongly urged full funding. Roger Starr of the H.D.A. sought to phase them out by extending funding for only 3 months. After evaluation of the PACs, all received favorable ratings, but all were cut by 15 percent for CD1. Funding for CD2 continued to be a problem. Cooper Square office kept open by volunteers. Finally, funding through October 31, 1978 is approved by Board of Estimate.

March, 3, 1975 – CSC Housing Incorporation

On this date, the Cooper Square Committee, with Lois Dodd at its helm along with Floyd Feldman, Richard Levenson, Oscar Hunter and others, created a housing corporation which they would control and which would be responsible for the development of Sites 1 and 2, with no accountability to the community built in. This leadership group was attacked and beaten in the following election, power returned to the Carlos Perez and Frances Goldin supporters, and the housing company disbanded.

As the UDC (Urban Development Corporation) had financially collapsed in February, the Cooper Square Committee contacted the State Division of Housing in an attempt to get funding for its project, and also initiated a Housing Sponsorship Committee under Oscar Hunter to select a private developer who would work with the Committee and the various agencies to produce the needed housing.

April 15, 1975 – Glick Construction Corp.

On this date, Reuben Glick, President of Glick Construction Company, thanks Oscar Hunter for their meeting and reiterates their understanding of the meeting and what Glick will do. On August 18, 1977, Glick proposed to push the state for Mitchell-Lama money and HUD for Section 8 subsidies. Glick will also advance the seed money for architectural work as well as hire neighborhood workers to the extent possible. Eight developers are interviewed. On or about May 16, 1975, Richard Levenson, attorney for Cooper Square, notifies the State Division of Housing that Glick has been approved as co-sponsor and developer by the Cooper Square Committee. Following the Cooper Square election on May 29th, at which the old Steering Committee is replaced, Richard Levenson reveals that the new housing corporation has never been officially incorporated.

The following months, are spent amending and approving the agreement with Glick on the one hand, and discussions with the State Division of Housing on the other. At an August 20, 1975 meeting with DHCR, Commissioner Goodwin said that projects in process could not get Mitchell Lama funds and that Section 8 allocations were used up at least for this year. By October, 1975, a memorandum of agreement was almost ready for signing by Glick and the Committee, but it took till December, 1983 for a final agreement to be reached and signed.

May, 1975 – late 1976 - Rent Increase

Word of a rent increase for all Cooper Square apartments to \$22.50 per room per month to take effect August 1, 1975 brought an immediate and unanimous rejection of the idea by the Cooper Square Committee, the Site Action Committee and the site tenants. The rent increase was called for by Aramis Gomez, Commissioner of Relocation and Management Services, ostensibly because Cooper Square rents weren't paying for the services rendered. Gomez also wanted to charge the Cooper Square Committee a commercial rental (it was then \$1 per year). At the same time, the city is refusing to rent the vacant apartments. The steering committee agreed to fight the increases and to join with other PACs to fight the increases. Funding for the PAC groups is also being cut off. The PACs appeared en masse at a Board of Estimate hearing on October 25, 1975, objecting strenuously to the proposed cut, but most were forced to cut their staffs. Site Tenant Committee held building meetings to organize tenants; demonstrations in front of City Site Office and 100 Gold Street were mounted. Songs were sung and slogans shouted. Letters to and meeting with Gomez objecting to the rent increases were met with little sympathy: "If you don't like it, MOVE!" Case histories of the hardships inflicted on many tenants are sent to Owen Moritz of the Daily News. In October, a plan was floated to demolish vacant buildings, also objected by all PACs. On October 31, 1975, a suit was brought against Aramis Gomez, Roger Starr, and the HDA in the Supreme Court of New York County to prevent the HDA from stripping vacant apartments, rendering them uninhabitable. A suit against the rent increases was brought by the PAC group by Nancy LeBlanc of MFY Legal Services, and was due to be argued on December 23, 1975. On June 10, 1976, Judge Sidney Asch found that the city did not have the right to raise the rents of site tenants at title vesting. The City appealed, and on June 30, 1977, the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court reversed the decision. Cooper Square Steering Committee votes to appeal decision and to continue the fight in the streets.

June 26, 1975 – End, 1979 - Sponsorship

Following defeat of the incumbent Cooper Square Steering Committee, Walter Thabit was elected Chairman of the new Sponsorship Committee, which proceeded to review actions taken by the previous Committee. Eight new members named to sponsorship Committee, old Committee lawyer Richard Levenson invited to meeting and told to undo housing corporation. It retained Roger Cumming as architect for the project, and agreed to pursue a State Division of Housing project using Section 8 set asides to achieve low rents. After some discussion and a meeting with Reuben Glick, the Sponsorship Committee agreed to sponsorship of the project by Glick Affiliates, which had also been selected by the previous committee. Negotiations on a memorandum of agreement began at this point.

By the end of 1977, the Sponsorship Committee was deep into negotiations on

project design items, ranging from use of tempered glass to bathtub size. Also in negotiation with State Division of Housing on apartment mix and probable rents. As of 2/22/78, members of the Sponsorship Committee included Frances Goldin, Saylor Creswell, Pedro Ortega, Carlos Perez, Chuck Ritchie, and Walter Thabit. In the March, 1978 file, the following wrote letters of support for Cooper Square: Elinor Guggenheimer, Raymond S. Rubinow and Joan K. Davidson of the J. M. Kaplan Fund.

During 1978, Cooper Square remained determined to build a minimum of 350 units on the Site 1 site. Design shown on following page. Sketches for a low rise building covering the MTA tracks were designed, but later tests suggested bridging the tracks would be prohibitively costly. A scaled back scheme was drawn up, but was also doomed, this time by the inability of the HPD and the NYCHA to work out a joint project on the site.

November 4, 1975

On this date, the Cooper Square Committee issued a report on the relocation of site tenants, titled The City's War Against Urban Renewal Site Tenants. The report documents the reduced involvement of PACs (Project Area Committees) in the relocation process, the transfer of the most experienced staff, unjustified rent increases, failure to rent vacant apartments, the stripping of vacant apartments, and other ills. The Committee vows to keep fighting for correction of these ills. A resolution of these problems finally showed progress in mid-1976, after which the Sponsorship Committee resumed its activities.

December 24, 1975 – Fire in 71 E 4th St.

On this Christmas eve, a devastating fire broke out at 71 East 4th Street, started apparently by someone in a vacant apartment which the HPD had refused to rent. Since the families living there had been forced into the street, the Cooper Square Committee and residents broke into vacant apartments on the block so that the displaced families could move into them. Generous neighbors made bedding and chairs available to them, and on Christmas day, each family was served a Christmas meal by their neighbors. Demands were made to restore or demolish 71 East 4th Street and 13 East 3rd Street, and to immediately secure the buildings so that entry would be denied to addicts. A city suit charging the Cooper Square Committee with trespass was dismissed.

June 3, 1976

Vacant 71 E 4th Street inspected, and whether to repair or demolish discussed. On 12/15/76, the Steering Committee voted to demand repair of all apartments in the building. Building continued to be a problem; a fire on March 5, 1978, causes new estimates of repair costs and a new demand for repair. Ultimately, the building is renovated.

June 30, 1976

The Cooper Square Constitution of this date is adopted.

December 1, 1976

Proposed constitutional changes were voted on by the membership on this date. The membership must approve constitutional changes by voting for them at two

separate membership meetings. The first date on which these changes were voted upon was April 21, 1976.

Mid-1976 – 1983 - Sponsorship Committee Activity

Both the Steering Committee and the Sponsorship Committee meet with Glick and Roger Cummings on November 10, 1976 to learn that costs would have to be cut significantly so that allowances for Section 8 apartments could be met. Discussions continued for months and many meetings were held with all the agencies involved, many very frustrating. Steering Committee and Sponsorship Committee met to review plan for 350 unit project on Site 1. (Sketch showing development of 350 units on Site 1 follows.) Many technical items on surface finishes, room sizes, bathtub size, etc., were raised, with HUD insisting on more design changes and reductions in the square footage of larger apartments so they can accept the plan. Discussion on adding units (from 350 to 407) to get under cost limits, as well as HUD objection to the inclusion of commercial space continues. In July, HUD says it doesn't have enough Section 8 money for 407 units.

Finally, Tom Appleby, Administrator of the HDA, approved a Section 8 set aside for the project in September, 1977, and announced the allocation of 200 Section 8 units in May, 1978. (The project had been scaled down from the original 350 units to 200 at this point.) Attention then turned to reviewing the plans prepared by Roger Cummings and Glick, and to resolve some 30 to 50 issues that had to be negotiated. Discussion on items to be included in Memorandum of Agreement continues through 1978 and 1979.

A draft memo between Glick and the Cooper Square Committee is circulated on 11/29/79. As of January 3, 1980, Roger Cumming is preparing preliminary plans to present to HUD and HPD in 5 weeks. During this period, Quinell & Rothschild were approved as landscape architects. Negotiations continued ad-infinitum, along with meetings with the relevant agencies. Approval process drags on, but at Sponsorship meeting of October 27, 1980, Glick states that HUD is favorable to plans, that HPD is ready to start ULURP, and that the MA is close to being ready to sign. Yet, many a slip twixt the cup and the lip. In early March, 1981, HUD wants to see the project cut to 180 units. The Committee raises hell, but the final total will be even lower – 146. Finally, on December 14, 1981, Glick filed the revised Plan and Project for the 146 unit project. On January 7, 1982, the last revision requested by HUD is being submitted to both HUD and HPD, after which the variances needed would be pursued. After threats to complain to HUD that the community had no signed agreement with Glick, an agreement was finally hammered out on December 30, 1983, just prior to the beginning of construction.

The dedication of the Thelma Burdick Apartments was celebrated on May 18, 1984.

January 27, 1977

On this date, Cooper Square Committee first considers HDA's suggestion that Cooper Square take over management of the site.

November 1, 1977 – January 31, 1978

The Cooper Square office, now located at 61 E 4th St., spent a majority of its

time on efforts to obtain city commitment to 350 units of housing, site maintenance problems, assisting the city in the rental of vacant apartments, and in joint efforts with many community organizations on a variety of issues..

November 2, 1977 - CUANDO

Steering Committee discusses its position on CUANDO which has taken over the Church Of All Nations (COAN), decides to support their getting a lease and low rent. Steering Committee eventually sends a letter of support. CUANDO moved into a new stage of development in June, 1983 by forming a relationship with Rev. William W. Kenney (formerly of Middle Collegiate Church) as Coordinator of Development. It also outlined an ambitious program of democratization and community inputs which it abrogated whenever it felt threatened. Democratization fails. Tom Craft, Cooper Square's representative on the CUANDO board, resigns early in 1984.

January 13, 1978

On this date, Nathan Leventhal was named Commissioner of HPD by Ed Koch.

February 10, 1978

On this date, 200 tenants from PAC groups march around City Hall protesting the City's failure to approve community management contracts. On February 10, the Emergency Financial Control Board approved 3 month contracts.

March, 1978 – 3rd Street Playground

Final plans are being made for the children's playground. Tenants encouraged to participate and efforts are made to get large cement pots removed. Artists are assisting in preparations for a children's mural to be undertaken during the winter. Keys to the playground are available for 50 cents. As of March 30, 1983, however, the playground was not moving forward.

March, 1978 – Attorney Selection

To hire an attorney for the project, half a dozen names were suggested, all of whom were interviewed. To get some free advice, we asked each of those responding to our call to critique our draft agreement with Glick Affiliates. Two attorneys responded, and one, Martin Berger, made some very useful suggestions. He was subsequently hired, took an active role in negotiating the agreement thereafter, and served the Cooper Square Committee until 2002 when he died of cancer. His death was a great loss to all of us.

April 23, 1978

Using 36 egg crate cardboard containers, the Cooper Square Committee led a demonstration from its office on E. 4th Street down Second Avenue to Houston Street where they were erected to resemble a building. The message in huge letters on the front of the boxes read: MR. LEVENTHAL: COOPER SQUARE NEEDS 350 SECTION 8 UNITS TO START BUILDING. It was a very successful demonstration, and rated space in two New York papers.

September 28, 1978

On this date, a celebration for the designation of the Ottendorfer Library as a New York City Landmark was held by the Committee to Keep the Ottendorfer Library Open. Helen DeMott chaired that committee.

October, 1978

Cooper Square is offered space at 59-61 East 4th Street for its offices, initially on 1/24/78, and later at the end of October, 1978..

December 6, 1978 – Washington Trip

A second trip to Washington, on behalf of Pueblo Nuevo and Cooper Square. They met with Larry Simon, Asst. Sec. of HUD, who agreed to study our plans And see whether cost increases were justified. It was agreed that Cumming and Glick should also write to Simons to add their voices to the plea. Thomas Appleby, Commissioner of HPD, also agreed to write Simons.

January 8, 1979

Paul Griffin, then Executive Director, fired for cause.

January 9, 1979

Tenants of city-owned buildings all over the city joined Cooper Square residents protesting the city's cut back of manpower levels just as the numbers of city-owned buildings is increasing. After two hours, the protest ended after a meeting with Leventhal was arranged for the following week. A meeting was held with Commissioner Raymond at which he said he was hiring more maintenance men.

May 23, 1979 – 3rd Street Mens Shelter

At about this time, serious complaints about the 3rd St. Mens Shelter surfaced, resulting in a close look at its facilities and its program. It was physically unsightly, allowed many men to loiter outside the building, and was the intake facility for homeless and destitute men. Up to 45 percent of the men were considered psychotic and 55 percent alcoholic, though perhaps 50 to 60 of its clients work at the shelter. The shelter served 8,500 different men each year, serving about 1,100 meals daily in the winter, 650 in the summer. Other service centers such as Booth House, the Bowery Mission, and the Womens Shelter were also interviewed. Out of these studies and the determination to improve conditions, the Cooper Square Committee scheduled a special Steering Committee meeting on the Mens Shelter on August 1, 1979 . Out of this and other meetings, a number of recommendations were made for dealing with inappropriate referrals, the violence tolerated under the present system, and improved treatment options. It was also agreed that Cooper Square should publicize the facts about homeless men and the way they are treated.

October 17, 1979 – 13 East 3rd St.

The threat of demolition for 13 East 3rd Street was imminent. All the beams were found to be rotten, and the tenants would have to be moved if the beams were to be replaced. Commissioner Manny Mirabel toured the building a week earlier. A meeting between tenants and city representatives was also held. After

much discussion and pressure, it was decided to rehabilitate the building, and on 10/15/80, some 5 bids had been received for doing the work.

November, 1979 – 1985 - Project Arts Committee

Consisting of Javier Bustillo-Vargas, Roger Cumming, Mary Nell Hawk, Alex John, Mike Ladin, Sandra Payne, Chuck Ritchie, Barbara Smith and Walter Thabit, the committee solicited proposals for artworks to be included in the Thelma Burdick project. In March, 1980, the request for proposals was widely distributed. 150 entries were received, gradually narrowed down to 5 artists who were commissioned to produce and install artworks. These included works by Dee Axelrod, Marni Bakst, Tony Bechara, Tom Doye and Ann Evans. Mary Nell Hawk masterminded and led the effort through to its conclusion in 1985. Friends of Site 1 (list in the Artworks Committee file), National Endowment for the Arts, Glick Affiliates, NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs, and others were supporters and participants. Toward the end of 1979, the Environmental Council on the Arts had made a grant to the New Wilderness Foundation, Inc., to begin planning for the inclusion of artworks in the project. Over \$100,000 was raised to pay for the purchase and installation of the artworks. The final report on the project was issued in August, 1986.

November 14, 1979

Robert Collier was interviewed for the position of Director of Cooper Square, and was subsequently hired..

November 30, 1979

A celebration of Cooper Square's 20th Anniversary and the opening of its new offices at 59-61 East 4th Street.

February 27, 1980 – De-funding Threat

Director Collier reported that Cooper Square's current contract runs out on 2/29/80, and that on 2/14/80, he was told that we would not be refunded. Mayor Koch has decided not to refund groups which do not include a plan to reduce the number of buildings under their control. A decision is made that de-funding was sprung too late to digest and that a meeting with Gleidman of HPD should be held to straighten it out.

February 27, 1980 – Astor Place Reconstruction

Chuck Ritchie has been appointed to represent the Cooper Square Committee on the board of The Committee for Astor Place which is raising funds for the reconstruction of the Astor Place subway station and vicinity.

February 1981 – Joint Planning Council

In February and March, of four town hall meetings held in various parts of the Lower East Side, Cooper Square's was best. Starting This Land Is Ours campaign. In April, parade planning is underway. As of 10/6/82, JPC was close to developing a draft development plan incorporating a non-profit development corporation, anti-displacement zoning, historic designation and land banking.

September 1, 1980

With no advance warning, the HPD cut off the organization's only outside source of funds.

September 8, 1980

On this date, Robert Collier resigns, effective September 19th, citing irreconcilable differences.

1972-1980 – Bowery Residents Committee

During the eight years since it was conceived, the Bowery Residents Committee had made substantial strides toward meeting its goals. On an annual basis, it had contact with over 3300 different individuals, providing a range of rehabilitation, social and human services. It was now funded by city, state and federal agencies, operates out of several sites including 191 Chrystie St., 189 Allen St., and 324 Lafayette Street. It operates a drop-in lounge, a sobering up station, and an older adults program.

August 24, 1981 – De-funded Again

Chuck Ritchie, Acting Director of Cooper Square, received a letter from Manny Mirabel of HPD stating that Cooper Square will not be funded for the coming year since it had failed in the competition based on services performed for the community.

1982

Val Orselli again takes over as Director of Cooper Square Committee. He switches to become Director of the Mutual Housing Association in 1997.

March 22, 1982

500 persons attended an anti R10 zoning rally at Cooper Union's great hall. The Community Board 3 Housing Committee held a hearing on the proposed rezoning on March 26, 1982, followed by a hearing before the full board March 23, 1982.

July, 1982

Cooper Square was unexpectedly de-funded at the end of 1981. When it was funded, as it was for nine years, as an example, 2/1/79 through 2/29/80, the budget ran around \$52,000, almost 79 percent of which was for personnel and fringe benefits. From a staff of five, by July 1982, we were left with only one employee, our Director.

July, 1982

Glick going for firm commitment from HUD, will not complete Memorandum of Agreement until HUD gives its approval. Pueblo Nuevo has firm commitment, but still does not have Memorandum of Agreement with Glick. By October 5th, Walter reports we have firm HUD commitment. Ground breaking expected by end of year. Land disposition for Site 1B (Thelma Burdick Houses) is approved by Board of Estimate on November 17, 1983. On 12/14/83, Cooper Square is

still without a memo of agreement. Walter is authorized to call HUD and ask that the project be delayed unless you come to agreement with Cooper Square prior to 12/23. Glick grant is funding a variety of improvements and facilities in the new building. Dedication of the completed Thelma Burdick apartments takes place on Friday, May 18, 1984.

July 22, 1982

N.Y. Times reports that 100 residents, legislators and representatives of 18 organizations assembled at City Hall yesterday to protest the possible demolition of vacant buildings on the Lower East Side. As a result of the protest, HPD Administrator declared the city will only tear down unsafe buildings and not others.

Oct 1982 – Mar 3, 1983 – The JASA Fight

With respect to JASA's application to build a 150 unit FH202 building on Third Avenue between 4th and 5th Streets, the Cooper Square Committee was adamant that the project not be built until JASA agreed in writing that eligible Cooper Square residents and those of the lower east side were given priority to live in the project. Meetings were held with Bernard Warrach, Executive Director of JASA, and Morris Stutsman, Director of Housing for JASA. For Cooper Square, the major participants were Frances Goldin, Valerio Orselli, Carlos Perez and Walter Thabit. At the last minute, on the day of the hearing, JASA finally agreed in writing to give Cooper Square site tenants first priority, that up to 49 percent of the units would be allocated to residents of Community Board #3, and that the remainder could come from elsewhere in the city. When the signed agreement appeared at the Board of Estimate hearing on the project, Cooper Square withdrew its objections and supported the project. It received Board of Estimate approval on March 3, 1983. It was a red letter day for Cooper Square.

June 11, 1983

City sent out notices to all commercial tenants, sharply raising rents, including Cooper Square from \$1 to \$500 a month. Immediately organized to fight such increases.

July 27, 1983 – Cube Building – 18 Second Avenue

Meetings on the Cube building with the city continue. ULURP question will be brought to CB #3 on September 6th. As of October 19th, a half million from the State Homeless Housing Assistance Program is on one minute and off the next. On September 22, 1983, Cooper Square delivers to Shuldiner its RFP plan for the building, and asks for Site Control of the Cube Building. By 10/5/83, Shuldiner gives temporary control of the Cube Building to Cooper Square till 10/23. Negotiations on many fronts continue. Though the building was offered to private developers for \$1, the city finally agreed to sell the building to Cooper Square for \$11,000.

August 15, 1983

Letter from Rick Cohen, Jersey City planning consultant, calling for a new plan for Cooper Square in keeping with the changed conditions and changes in subsidy programs. He recommends strongly that Cooper Square take the lead in the planning process rather than wait till the city preempts the planning process.

The issues are discussed at length with Rick Cohen on March 28, 1984. He is hired to help develop Cooper Square's re-planning effort. A draft memo of understanding between Rick Cohen and the Cooper Square Committee is dated December 12, 1984.

December 22, 1983

Proposed contract for architectural services for the Cube building at 16-18 Second Avenue received by Cooper Square Committee, outlining the costs, timetable, and relationship between the architects, Peter Woll Associates and the Pratt Architectural Collaborative.

January 18, 1984

Rally held by Third Avenue Tenants, Artists and Businessmens Association to protest NYU's plan to build dormitories on Third Avenue to Community Facilities zoning level which permits twice the normal building bulk.

February 1, 1984

On this date, the Cooper Square Committee requested that Glick Affiliates name the Stanton Street project Thelma Burdick House. Mary Nell Hawk was named head of the Arts Committee for the project. The Cooper Square Committee also approved the creation of a Housing Development Fund Corporation to acquire title to the Cube building.

April 18, 1984

The buildings at 261-277 Bowery have been served with a vacate order. Efforts will be made to prevent the vacate from taking place.

July 24, 1984

On this date, Mayor Koch, Manhattan Borough President Andrew Stein, and HPD Administrator Anthony Gliedman announced their "cross subsidy" program which would turn over vacant buildings to private developers to rehabilitate, with some of the sales price being used to rehabilitate occupied properties for low income residents. The plan was immediately attacked by all Lower East Side groups. The Lower East Side Joint Planning Council is leading the fight.

September 12, 1984

Val Orselli announced at the Steering Committee meeting of this date that the NY Civil Liberties Union agrees to bring suit against the NYC CDA for de-funding Cooper Square and 10 other organizations while funding the United Jewish Council and other organizations which submitted poor applications or were being investigated for corruption. The suit is successful State Supreme Court justice Richard Wallach orders CDA to fund the 11 groups whose applications were rejected and to de-fund the Puerto Rican Council and the United Jewish Council.

At the Steering Committee meeting, Walter Thabit first mentions his desire to resign, but no action is taken..

September 15, 1984

Date of the 25th Anniversary of the creation of the Cooper Square Committee. The gala was held at Webster Hall on E 11th Street, and featured dinner, dancing and entertainment. The affair was free to all attendees. A Silver Anniversary journal was produced, and raised some \$4,000. Reuben Glick paid for the bash.

October 6, 1984

Initial attempt by Rick Cohen to generate a new memorandum of Understanding between Cooper Square and HPD which deals with the changed conditions on the site and decisions regarding the use and local involvement in the Cooper Square sites. After many meetings, long discussions and changes in housing subsidies available, Committee begins to zero in on rehabilitation in the tenements and the creation of a mutual housing association.

April 5, 1985

Walter Thabit resigns as Chairman of the Sponsorship Committee. He feels he has worked on it long enough. On May 5, 1985, he sends a letter of resignation to the Steering Committee. He has served since 1959, longer than any other person, except for Frances Goldin who continues her activity. He is, nevertheless, present at the May 22, 1985 Steering Committee meeting.

June 26, 1985 – Election of Carmen Barreto

On this date, Carmen Barreto was elected Chairman of Cooper Square, and almost immediately went wild with accusations of corruption and libelous statements and threats against staff and volunteers. Ultimately, her behavior was so divisive and impossible, a recall election was held at a membership meeting on October 2, 1985, at which she was relieved of the Chairmanship. Carmen continued to run as a candidate for Chairman of the Cooper Square Committee for at least another 10 years.

Thanksgiving Day, 1985 ?

It could have been this or another year, but Cooper Square wanted to show Reuben Glick their appreciation for his generosity and invited him, his wife and his brother to a Thanksgiving dinner at the Cooper Square office. Everything was made or brought from home – plates, silverware, dishes, turkey, all of it. They even set up candles. Eight o'clock came and went, but no Glick showed. Finally, at 9:30 PM, they called Reuben and asked why he wasn't there. He said that Carmen Barreto had called and said that Frances was in a car accident and the dinner had been called off. A most regrettable incident.

January 8, 1986

Preservation Committee Chairman Brian Rose reports that at a meeting with Shuldiner, the HPD seems ready to jointly plan the rest of the Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area in a way that makes sense to everyone.

January, 1986

The Future of Cooper Square, a report by Ad Hereijgers and Yvon van der Steen, interns from the Netherlands, was issued in January, 1986. The report goes into

greater detail on the community management and TIL programs.

May 19, 1986

Date of a meeting called by the Third Avenue Tenants Association to discuss strategy and action on NYU's proposal to build dormitories between 11th and 12th Streets on Third Avenue. The Association is unlikely to approve the project without material changes in design.

July 8, 1986

A meeting of Friends of Cooper Square (list follows) both to be brought up to date and to map out an event which would satisfy our operational needs for this year. A fund-raising cocktail party is to be held on October 15th.

July 16, 1986

At the Steering Committee meeting on this date, it was reported that St. Georges church wanted to build a 16 story residence between 6th and 7th Streets for its better off parishioners, and that 10 zoning variances would be needed to make the project go. The Committee unanimously agreed to fight the proposal and the variances needed for the project.

September 24, 1986

Constitution Revision Committee will be ready with new draft prior to October 22nd meeting, after which it can be given first vote at next membership meeting.

October 15, 1986

Date of The Cooper Square Plan – Report for Discussion, which first detailed the idea of rehabilitating the tenements under an MHA, an additional 600 units of new low- to market rate housing, a concept which was approved by the Cooper Square membership on January 7, 1987.

October 22, 1986 – Steering Committee Minutes

Committee to take up staff salary increases when budget for coming year is in hand. Ad Hereigers and Yvon van der Steen, our visiting planners from the Netherlands, are hired for 8 weeks. Fund raising party held on October 15, 1986, netted over \$3,500. Working toward closing on Cube building the week of October 27th. The closing was often deferred, and was later set for January, 1986. Cooper Square awarded community consultant contract, now awaiting Board of Estimate confirmation. The Preservation Committee continues working on a new plan for Cooper Square, one that envisions creation of a Mutual Housing Association which will maintain the tenements on 3rd and 4th Streets.

October 29, 1986

It was agreed that the current illegal occupancy of 9 Second Avenue, the building itself, and CUANDO's involvement be studied and a position decided on.

January 5, 1987

Committee receives letter from the IG exonerating Cooper Square from all charges leveled by Evan Blum in his attempt to kill the Cube building project. Zenith Renovators will begin demolition work the week of February 18th. Ground breaking is scheduled for February 20th. As of early May, demolition (interrupted for beam shoring) was about 50 percent complete.

January 28, 1987

On this date, BASTA, a loose coalition of Lower East Side organizations called a public meeting with elected officials to stop the 1st Street shelter proposal, to protest the Mens Shelter as a "human dump," to stop welfare dumping, and to build more low rent and moderate income permanent housing.

February, 1987

As a result of the organizing efforts of the Joint Planning Council, the Lower East Side Peoples Federal Credit Union was established in February, 1986. By February, 1987, the credit union had over 500 members and nearly \$5 million in shares. What had been an idea in 1984, a plan in 1985, and a charter in 1986, had become a functioning institution in 1987.

June 19, 1987

Meeting held between Ellen Stewart (LaMama) and the Cooper Square Committee on the future of 12 E 1st St. LaMama has been renovating the building illegally, and the HPD has padlocked it to prevent further work. This was an opening meeting; nothing was decided.

August 12, 1987

Letter from Mary Nell Hawk to Nancy Rosen of the Fine Arts Planning Group updating progress on the arts project at Thelma Burdick Apartments. Five art works were commissioned in 1985, three have been installed, Tony Bechara's painting will be installed in the fall. A fabricator for Dee Axelrod's sculpture is still being sought. Of the total budget amounting to \$115,000, some \$87,700 has already been expended. Efforts to raise the rest were being pursued.

Wednesday, August 26, 1987

At around this time, changes to the Cooper Square constitution was acted on by the membership for the second time. These changes were opposed in a letter written on this date by Antonio Pagan, who has always been hostile to the Cooper Square Committee leadership, and has attempted to take it over.

October, 1987

Cooper Square began to organize citywide opposition to the raising of commercial rents in renewal areas.

December, 1987

Construction on the Cube building continues. By January 1988, construction was 85% complete. Tenant selection procedures were worked out; by 5/4/87, 32

tenant interviews had taken place, more to follow. When interviews were completed, visits were made to about 30 homes. While occupancy was projected for June, 1988, months were to pass before completion. The opening celebration was finally scheduled for November 14, 1988.

Satellite office in Thelma Burdick apartments is opened.

The Site Action Committee has also been active for the past year or two. Among its activities are the issuance of a newsletter, organizing Three Kings parties, the war on drugs (a call for a Lower East Side Drug Free Zone), decentralization of the shelter system and the growing rat problem.

March 4, 1988

The Preservation Committee is charged with developing a revised plan for Cooper Square, and has been pursuing this objective for many months. A draft of a Memorandum of Understanding between the HPD and the Cooper Square Committee on this date spells out the basic agreement to rehabilitate the tenements for the tenants who live there, that a Mutual Housing Association be established to own those buildings, and that new construction with at least 80% market and 20 % low rent housing be developed.

March, 1988

An amended constitution is so dated in the file.

May, 1988

Mayor Koch awarded the Lefrak organization development rights in the Seward Park Extension Urban Renewal Area, drawing the immediate wrath of the Joint Planning Council, the Cooper Square Committee and other groups throughout the Lower East Side.

October 4, 1988

Memo from Brian Sullivan, our Pratt Institute architectural consultant, calling attention to the variety of problems to be encountered in the rehabilitation process. The memo proposes a schedule of rehabilitation for discussion. Ultimately, a Consulting Services Contract is worked out between Pratt's PICCED center and the Cooper Square Committee.

November 14, 1988

Dedication of the Cube Building at 16-18 Second Avenue at East First Street was held on this day to celebrate the renovation and rehabilitation of this abandoned and burnt-out hulk. In two weeks or so, the cooperative residential building will be occupied by 22 homeless families, drawn from 600 applicants. As far as is known, it is the first cooperative for homeless families in the united States. Half a dozen major papers carried the story. The building was occupied on Christmas eve, 1988.

December 21, 1988

On this date, Community Board #3 met on a proposal to establish a committee to monitor the Cooper Square Committee. It was met with vehement and total

opposition, and died right there.

January, 1989

The proposed revision of the Cooper Square plan hopes to provide roughly 975 units of housing on the Cooper Square site, 575 of which will be newly constructed and 400 rehabilitated. During February, discussion continued on setting up a mutual housing association, progress on major building repairs (prior to rehabilitation) and other matters. A Negotiating Committee to pursue the revised plan was established on March 14, 1990; the committee includes Maria Torres Bird, Brian Rose, Val Orselli, Sandile, Brian Sullivan and Frances Goldin.

March, 1989

Lincoln Swados died in his ground floor apartment at 99 East 4th Street. The apartment had a shed built around it by the landlord, penning Swados in. He wanted Swados to move so he could coop his apartment. He was discovered dead after several days. The DA and AG were called to investigate the death and to bring the landlord to justice. Robert Abrams, Attorney General of New York, filed suit to permanently bar GLM from sales of apartments at 99 East 4th Street, the former home of Lincoln Swados. The Cooper Square Committee played a leading role in the Lincoln Swados Coalition.

January 7, 1990

This was the date of the 12th annual Christmas/Three Kings party (alternating every year). In 1989, some 500 gifts were handed out to attending children.

May 11, 1990 – 4th St. Cinema

The date of the City Environmental Quality Review of a proposed residential and commercial development at higher than permitted density at the northeast corner of the Bowery and East 4th Street. The proposal was opposed by the Cooper Square Committee and was never approved, but dragged on at least through February, 1991.

May 24, 1990

Meeting between HPD and Cooper Square brought parties very close to an approved MOU. The membership meeting of August 19, 1990 ratified the agreement so that Cooper Square could officially sign it, but there remained an item not agreed to. Finally, all is in order, and the MOU is signed by Maria Torres Bird for Cooper Square and Felice Michetti for the HPD on October 15, 1990.

Spring, 1990

As a result of the efforts of Cooper Square, local community groups, and the 3rd Street Shelter Task Force, the 3rd Street Shelter will become an "in house" alcoholism treatment center for about 256 men. The program will be run by the Manhattan Bowery Project Corporation. The facility will include 46 beds for detoxification, 144 specialty beds, 48 beds for rehabilitation, and between 16 and 20 beds for St. Vincents Infirmary.

June 23, 1990

Cooper Square Committee held its 4th Street Street Fair with music, dance, food, clothing arts and crafts. The Fair netted \$3,200.

More on the Cooper Square 1990 Year

Although the number of items covered in the chronology was not great in 1990 (and many other years), the organization was very busy taking care of business. Among items covered by the Steering Committee and its staff were: Building meetings held throughout the year; assigned a store lease to Mary Ann Miller; joined Housing Justice Campaign; worked on Cube building issues including a punch list of items still needing work; saw hundreds of clients needing social work assistance; noted repairs needed in dozens of buildings; contacted a dozen or more foundations seeking funds with varying degrees of success; attended dozens of meetings of associated groups; discussions with HPD on repairing major systems such as boilers; many meetings on the revised plan in committee and with the HPD; very active Site Action Committee putting out newsletter, collected \$805 for Puerto Rico for Hurricane Hugo damage; an active Lincoln Swados committee; Nominating Committee and elections, active Membership Committee chaired by Saylor Creswell; Cooper Union dorm construction controversy; This Land Is Ours committee; beautification – trees from Parks Department; war on drugs; long hours and careful screening mark the work of the Tenant Selection Committee, chaired by Clemencia Robledo; many JPC (Joint Planning Council) issues dealt with; grand opening of Orfeo's piano bar in the commercial space of the Cube building; a new Arts Committee representing the artist loft dwellers on the Bowery; higher density building proposed for 4th Street, west of Third Avenue; probably others.

December 1990

First ten buildings in DAMP/MHA Program enter rehabilitation process. They include 21, 23, 25, East 3rd Street, 58,60,67,69, East 4th Street. Three vacant buildings are renovated under the Special Improvements Program (SIP). Tenants are temporarily relocated to other MHA buildings, including the three SIP buildings, or off-site but all within the Lower East Side area. Approximately two buildings are completed each year.

December 18, 1990

There was an official signing of the MOU in the Blue Room of City Hall at 11 AM on this date. Mayor David Dinkins officiated and warmly praised the Committee. The MOU committed the city to spend some \$32.8 million for full implementation of the Cooper Square Plan as well as fund the rehabilitation of 350 occupied and 40 vacant tenement units, 25 SRO units, and 50 artists' lofts. It also approved the establishment of the MHA as the owner and maintenance arm for the rehabilitated properties.

February 20, 1991

Preliminary list of positions including hiring a director for the MHA by March is approved by Negotiating Committee as is an interim MHA Board including Maria Torres Bird, Ann Pollon, Ernest Fernandez, Brian Sullivan, Pedro Ortega,

Brian Rose and Frances Goldin. Others being considered. By April, candidates for the MHA positions are being interviewed by the recently formed Management Committee.

May 1, 1991

For some time, 71 E 4th Street has been under repair and rehabilitation. A final inspection of the building with the contractor and the committee found the work was satisfactory. On Wednesday, August 28, 1991, 71 East 4th Street was the site of "Building Opening Day" celebrating its completion and occupancy by 13 families. It is also being used as relocation housing in the staged rehabilitation on East 3rd and East 4th street tenements. In addition to 71 E 4th Street apartments, only 29 or 30 additional units are needed as relocation resources to permit the rehabilitation of 58 and 60 E. 4th Street with no tenants in occupancy.

August 15, 1991

At around this date, the Mutual Housing Association (MHA1) was incorporated. The MHA management staff has been hired, with Deanne D'Aloia named as Director. The Community Land Trust #1 was established in 1997.

October 16, 1991

In the minutes of the Steering Committee on this date, it is suggested that "we can and should have architect Victor Caliendo continue his work on the Large Scale Development Plan which will greatly assist the planning process." Cooper Square has requested \$10,000 for Caliendo to continue his work.

November 20, 1991

The MHA is invited to send a formally selected representative to sit on the Cooper Square Steering Committee. Pedro Ortega has resigned as Chairperson, and is replaced by Brian Rose. The MHA By-Laws are amended to increase the number of Board members to eleven persons.

November 25, 1991

Negotiating Committee meets regarding Marty Berger's letter suggesting that LaMama/Ellen Stewart be given upper floors of 11-17 Second Avenue, all of 6 E. 1st St., and three floors of 66 E. 4th St. Resolution of the issues is not concluded at this meeting.

January 8, 1992

At this Steering Committee meeting, Tony Janetti, reported that the loft artists have formed a group called The Bowery Artists Tenant Association to look out for their interests, and asked for a representative of their group to become a member of the Steering Committee. This was rejected as an Arts Committee already exists. Janetti then left, but this may not be the end of it.

March 11, 1992

At this Steering Committee meeting, a letter was approved to be sent to the Mayor's office opposing Councilman Pagan's strong support for retaining the CUANDO building, and calling attention to the Large Scale Development Plan

being prepared in conjunction with the HPD.

May 6, 1993

Date of JPC's statement on Seward Park Extension, calling for one-third low rent, one-third moderate rent and one-third middle income housing on this site – which can hold up to 1,200 units of housing.

June 24, 1992

Steering Committee minutes state that Louis Soler has been elected Chairman of Community Board #3. His hostility spelled trouble for Cooper Square. After many harassing and untruthful charges are made and spread around the community, Cooper Square responded to CB#3 Housing Task Force questions, Krystyna Piorkowska's (Chair of the Housing Committee) questions and LESUTA's (LES United Tenant Association) questions according to Steering Committee minutes of 5/5/93. As a result of CB#3's divisive actions, Ruth Messenger, Borough President, stated she will appoint progressive members to the Board in the future. Cooper Square residents appear in force at CB#3 meeting in June 1993, and are further harassed by untruthful charges and reports.

July 13, 1992

Letter from Kathleen Dunn, Deputy Commissioner of HPD, to the effect that disposition of the loft buildings along the Bowery (artists housing) will be restricted to methods which will maintain the long term affordability for low and moderate income residents. Meetings between Arts Committee and Cooper Square continue.

Saturday, November 7, 1992

Date of a Vinie Burrows one woman show entitled Sister! Sister! To benefit the LES Joint Planning Council

July 22, 1993

The Cooper Square MHA celebrated the completion of rehabilitation at 58 East 4th Street with 15 apartments and a ground floor store which is rented by the Good Food Co-op. This is the first of 18 buildings included in the MHA rehabilitation program.

August 24, 1993

A letter to all Cooper Square members saying that low and moderate income families were eligible to purchase co-op apartments through the Resolution Trust Corporation's Affordable Housing Disposition Program. These units are assets of failed Savings and Loan companies, and are being offered at distressed sales prices to qualified buyers. A month later, some 25-30 inquiries had been received, mostly not from Cooper Square, though several members were pursuing this option.

March 10, 1993

Steering Committee minutes state that the Design Architect has completed

refinements to the Large Scale Development Plan. Arts Committee desires to see and review those plans.

Monday, March 15, 1993

Date of the LES Joint Planning Council dinner in honor of Carolyn B. Maloney, Jerrold Nadler, and Nydia M. Velasquez, all congresspersons.

April 17, 1993

Date of retreat on Future Directions for Cooper Square. Since the MHA will take over the maintenance of buildings, sharply reducing Cooper Square's involvement, the retreat discussed what the future mission of the Cooper Square Committee should be.

April 28, 1993

From 11/84 to 4/28/93, there were some 40 Cooper Square membership meetings held, each of them dealing with the Cooper Square revised plan, the Mutual Housing Association, and the Memorandum of Understanding between Cooper Square and the NYC HPD. Cooper Square members were notified of meetings through mailings and postings, in all Urban Renewal buildings as well as under each tenant door and phone call reminders. The annotated list of meetings and subject matter was prepared by Valerio Orselli, on 6/14/93, and follows:

COOPER SQUARE COMMITTEE CHRONOLOGY
OF MAJOR MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

The concept of the MHA was not developed overnight. In fact, initially we looked at the various DAMP programs and given that at that time (mid-80's) the TIL program did not pay for the full rehab of a building, and Community Management did, we spoke of a "Community Management-like" program. Eventually, after much research and meetings of the membership, the MHA concept evolved, was adopted by the membership, and Cooper Square put its organizational resources towards its implementation.

Attendance varied from a quorum to well over a hundred members, with the majority being urban renewal site tenants. Some of the major membership meetings were as follows:

- 3/12/85 - Discussion of Alternative Management programs (HPD figures: CMP 16,000/du; TIL \$4-5,000/du, Co-oping, and homesteading). Some 112 members attended, 85 being urban renewal site tenants.
- 7/3/85 - MHA concept introduced to membership and approved for further discussion.
- 8/28/85 - Full discussion and comparison, with questions and answers about MHA and TIL.

- 9/7/85 - Retreat, with active tenants. (15 of the urban renewal buildings represented), along with our Steering Committee and Pratt Institute. Discussion included comparison of various programs (MHA, TIL, HTF, and CMP). Presented HPD's figures for total programmatic limits for rehab. TIL: \$5-10,000; CMP: \$16,500; MHA—based on preliminary discussion with HPD: \$16 to \$25,000 per du)
- 11/6/85 - Discussion on future options for our buildings. Substance of the meeting was reported in special Tenants' Bulletin, where it was noted that Commissioner Joe Shuldiner attended the meeting and stated that TIL would not be suitable for our buildings due to extensive rehab needs and limited TIL per du funding.
- 3/12/86 - Review of all rehab options.
- 10/15/86 - Revised Plan for Cooper Square ("The Cooper Square Plan – Report for discussion") made public. Copies of the plan in English and Spanish made available to our membership. Summaries of the plan widely distributed.
- 1/7/87 - Review of proposed Cooper Square plan and discussion.
- 2/1/87 - Special meeting in Spanish language for review and discussion of Cooper Square plan.
- 3/11/87 - WORKSHOP style membership meeting. 2nd. Review of proposed plan. Five working groups of tenants, with consultants going around room acting as facilitators.
- 3/19/87 - Review of Plan in Chinese.
- 4/20/88 - Presentation for evaluation and acceptance. by membership of revised Plan. HPD Comm. Kathleen Dunn was present at the meeting to answer questions.
- 10/5/88 - Update on negotiations with HPD on Revised Plan.
- 11/88 - Full presentation of Cooper Square plan to CB~3 Housing and Economic Development Committees.
- 12/88 - Full presentation of Cooper Square Plan to CB#3, small anti-Cooper Square group organized by Antonio Pagan called for establishment of an "oversight committee". CB#3 voted down his proposal, and voted overwhelmingly to support the Cooper Square plan.

- 6/21/89 - Discussion on proposed structure for MHA. Review of 5th draft of Cooper Square-HPD Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- 8/31/89 - Membership meeting held to vote on approval of MOU, with modifications still to be negotiated. Language of MOU was largely agreed upon by both Cooper Square and HPD, but during election period we were not able to move towards execution of agreement.
- 9/19/89 - Cooper Square Plan endorsed by then Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins.
- 1/90-8/90 - Negotiations continued with HPD, under new Dinkins administration and were finally concluded.
- 8/15/90 - Membership meeting held. MOU was reviewed one more time. Cooper Square Chairperson Maria Torres Bird was authorized by membership to sign the MOU, which covered both the rehab and new construction of buildings, creation of a Community Center and the establishment of a Mutual Housing Association, with tenants having the option to apply for other Alternative Management programs.
- 10/19/90 - Signature of Cooper Square/HPD MOU at City Hall, with all major political officials present, as well as the Chairs of CB#3 and CB#3's Housing Committee.
- 12/19/90 - Cooper Square membership meeting celebrated signing of MOU. Some 135 members attended.
- 4/10/91 - Report on establishment of MHA.
- 4 to 6/91 - Seven buildings petition to join MHA program.
- 10/2/91 - Rehab update and MHA update. Completion of rehab of 71 E 4th Street.
- 11/91 - Seven buildings are certified by HPD as having 60%+ sign on in petitions and are accepted into MHA program.
- 12/18/91 - Initial presentation on Large Scale Development Plan. MHA update- 7 buildings entered program. Formation of Tenants Council
- 3/25/92 - MHA Update.
- 4/29/92 - MHA Update.
- 5 to - 10/92 - Nine more buildings petition HPD for inclusion in MHA program.

10 to 12/92 - HPD verified that 60% + of legal tenants had signed petition and accepted the nine new buildings in the MHA program.

11/4/92 - MHA Report at membership meeting. Some 125 members attend meeting. Comm. Kathleen Dunn and Comm. Joan Wallstein were present to answer questions. Meeting disrupted by small but vocal anti-MHA group, seeking to prevent HPD or Cooper Square from answering questions..

4/28/93 - Update in draft of Large Scale Development Plan.

In addition to the above meetings, there were many more membership meetings that dealt with other issues, including the nomination and election of our board of directors (unlike every other CBO on the Lower East Side, our board is elected by our membership). 60% of our board must come from the urban renewal buildings. To be a member of Cooper Square one must either live or have a business within the urban renewal area.

Further, in addition to the membership meetings, during the period of 7/88 to 5/93 Cooper Square organized some 218 building meetings in all the residential urban renewal buildings covering all aspects of the revised Plan for Cooper Square, the MHA, the MOU, repair and rehab issues, etc.

Since its formation, the MHA has had two major meetings, where all MHA tenants were invited and fully briefed on the MHA progress, and financial reports were given. Since its formation, the MHA Tenants Council has been holding monthly meetings, covering rehab issues, tenant selection, house rules, etc. Since intake into the MHA programs, all the MHA buildings have been holding meetings every 4 to 6 weeks to discuss architectural layouts, rehab problems and schedule, temporary relocation, etc.

This is a mere outline summary of the work carried out by Cooper Square, and the MHA, in order to provide for full community participation.

June 23, 1993

On this date Councilman Antonio Pagan wrote a letter to Borough President Ruth Messenger, which he simultaneously issued as a press release, accusing Frances Goldin, Lisa Kaplan, Margarita Lopez, Armando Peres, Joyce Ravitz and Rob Schoenbaum of inciting to riot, a criminal offense. The six have brought suit against Pagan for slander. A dissident group trying to destroy the MHA and take over the project has issued vicious leaflets, many unattributed, maligning Frances Goldin and others. Councilman Pagan has publicly supported this dissident group. Frances Goldin launched an individual defamation suit against Antonio Pagan, dated August 16, 1993. The suit was dropped after Pagan apologized for his statements, but then denied his own apology. The court suit brought by the six was settled out-of-court when Pagan signed a statement retracting his accusations against them. The Goldin suit was settled after Pagan signed a statement on October 5, 1993, conceding that his charges against her were untrue.

September 12, 1994

On this date, the Certificate of Incorporation was issued for the Cooper Square Mutual Housing Association II Housing Development Fund Company, Inc.

December 6, 1994

Date of closing on 13 East 3rd Street. The New York City Council approved the disposition of the building to the Cooper Square Community Land Trust despite the opposition of Councilmember Pagan. Demolition was underway by early 1995. Construction could then follow.

December 19, 1994

Date of a rally supporting Sister Elizabeth who was the target of a politically motivated Grand Jury investigation, based on false accusations made by her political opponents in the 1993 school board election.

January 11, 1995

One of the Lower East Side's most extraordinary working-class leaders, Sophie Saroff died peacefully in her sleep on this day, three months shy of her 99th birthday. Sophie became a legendary organizer in labor, anti-racist, peace and anti-fascist struggles.

February 8, 1995

Steering Committee minutes show that the Community Land Trust (interim board), just created, was approved as the permanent board at this meeting.

May 22-23, 1995

Dates of a City Council hearing on removing Site 1A from the Cooper Square plan. The hearing was called after the city council leadership met with the leadership of Community Board #3 and Councilman Antonio Pagan who insisted that the community no longer supports the Cooper Square plan. Cooper Square Committee contacted Council Member Kathryn Freed, who was the actual representative for the site in question, expressing concerns that the middle-income housing for Site 1A might be lost because of Pagan's actions. She indicated to Cooper Square that there was nothing to worry about. In fact, the HPD did cut \$10.3 million for the middle/low income housing on Site 1A two Houston Street from the city's 1996 capital budget.

July 31, 1995

The Cooper Square Committee met with the Community Board #3 on the MHA (Mutual Housing Association) ULURP application. The Board was clearly impressed by the MHA tenants testimony. Given the conservative majority membership of the Board, CSC had not expected to win the Board's support. Still, when the vote was taken, the MHA received 16 votes in favor, 15 against, with two abstentions (which were counted as 'no' votes. Considering the closeness of the vote and that CB #3 has only an advisory role, Cooper Square did very well.

September 12, 1995

The Lower East Side celebrated the victory of Margarita Lopez and Armando Perez over Antonio Pagan's picked candidates for District Leaders. The newly created CODA (Coalition for a District Alternative) was central to the victory. Its by-laws were adopted at a CODA meeting January 25, 1996.

December 20, 1995

The Cooper Square Committee mounts a major campaign to get City Council approval for the transfer of 19 HPD buildings to the MHA. Each of the City Council members was visited and given a briefing on the plan and its progress. The ULURP was approved almost unanimously, being voted against only by Pagan and one other.

April 1996

Six more MHA buildings enter rehabilitation process. They include: 9 and 27 East 3rd, 56, 65, 63, and 57 East 4th Street. On April 1, 1996 Cooper Square MHA2 representatives, represented by Marty Berger, attorney, meet with Melissa Piesman, NYS Attorney General's office to discuss the preparation of the MHA's co-op offering plan. The NYS AG's office agrees to the concept of a multi-building cooperative, with ownership of all the buildings vested in one corporation (CS MHA2) and land owned by the Cooper Square Community Land Trust (CS CLT) and leased back to CS MHA2. Splitting ownership of the buildings from the land allows for tenant shareholders to gain full control over their buildings, while the CLT will be able to monitor compliance with the underlying documents (mortgage, regulatory agreement, insurance requirements) in order to prevent speculation and to ensure that the MHA is functioning in accordance with all its mandated regulations and covenants. In light of the fact that CS MHA will be a non-profit co-op the NYS AG agrees to allow CSMHA to submit an abbreviated co-op offering plan consisting of a narrative description of tenants' rights, engineer's report, annual budget, the land lease and two years' worth of financial information.

Late May, 1996

Cooper Square starts house meetings in Phase II buildings (those which have not been rehabilitated), but also reports many problems with MHA performance.

At about this time, a prospective agreement between Cooper Square and the Department of Relocation and Management Services of HPD on the rental of vacant apartments in Stage II buildings was being circulated.

June 28, 1996

On this date, the City of New York transferred ownership of the 10 buildings already renovated to Cooper Square MHA2 and the Cooper Square Community Land Trust. 13 East 3rd Street is owned in entirety by the Land Trust, but will be transferred to the MHA at the time of the coop conversion. The remaining 9 buildings will be purchased from the city as renovations are completed.

July 10, 1966

Negotiating Team meeting with Fran Reiter resulted in suggestion that a consultant from the New School be brought in to help create a new plan which reflects today's realities. By December, the Team was interviewing developers including the Fillmore East site developer, Sam Glasser (Cristadora project), and the Settlement Housing Fund. In February, the New School is encouraged to apply for the RFP for the development of sites 1a and 2.

August 12, 1996

First election for MHA2 Interim Board of Directors is held. Only tenants from the ten MHA2-owned buildings are eligible to vote. Tenants elect seven out of the MHA2's 9 member board. Two members are appointed by the Cooper Square Community Land Trust.

October 10, 1996

The completion of construction at 13 East 3rd Street was celebrated on this date. In addition to speakers, a tour of the building, light refreshments and entertainment marked the occasion. The fifth year of the MHA was also celebrated.

February 20, 1997

More than 600 Lower East Side residents participated in a tremendous rally to save rent controls and public housing on this date. The rally was organized and supported by all the major housing groups, with Cooper Square playing a leading role, and was chaired by Margarita Lopez, our District Leader, now running for the City Council.

March 11, 1997

As reported by the N.Y. Times, a group called the Block 427 Bowery Loft Tenants Association has been negotiating with the HPD to buy five artist loft buildings and two vacant residential buildings for \$2.97 million. Frances Goldin's reaction: Some of these artists were really very greedy and were looking to make a buck; they chose to try to work it out themselves."

June 2, 1997

Tenants of 346 East 21st Street upon learning of NYC HPD of the City's intention to sell their building to the highest bidder, contacted Cooper Square Committee for help in saving the building. The building consisted of 30 tenement apartments occupied by tenants of low or moderate income, mostly Latino, Black or elderly white. It would have seemed to be an ideal candidate for inclusion in one of the City's DAMP Programs. Ed (Tito) Delgado, President of the Gerry Manning Tenants' Association, submitted a request to NYC HPD seeking their approval for the building to enter either the DAMP/TIL or DAMP/MHA program.

July 3, 1997

Commissioner Richard Roberts responds to Tito Delgado's letter by turning down the tenant association's request stating the City "is currently developing a program to focus on returning... City-owned occupied buildings' such as your own that are located in areas with strong real estate markets." In essence low-income city-owned buildings in middle class neighborhoods are not eligible for a city-assisted housing rehabilitation program. Subsequently, the City announced the Assets Sales Program, calling for sale of such buildings to the highest bidder. Tenants were given first option to buy, as long as they submitted a valid proposal and bid at least the minimum assessed value for the building: \$1.5 million dollars. As Valerio Orselli, Executive Director of Cooper Square indicated to Community Board #6, by whipping out a check from his pocket: "Here is what the HPD means by a proposal. If the tenants could write out a check for \$1.5 million, the City would give them the building."

Fall, 1997

With no prior notice or discussion, the furnished room house at 26 E. 1st Street was declared unfit for human habitation, and was unceremoniously torn down before Cooper Square was able to raise a finger to stop it.

September 9, 1997

On this date, Margarita Lopez won the Democratic Party primary election for City Council membership from District 2. This was the culmination of a long, hard campaign, involving hundreds of volunteers as well as the strong organizational support of CODA (Coalition for a District Alternative). She won in November as expected, and in 1901 when she ran for reelection. Ms. Lopez has always been an ardent supporter of Cooper Square.

January 3, 1998

Swearing in ceremony for Margarita Lopez' election to the City Council from the 2nd Election District..

February 11, 1998

Public Presentation of the Cooper Square plan developed by the Cooper Square Task Force at a meeting of CB#3 on this date. (See map following.) The Task Force includes representatives of Cooper Square, CB#3, Kathryn Freed, Margarita Lopez, NOHO, Dept. of Cultural Affairs, NYC Economic Development Corp., Dept. of City Planning, and the HPD, all working with Abeles, Philips, Preiss and Shapiro, a private planning consulting firm employed by the city.

On April 30, 1998, a further meeting of the Task Force was held, with the participants wrestling with diverse elements of the proposal, mostly having to do with the development of Site 2. On July 29, 1998, Brian Sullivan reported on a more positive approach by the HPD, suggesting that consensus was within easier reach. At a meeting of the Task Force on November 10, 1998, the discussion was largely on the form, content and operation of the community space. Participants were asked to present their conclusions to the community at a CB#3 meeting in December. Yet the discussion continued, with a meeting set for June 17, 1999 at which several remaining

development proposals were taken up, a few more decisions made, and a few still to be decided later.

The Cooper Square Task Force presented its finalized recommendation for the redevelopment of the Cooper Square Urban Renewal sites at a public meeting on Thursday, February 11, 2000.

May 11, 1998

Tenants of 89 East 3rd Street petition the city to join the Cooper Square MHA, in opposition to efforts by NYC HPD Site Office and a minority faction within the building to take it over and to place in the TIL Program. Tenant Association leaders write to HPD Site Director, Charles Saunder, and demand the right to consider other options, including joining the Cooper Square MHA. Subsequently they are notified by HPD that the only options they would be willing to offer them were either entering their building in the TIL or the NRP Program. Tenants reject both options in their petition.

June 1998

The Gerry Manning (346 East 21st Street) Tenants Association working with Cooper Square Committee and Cooper Square MHA mounts a major organizing campaign. It secures the strong support of Community Board #6, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney and other political representatives. Despite its efforts, the City refuses to budge and sets a deadline for submittal of proposals. Cooper Square MHA and the Gerry Manning T.A. submit a proposal offering to set up REIT and using LISC/Enterprise Foundation and the New York Equity Fund to help secure low income tax credits. NYC HPD turns down the proposal, but feeling the political heat does not accept any other offer. Tenants continue to organize and gather political and community support. Community Board #6 urges HPD to come to terms with Cooper Square MHA and the Gerry Manning TA.

July 20, 1998

CHARAS/El Bohio, a major Lower East Side community and cultural center located in a formerly abandoned public school on East 9th Street, was sold by New York City at public auction. Chino Garcia and Armando Perez were co-founders and co-directors of the group, and ran it for 20 years. The entire Lower East Side community supported CHARAS attempts to stay in the space, but it was ultimately forced out despite huge demonstrations and several lawsuits brought in the attempt to maintain possession.

July, 1998

The 89 East 3rd Street Tenants' Association, working closely with the Cooper Square Committee and MHA mobilize widespread political and community support.

August 1998

Tenants of 89 East 3rd Street are visited by HPD Assistant Commissioner John Warren. In a letter to tenants, John Warren offers four alternative options, two being rental models and two cooperative models. In all of them Cooper Square MHA would play a role, either as owner or manager. Tenants overwhelmingly (60 percent +) vote for the

cooperative ownership model, with Cooper Square MHA as the HDFC owner. As a compromise between NYC HPD and the tenants, the building is placed in the TIL2 Program (TIL Pilot). This allows the City to say that the building was not allowed to join the DAMP/MHA Program, while at the same time the building is allowed to join the Cooper Square MHA.

December 1998

Two more MHA buildings enter rehabilitation process: 73 and 75 East 4th Street

1999

BFC Partners LLP, at John Warren's suggestion, approaches Cooper Square MHA and proposes a deal. BFC would be willing to purchase 346 East 21st Street for \$1.5 million and to put in up to \$1 million in renovation costs, in exchange for air rights transferable to another property within the R10 district. In addition BFC would be willing, subject to the NYS Attorney General's approval, to create a condominium, splitting ownership of the building into a residential condo to be owned by an HDFC controlled jointly by Cooper Square MHA and the Tenants Association and a Commercial Condo which would be owned by BFC LLP. After much deliberation, Cooper Square MHA and the T.A. agree to the deal. A Memorandum of Understanding between BFC Cooper Square MHA and the T.A. is executed on May 6, 1999. Community Board #6 gives the deal its strong endorsement. The building enters rehab in 2000 and is completed by 2001.

March, 1999

A Cooper Square Budget Committee report showed the actual income of the Committee for 1998 was \$228,413, while expenses amounted to \$199,693. Anticipated income for the year 2000 was \$267,400 (including the \$28,720 surplus from 1998, balanced by expected expenditures of \$265,836.

April 1, 1999

Cooper Square MHA takes over management of 89 East 3rd Street.

April 3, 1999

Armando Perez, co-director of CHARAS, was found brutally beaten and near death at 5AM outside his wife's apartment complex in Long Island City in Queens. The injuries, which shortly killed him, included a brain hemorrhage, fractured ribs, and the laceration of his spleen. The death shocked the community, forced many investigations into his death, and threw the entire Lower East Side into mourning. Ten days after his death, a memorial drew more than 250 people to Our Lady Of Sorrow Church. He was murdered by drug dealers who were angered by his organizing against them.

April 15, 1999

An architect's sketch plan prepared for the Friends of Bowery Preservation shows a number of alternatives to the Cooper Square plan, all of which save most if not all the Bowery lofts valued by the artist group. On May 10, the LaSalle Academy outlined its proposal for a 100,000 sq. ft. facility on the southeast corner of Houston St. and the

Bowery. Neither of these proposals met with great encouragement.

July 1999

Cooper Square MHA2 releases its Cooperative Offering Plan, the so-called "red-herring" to tenants in all 10 MHA2-owned buildings. The plan does not cover the six buildings that had just been turned over to MHA2, because the plan was written prior to their ownership-transfer, but our attorney plans to amend the plan to include said buildings. The plan also does not include buildings still in City-ownership or yet to be renovated.

July-December 1999

Cooper Square MHA, working closely with the Cooper Square Committee, initiates a series of individual building meetings, as well as a community-wide meeting to explain the co-op offering plan. Tenants express some concerns at the building meetings and the community meeting which are addressed by Cooper Square MHA Board members and staff. Tenants express strong support for the cooperative plan as presented. At the same time a dissident member of the Cooper Square MHA Board sends a letter to the NYS Attorney General's office, complaining about the CS MHA2's Real Estate tax arrears, due to NYC HPD not yet having issued J-51 tax abatement, the MHA budget, certain provisions of the boilerplate Proprietary Lease. Some 7 or 8 additional tenants signed on to the letter.

October 6, 1999

Second election for MHA2 Interim Board of Directors is held. Tenants from all 20 building (including 13 East 3rd Street, owned by CS CLT) participate.

January 2000

In response to the decision of the United States to continue bomb testing in Vieques, Puerto Rico, Lower East Siders, including many from Cooper Square and led by Councilmember Margarita Lopez, planned to send a delegation to Vieques, with many resolving to penetrate the test bomb area to show their extreme displeasure. A vigil for Peace and Justice for Vieques was organized for April 1, 2000. On May 4, 2000, FBI agents and federal marshals forced 224 non-violent protesters and 13 protest encampments off the bomb test site and away from the front gate.

January 2000

Cooper Square MHA2 representatives meet with the new reviewing attorneys for the NYS Attorney General's Office. Discussion ensues about objections raised by the dissident group within the MHA. The NYS AG accepts our explanations, but comes to the conclusion that MHA tenants are not sufficiently informed about the co-op process. The NYS AG therefore requested of Cooper Square MHA2 that it withdraw the abbreviated co-op offering plan as drafted and submit a full-blown co-op offering plan with all the conditions attached for a typical for-profit plan. Such a plan is to include 2

years of audited financial information for each individual building and that it include all 20 buildings. In the case of the buildings we do not yet own they indicated they might accept documentation showing the City's intention to sell the buildings to the MHA at a future date. Such a plan will be almost the size of a Manhattan phone book and be very expensive to produce. On February 25, 2000 the CS MHA formally notified tenants of the withdrawal of the abbreviated co-op offering plan.

January 23, 2000

Saylor Creswell, actor, stage manager, social activist, husband and father, died on this date after a three-year battle with cancer. Saylor served on the Board of Directors of the Cooper Square Committee for over two decades, where he championed the cause of affordable housing, community gardens, and responsible urban planning. Among other interests, Saylor was active in the East Timor Action Network, raising awareness of the U.S. role in the genocide of the East Timorese. A memorial service was held in the JASA community room on Wednesday, March 8, 2000.

June 15, 2000

The dissident faction, consisting of four tenants and calling itself the Tenant Board, sues the NYC HPD, the 89 East 3rd Street Tenants Association and the Cooper Square MHA in NYS Supreme Court. They claimed the HPD did not follow proper procedure and that the intake petitions did not add up to 60% of the legal tenants. While pre-development work continues, the project comes to a standstill. At a meeting with HPD legal, Corp Counsel, fearing that the City's case is weak, recommends that we accept the building being taken back into Central management so that a new and legally airtight intake process can be carried out. Marty Berger, counsel for the tenants and the MHA, rejects the City's proposal and urges that the case be litigated. HPD reluctantly agrees. On June 15, 2000, Judge Schoenfeld in a lengthy 13-page decision finds against the dissident faction, ruling that the tenants rightfully voted to join the Cooper Square MHA.

June 30, 2000

Two more renovated buildings are turned over to Cooper Square MHA II ownership: 73 and 75 East 4th Street.

July 20, 2000

The HPD issued the RFP for potential developers on March 6, 2000. Approximately seven developers submitted serious proposals. On July 20, 2000, the NYC HPD announced the selection of Chrystie Venture Partners (CVP) to develop 618 apartments on the Cooper Square urban renewal sites on the north and south sides of Houston Street, between the Bowery and Second Avenue. The CVP development team is led by Avalon Bay Communities, a REIT (real estate investment trust) that owns 39,600 apartments in 136 developments nationwide. It is coming into New York for the first time. The plan is to produce 618 new units of housing, with 25 percent of them reserved for low-income tenants, in addition to 160,000 square feet of retail space, and a 30,000 square foot community center. Avalon Bay will pay the city \$40.5 million for the land. These are the funds through which the city paid for the rehabilitation of the tenements on 3rd and 4th Streets. At this point, the ULURP process had not yet begun.

On July 16, 2001, the ULURP process was initiated with a hearing before Community Board #3 at which Cooper Square strongly supported the plan, and showed that two-thirds of the units covered by the overall plan for the area including Thelma Burdick Apartments, the JASA building, 16 Second Ave. (formerly 26 E 1st Street), and the rehabilitation of 350 tenement apartments) were all low-rent units, while only 468 being built by Chrystie Venture Partners Bay were to be market rate. Altogether, 65 percent of the planned units will be low income while 35 percent will be market rate. On August 1st, CB#3 voted 13 to 1 in favor of the plan.

These hearings were apparently not final. In September 2001, a Cooper square flyer calls on members to attend a CB#3 ULURP hearing on October 4th, and a City Planning Commission ULURP hearing on October 10, 2001. CB#3 again voted in favor of the plan.

July 13, 2000

On this date the 4-story building at 14 Second Avenue, next door to the Cube building, collapsed, injuring eleven people and causing the evacuation of nearly 100 people from nearby buildings. In April 2000, the Blums, father and son, owners of the collapsed property, planned to create a restaurant, and proceeded to tear out structural elements. Ignoring a stop work order and falsely claiming they were doing no structural work, the collapse followed. Blum's building had been illegally bolted to the Cube building's south wall; the collapse pulled the wall away from the basic structure, causing substantial damage and repair costs. The Blums were indicted on July 24, 2001 for causing their building to fall down.

Mid-July, 2000

Since mid-July and at least through 2001, a group called the Coalition To Save The East Village has been meeting and negotiating with Cooper Union about its development plan calling for commercial buildings including a hotel, traffic and street changes, and zoning changes.

September 9, 2000

On this date, the Cooper Square Steering Committee, staff and friends had an all day meeting to discuss and select a mission for the future of the organization. To prepare participants, consultants supplied participants with a data book, information on real estate trends, and the results of interviews with many of the participants

September 22, 2000

On this day, thousands of people from dozens of cities in the U.S. and Puerto Rico gathered in Washington, D.C. to express their solidarity with the people of Vieques. October 1, 2000, there will be demonstrations in Vieques in opposition to the continued use of the island for bombing practice.

October 13, 2000

Community Board #3 ULURP hearing on 29 E 2nd Street, a proposal to build 53 efficiency units of supportive housing (on the site of 26 E 1st St.), jointly sponsored by the Cooper Square Committee and Community Access. CB#3 approved the plan as did the City Planning Commission on January 17, 2001. The City Council subsequently

approved the project as well. On December 12, 2001, our project architects opened the sealed bids, finding 3 bids that were close to the construction budget of \$5.9 million. Line items are being reviewed with an eye to ending up with a bid within the construction budget. The construction budget was finally met, and the ground-breaking ceremony was held on September 24, 2002.

November 7, 2001

The City Planning Commission approved the Cooper Square Development Plan by a vote of 12 to 0.

February, 2001

Lower East Siders spoke out again against the expansion of Con Edison's East River plant. They will close the Waterside steam generating plant, selling it for \$680 million, and build new steam and electric generators to more than double the output at its 14th Street plant. After much public opposition and negotiation, a \$3.7 million settlement was reached which will result in air quality improvements to offset the emissions from the plant expansion.

October 2001

The last building in the DAMP/MHA Program enters rehabilitation process. It is completed in 2002. Ownership is transferred to MHA II on June 30, 2002.

January 28, 2002

On this day, Martin Berger, the Cooper Square Committee's pro bono attorney for nearly four decades, and attorney for the Cooper Square Mutual Housing Association since its inception in 1991, died of lung cancer. Marty had a passion for affordable housing, created innovative housing models, and worked closely with the Settlement Housing Fund on many projects. His death saddened those who knew him. Cooper Square MHA, with Marty's approval (prior to his passing away) secures the services of the legal firm of Mallin and Goldstein to continue his work.

July 24, 2002

A hearing was held on this date before the City Planning Commission on Cooper Union's proposed development plan which calls for a 16 story office complex to replace the school's 60-story engineering school and a nine-story academic building to replace the two-story Hewitt building on Third Avenue. A hotel is being proposed for the parking lot on Astor Place (now in construction in 2004).

2002 to 2003

Cooper Square MHA working with the tenants association continues to manage 89 East 3rd Street, secures tenant input regarding architectural drawings and options. It also engaged in protracted legal struggle to evict squatters put into the building by the former building super, who apparently was renting out apartments.

May 28, 2003

Third election for MHA2 Interim Board of Directors is held. Tenants from the 20 MHA buildings and its newest project (89 East 3rd Street) participate.

October 4, 2003

On this, her last day of work, Elba Suarez retired after twenty-two years of service as Cooper Square's bookkeeper. She helped the organization grow, kept it in good fiscal condition, helped to organize tenants, worked closely with the residents of the Cube building, and was a champion of affordable housing over all those years.

October, 2003

Cooper Square launched its capital campaign to raise \$160,000 to renovate its offices at 59-61 East 4th Street. The non-profit organizations and residents of this building will be able to buy the building from the city for \$1 next year. After it is bought, the occupants will have to raise \$2.35 million to renovate the building and to remove its many violations.

December 15, 2003

After relocating the last remaining tenant, and taking over ownership of the 89 East 3rd Street building, the Cooper Square MHA gave the contractor the Order to proceed with rehabilitation on December 15, 2003. Renovation began in earnest in January 2004. The building is now 99 percent complete and tenants should be returning to their newly renovated apartment by May 2005.

2004 and 2005

Mallin and Goldstein initiate meetings with NYS Attorney General's office regarding the new co-op offering plan. The original reviewing attorney, Melissa Piesman, is back at the AG's office and she again agrees to the submission of an abbreviated co-op offering plan. Mallin and Goldstein begin working on the new plan.