



120 Academy Street, Trenton, N.J. 08608
609-392-7188 * www.trentonlib.org

Coll. 471
**N. Chris Pratico Collection of
Central Trenton, Inc. Records, 1984-1989**

By Ellen R. Callahan
June 2022

Institutional History

In January of 1985 Mayor Arthur Holland invited N. Chris Pratico, a senior vice president of W. H. Newbolds Son and Co. Inc., to join members of the Trenton Commons Commission and the city's Overall Economic Development Committee in their task to create a new municipal management organization to help manage and promote downtown Trenton. The outgrowth of this was the creation of Central Trenton, Inc. (CTI). CTI was incorporated in 1986 as a non-profit corporation to manage a special designated improvement district in Trenton, succeeding the Trenton Commons Commission. CTI was administered by a 21-member Board of Directors made up of both those elected by district business representatives and those appointed by City Council. CTI was seen as an organization that would "supplement rather than replace city services." The priorities of CTI were to help revitalize Trenton by maintaining cleaner streets, enhancing safety through use of Trenton City Police as well as hiring of additional security officers, and by providing year-round promotional activities which culminated in the annual Heritage Days Festival in June.

Pratico was a founding member of the Board of Directors and was elected as Chairman of the Central Trenton Inc. in July 1987, replacing Wendell T. Breithaupt who shepherded CTI during its first year. He continued as Chair until 1988 and remained on the board until the early 1990s. By then, CTI had changed its name to the Trenton Downtown Association which continues to help manage the designated enterprise zone [see also Coll. 34 for ephemera related to this later group].

Scope and Content

This collection is made up of 2 boxes, spans the years between 1984 and 1989 and is divided into 10 series as listed below. It provides information about the formation of CTI including minutes, copies of pertinent state legislative information, the creating city ordinance and by-laws. The collection

provides especially comprehensive information about CTT's Security Committee's efforts to increase a stronger police presence including supplementing state and city patrols with CTT-funded off-duty police officers and a campaign to have a Trenton City Mounted Police division.

Series Descriptions

Series 1. Organizational Records, undated and 1984-1986

This series includes founding documents and information including services provided by CTT's predecessor, Trenton Commons Commission (undated), information about state legislation which provided for the creation of municipal management corporations, the Trenton ordinance creating CTT, and draft by-laws.

Series 2. Minutes, April 1986 - June 1988

The minutes provide documentation of CTT's organizational development, including transition from Commons Commission, creation of sub-committees and reviews and updates to their by-laws. Generally, minutes include a report from the executive director, the sub-committees (Planning, Security, Promotion) as well as the search to choose a new executive director. These reports help provide a summary of CTT's progress in its formative years.

Series 3. Security Committee, 1986-1988

The Security Committee was formed on September 23, 1986 and had its organizational meeting on October 30, 1986. In addition to CTT board members including Pratico, the committee consisted of Trenton's Director of Public Safety and a representative from the State Police. The records of the Security Committee include memorandums, meeting minutes and newspaper clippings which help document the committee's efforts to provide a stronger security presence in the district. Of particular interest were efforts to develop a mounted police patrol.

Series 4. Correspondence, 1985-1988

This series is made up of internal and external correspondence. Internal correspondence includes notices of meetings, circulated weekly administrative reports, discussions of amendments to the by-laws and the search for a new executive director. In general, external correspondence consist of letters received by Pratico or on which he was copied. There are also a few general outgoing letters to downtown property owners regarding CTT operations, the hiring of a new executive director and inviting them to the 1988 annual meeting.

Series 5. Press Releases, 1987

This series consists of a few press releases from 1987 including three announcing the election of Pratico as CTT's new Chairman and another announcing efforts to establish a new daily cleaning regime for the downtown area.

Series 6. Publications, 1987-1989

Publications includes a complete "Welcome to Trenton Packet" for Trenton newcomers; two editions of CTT's newsletter *CTI Reports*, 1988 and 1989; a holiday gift giving flyer promoting downtown businesses and "Welcome to Trenton" cards with information about CTT. *CTI Reports* provides a good overview of the organization's activities from 1986 to the summer of 1988.

Series Descriptions (cont'd)

Series 7. Budget and Accounting, 1986-1988

This series provides some insight into the organization's finances via their draft budgets for 1987-1988 and 1988-1989 as well as audits and other reports from their accountants, 1987-1988.

Series 8. Miscellaneous Administrative Files, 1987-1989

An assortment of files as described below including lists of board members, Heritage Day planning files, and of particular interest, CTI Goals and Aspirations, 1987-1988.

Series 9. Miscellaneous Subject Files, 1987-1988

A variety of subject or reference files which includes draft briefing papers on downtown safety written for the Regional Plan Association, New York.

Series 10. Newspaper Clippings, 1986-1989

This series includes a folder of clippings on CTI activities in general and another about Heritage Days 1989.

Container List

Box / Folder / Folder Title

- 1 / 1 / Organizational Records - Trenton Commons Commission list of Services [undated]
- 1 / 2 / Organizational Records - Special Improvement and Downtown Management Corporation Law (New Jersey State Public Law 1984, Chapter 151)
- 1 / 3 / Organizational Records - An Ordinance Creating a Special Improvement District within the City of Trenton and Establishing a District Management Corporation Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40 : 56-65 Et. Seq. [ca. July 1986]
- 1 / 4 / Organizational Record - By-Laws [ca. 1986; drafts]
- 1 / 5 / Minutes, April 1986 - June 1988
- 1 / 6 / Security Committee Records - memorandum, minutes, reports, 1986-1988
- 1 / 7 / Security Committee Records – clippings, 1984-1987
- 1 / 8 / Correspondence – Internal, ca. 1986 -February 1988
- 1 / 9 / Correspondence – Internal, March-April 1988
- 1 / 10 / Correspondence – External, ca. 1985-1988
- 1 / 11 / Press Releases, 1987
- 1 / 12 / Publications - CTI “Welcome to Trenton” Packet, ca. 1987
- 1 / 13 / Publications - Reports, Summer 1987 & 1988 [newsletter]; Trenton Downtowner: Gift Ideas from Downtown Trenton Stores, ca. November, December 1986; “Welcome to Downtown Trenton” cards, ca. 1987
- 1 / 14 / Budget and Accounting - Budget Drafts and Projections, FY 1987-1988 & 1988-1989
- 1 / 15 / Budget and Accounting - Accounting reports, 1987-1988
- 2 / 1 / Miscellaneous Administrative Files - Central Trenton Inc. Management District Boundaries [map], ca. 1986
- 2 / 2 / Miscellaneous Administrative Files - Board Members, 1988-1989
- 2 / 3 / Miscellaneous Administrative Files - Goals and Aspirations, 1987-1988

Container List (cont'd)

Box / Folder / Folder Title

- 2 / 4 / Miscellaneous Administrative Files - Heritage Days Festival Planning memorandum, notes, correspondence, etc., 1988
- 2 / 5 / Miscellaneous Administrative Files - Resume of Elinor G. Luse, ca. 1988 [became Executive Director of CTI in June of 1988]
- 2 / 6 / Miscellaneous Administrative Files - open public meeting law regulations, undated
- 2 / 7 / Miscellaneous Administrative Files - phone messages, notes ca. 1986-1987
- 2 / 8 / Miscellaneous Subject File - Trenton Bus and Shuttle Service, 1985
- 2 / 9 / Miscellaneous Subject File - Brochures on various national downtown management associations, ca. 1987-1988
- 2 / 10 / Miscellaneous Subject File - Regional Plan Association, New York, draft briefing papers on downtown safety, 1987
- 2 / 11 / Newspaper Clippings, General, 1986-1989
- 2 / 12 / Newspaper Clippings, Heritage Days, 1988

Provenance

This material was donated by N. Chris Pratico in 2020 [Accession 2021.012].

Bibliography

CTI Minutes

CTI Reports, Vol 1., No. 1 Summer 1987

CTI Reports, Vol 2., No. 2 Summer 1988

The Trentonian, 3/11/1986

Related Material

Coll. 34, Trenton Downtown Association

Holland, Mayor Arthur J. – Papers [main collection] under subject files for:

Central Trenton Inc.

Downtown Management Corporation

Overall Economic Development Committee

Public Safety