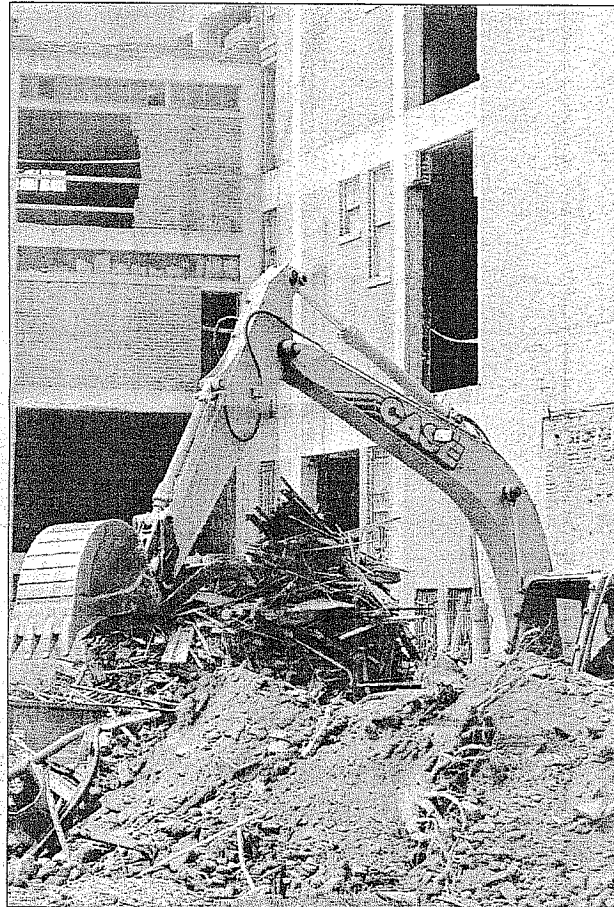


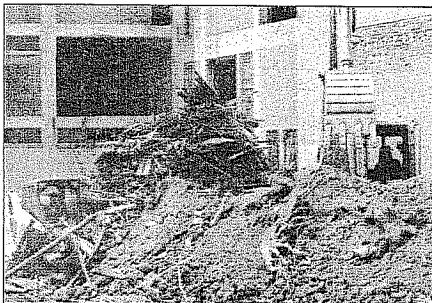
Plainfield begins to transform Tepper's



STAFF PHOTO BY MICHAEL SCHWARTZ

A worker moves piles of debris Monday outside the Tepper's building in Plainfield as demolition work begins. The former department store on West Front Street, which once stood as a city landmark and closed in 1977, is being renovated to make room for apartments and commercial tenants. For full story, see Page B-1.

Transformation begins for Tepper's building



STAFF PHOTO BY MICHAEL SCHWARTZ

A crane deposits debris Monday outside Tepper's on West Front Street in Plainfield. The former department store is being turned into apartments.

Former Plainfield department store will be turned into apartments.

By **BERNICE PAGLIA**
Staff Writer

PLAINFIELD — A quarter-century after it closed as a department store, the Tepper's building is being readied for occupancy by 74 families.

Piles of debris wrenched from its interior have filled more than 300 20-yard trash containers, developer Larry Regan said. As more is being

cleared, contractors have begun laying out apartments that Regan says will offer "luxury" living at affordable rental rates.

The building will also have commercial and community space on its lower levels. Regan said an adult medical day-care center, a Subway, Dunkin' Donuts and a Laundry Zone will be among the commercial tenants.

The residential development company is Horizons at Plainfield and the commercial portion is being developed by Yonkers-based Bogart Commerce Urban Renewal, Regan said.

In early talks, the residen-

tial portion was to be for independent seniors, but Regan said that was before marketing studies were made. Mayor Al McWilliams said Monday the project could not be age-restricted with the kind of financing involved. The proposal received Planning Board approval as an affordable housing project.

Regan said rentals will be "well under market" at \$475 for one-bedroom apartments, \$600 for two bedrooms and \$750 for three bedrooms. A superintendent will live on the premises.

A family of four earning less than \$38,000 will qualify and "it scales down from

there," Regan said.

A huge banner with the company's phone number blew down in a windstorm last fall and Regan said he wanted people to know they could apply for apartments by calling (914) 693-3011.

The redevelopment follows many years of talk and failed plans for the Tepper's building, which was city-owned until Regan bought it. He said the work is going well and the general contractor is trying to involve as many city minority contractors as possible.

Bernice Paglia can be reached at (908) 707-3137 or bpaglia@c-n.com.