



SHARPE JAMES
MAYOR
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY
07102

April 2, 1987

Ms. Didi Barrett, Editor
Museum of American Folk Art
444 Park Avenue, South, 4th fl.
New York, New York 10016

Dear Ms. Barrett:

I am in receipt of and most appreciative of your valued letter concerning the five year old "Ark" owned by Ms. Kea Tawana, presently located on the property of the Humanity Baptist Church at Bergen and 14th Streets.

In retrospect, for five years, the City of Newark has not enforced city ordinances encompassing said structure and location. During this time I need not remind you of known problems and charges encountered during a policy of "selective enforcement" in a city struggling for neighborhood improvement revitalization. The Ark has never been seaworthy. Other legitimate concerns involving safety, health hazards, taxes, water and sewer usage went unanswered as well.

I, therefore, would be remiss in my duties if I did not address statutory and legal concerns as posed by Newark and your municipality as well. As Mayor of the great City of Newark I must constantly weigh my personal love of art, cultural enrichment and folklore in concert with my oath of office to uphold the law for all citizens. No one can be above the law.

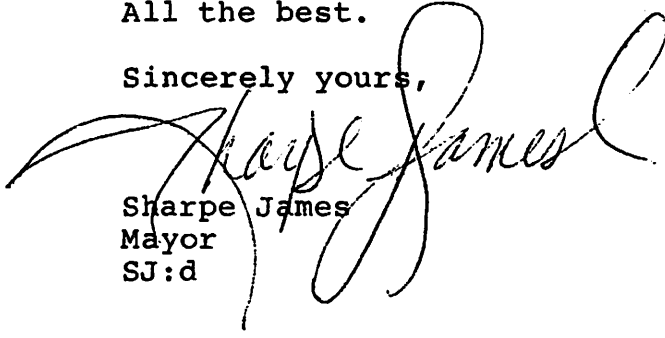
Please rest assured that a fair and honest evaluation of this situation will be conducted by my office. I also have requested that our municipal ombudsman immediately explore the issue.

April 2, 1987
Page 2

I sincerely appreciate your heartfelt comments and assure you that the Ombudsman's Office will conduct a timely and impartial investigation. Thank you for taking the time to write.

All the best.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharpe James". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Sharpe James
Mayor
SJ:d