

Metuchen-Edison Historical Society

PO Box 61, Metuchen, NJ 08840. www.metuchen-edisonhistsoc.org

New Petrograd

Is a neighborhood in Edison west of Park Ave. to the South Plainfield border. Streets such as Nevsky, Fleet, Peace, and Spring are located in this neighborhood. In the 1920's it was a new development created by Russians.

Below are excerpts from the newspapers in 1925. (MEHS 2012)

Plainfield Courier News -- July 6, 1925

South Plainfield, July 6 [1925]-- Impressive ceremonial rites marked the dedication of the prospective Russian settlement known as New Petrograd, which took place yesterday afternoon.

The ceremonies were conducted by high dignitaries of the Russian Church in America and were witnessed by about two thousand citizens of the Muscovite Empire and other interests.

A special train conveying the ecclesiastics and some seven hundred future dwellers in the colony was run from New York over the Port Reading Railroad, and was met by cadet fife and drum corps of St. Mary's Church, Plainfield, which played an appropriate Russian air. The dedication ceremonies took place shortly after the arrival of the train which was the first passenger train ever run over the Port Reading road.

Following the religious services a Cossack choir sang several Russian songs and danced native dances, airplanes circled overhead and the future colonists fraternized. New Petrograd will have a typically Russian flavor in addition to its residents. The main thoroughfare will be named "Nevsky Prospect," a Russian church will be built and a home erected for the Archbishop Metropolitan. The present extent of the ground secured by the future home owners totals eight hundred acres of former farm land. Negotiations for the purchase of the land were carried out between John Geary Jr., of Plainfield Avenue, and Waldemar W. Bauimistrow, president of the Russian Refugees' Relief Society of America. Construction of homes and other dwelling will begin shortly.

Crowd Greater Than Anticipated

Plainfield Courier News -- July 8, 1925

The job of feeding five hundred people is a formidable one in itself, but when the crowd increases to one of twenty-three hundred without any previous notice to that effect, the task then attains proportions of considerable magnitude. Yet the performance was

accomplished without a hitch at the dedication of the New Russian settlement at New Petrograd last Sunday.

John Kane, proprietor of the American House, had contracted to provide for five hundred of the future colonists, which was the limit anticipated. The event, however, drew nearly five times that number and provision was made for all of them.

New Petrograd

From Lloyd Grimstead's notes

Home News Monday July 6, 1925 Page 1 Column 8

Russians Dedicate New Colony

“New Petrograd” to house a Main Street, and a Russian Church.

Dignitaries of the Russian Church in New York and New Jersey went to Plainfield yesterday where before 500 of their countrymen they blessed 1,000 acres of land which have been acquired for the development of a Russian colony. The development will be known the officials said as New Petrograd.

The clergymen were met at the Plainfield station by the fife and drum corps of St. Mary's Church, Plainfield. The trip to the development, which is on the New Durham Road near South Plainfield, was made in automobile.

After a dedication, a Cossack choir sang Russian songs and danced native dances. Airplains circled over the property and performed stunts for the visiting Russians. Most of the delegation from New York were ex-senior men who had been driven from their native land during the Revolution.

While definite plans for laying out the new settlement have not been completed, nearly half of the 1,400 lots to be put on sale July 10 have already been subscribed for, it was learned. They are sold on the installment plan it was said.

The new city will have a main street to be known as Nevsky Prospect, and a Russian Church. A home for the Archbishop Metropolitan and an all-Russian citizenry.

Attending the dedication ceremony by the prospective citizens of “New Russia” was a religious ceremony participated in by Archbishop Platon, and other ceremonies which included a sword dance by thirty (?) Cossacks in native dress.