



SHARON ROBINSON-BRIGGS
MAYOR

CITY OF PLAINFIELD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
515 WATCHUNG AVENUE, ROOM 202
PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07060



Sandra Gurshman, Chairwoman
William Michelson, Vice Chairman

Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
February 28, 2012, 7:30 PM, City Hall Library, 515 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, New Jersey

I. Open Public Meeting Statement

Historic Preservation Commission Chairwoman Sandy Gurshman called the February 28, 2012, Regular Meeting of the Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission to order at 7:35 PM and read the following into the record: *"This meeting has been duly advertised in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, 10:4-6 et seq. The annual schedule of board meetings has been published in the Courier-News newspaper. In addition, copies of the notice have been posted in the City Clerk and Planning Division offices. This is a regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission."*

Name, Class Designation (Term Duration)	1/24/12	2/28/12	3/27/12	4/24/12	5/22/12	6/26/12	7/24/12	8/28/12	9/18/12	10/23/12	11/27/12	12/18/12
John Favazzo / Class A (5/10/10 - 1/1/14)	X	X										
Lawrence Ferrara / Class C (1/18/11 - 1/1/15)	X	X										
Sandra Gurshman / Class B (1/18/11 - 1/1/15)	X	X										
Patricia Turner Kavanaugh / Class C (1/3/12 - 1/1/16)	X	X										
Elizabeth King / Class C (1/12/09 - 1/1/13)	X											
William Michelson / Class B (1/18/11 - 1/1/15)	X	X										
David Westlake / Class A (1/12/09 - 1/1/13)	X	X										
Jan Jasper / Class C, (1/1/09 - 1/1/13) unexpired term	X	X										
Bill Garrett / Class B (2/3/12 - 1/1/16)	n/a											
Alt. #1 James Galvin / Class A (2/3/12 - 1/1/13) unexpired term	n/a											
Alt #2 VACANT (2 year term 1/1/12 - 1/1/14)	n/a	n/a										
HPC Consultant Gail Hunton	X	X										
HPC Secretary Scott Bauman	X	X										

II. Adoption of January 24, 2012, Meeting Minutes

Ms. Turner Kavanaugh made a motion to approve the January 24, 2012, meeting minutes as submitted; Vice Chairman Michelson seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

III. Carried Certificate of Appropriateness Application

1. HPC 10-06; 801-807 Park Avenue / 100-104 Crescent Avenue; Block 828, Lot 1

Crescent Area Historic District; Applicant & Owner: Lamont Gibson

The Historic Preservation Commission has carried this application since April 2011; the only portion of the Certificate of Appropriateness application which remains unaddressed is the proposed wood cornice repair. The Applicant / Owner was at first not present; Commission members discussed the options of carrying the application or referring the case to code enforcement. A discussion ensued over slate sidewalk that broke during the tropical storm last August due to falling trees.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public. Brian Munroe of 313 Franklin Place, Plainfield thinks the owner of 801 Park Avenue has abandoned the property. Commission member Jan Jasper entered the meeting room at 7:44 PM; Vice Chairman Michelson swore in Ms. Jasper to fill an unexpired 4 year term as a regular member of the HPC. Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public session of the meeting.

After further discussion, Vice Chairman Michelson made a motion to carry the application to March 27, 2012, with no further extensions; Ms. Turner Kavanaugh seconded the motion and there was no discussion. The Commission voted six (6) in favor of the motion with Mr. Ferrara voting against the motion.

After the Commission voted, Applicant Lamont Gibson entered the meeting room. Chairwoman Gurshman reopened the application hearing. Mr. Gibson of 448 Cliff Road, Sewaren, introduced himself and informed the Commission that the broken sidewalk will be remedied quickly because his insurance claim has just been processed- the sidewalk should be repaired within the next 30 days. With regards to the roof cornice, Mr. Gibson told the Commission that he has a carpenter lined up to do the work; he will be making wood repairs as close as possible to the original work. Vice Chairman Michelson asked Mr. Gibson to provide the Commission with an agreed design for cornice repair. Vice Chairman Michelson added that Mr. Gibson has 2 years to complete the project; the Commission just wants to close this case. Mr. Westlake suggested that Mr. Gibson take a good photograph of the existing cornice, and have his carpenter build a mock-up; the overall cornice design is fairly simple and a good carpenter can easily build a mock-up. By voice vote, the Commission and the Applicant agreed to carry application HPC 10-06 to March 27, 2012.

**2. HPC 11-08; 543-573 West Eighth Street; Block 761, Lot 1; Van Wyck Brooks Historic District
Applicant: Phyllis Novello & Cena Glaser; Owner: Phyllis Novello**

The Historic Preservation Commission has carried this application since October 2011. The Applicant requested (via email) that the hearing be carried to April 24, 2012. The application is for the installation of new wood or metal grids (charcoal grey color) to be placed on the outside of vinyl / twin casement windows in the sun room of the Van Wyck Brooks House facing Plainfield Avenue. Chairwoman Gurshman informed Commission members that it was recently discovered that the Applicant has removed back doors that were visible from Stelle Avenue- the Zoning Officer will cite the Applicant for this action. Pictures of the door replacement were passed around for each Commission member to observe. Vice Chairman Michelson said he would recommend carrying the application for one more month- March 27, not April 24. Mr. Westlake asked if the Commission can be preemptive by reminding the Applicant not to remove any remaining original windows and doors.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the hearing to the public for comment. April Stefel of 935 Madison Avenue informed the Commission that neighbors have spoken with the police and the police agreed to act on construction work performed over weekends without a permit. Ms. Stefel added that if the Commission does not do something about this case, they will have lost whatever power they assumed they had. Richard Lear of 925 Madison Avenue took pictures of the art studio building and laundry house on the Van Wyck Brooks property. Mr. Lear commented that the Applicant / Owners have no respect for the Historic Preservation Commission. Mr. Lear wanted to know how the Historic Preservation Commission can get "teeth" and enforce the ordinance. Ms. Hunton said the HPC is not the enforcement entity; that falls under the jurisdiction of the Zoning Officer. Brian Munroe of 313 Franklin Place cited from the Land Use Ordinance the Commission's ability to fine property owners for ongoing violations. Larry Quirk of 967 Madison Avenue said he thought the HPC was very clear as to what to expect from the Applicant – a proposal without vinyl windows, possibly metal windows. Mr.

Quirk asked if the HPC denies the adjournment request, what are the next steps? The Van Wyck Brooks District is willing to put pressure on whoever to get the Applicant fined; where should the District aim their efforts? If the HPC decides to deny adjournment, or give another month, or if the application is denied, what happens next? Barbara Kerr of 915 Madison Avenue requested that the HPC be pre-emptive about the remaining original windows on the building. Gerry Heydt of 915 Madison Avenue recalled that at the October 2011 meeting the Applicant said the Design guidelines said that reasonable costs may prohibit someone from duplicating an original window- can this be changed or revised to be stronger? Ms. Turner-Kavanaugh said the word "may" is important and gives the Commission flexibility when reviewing an application. Mr. Quirk asked if the owner is being cited for the removal and replacement of the back doors? Mr. Bauman said a citation will be issued by the Zoning Officer.

Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting. Chairwoman Gurshman informed the Commission that they can choose to deny the application as it stands today, or carry it to March 27. The Applicant requested that the application be carried to April 24 but the Commission did not support a two month extension of time. Vice Chairman Michelson said if the HPC denies tonight, it can be appealed; he supports a one month extension to March 27. Mr. Favazzo also supports a one month extension, but it should be made clear to the Owner that she is not to touch any more windows or doors. Ms. Turner Kavanaugh made a motion to carry application HPC 11-08 to the March 27, 2012 meeting and that no further adjournments will be granted; the owners are to be notified of the adjournment and shall be told to cease all activity on the exterior of the house and accessory buildings. Vice Chairman Michelson asked that the motion be amended to include notification to all three owners- Cena Glaser, Phyllis Novello, and John Novello. Ms. Turner Kavanaugh agreed to the amended motion, and Vice Chairman Michelson seconded the amended motion. Discussion on the motion concerned how to word the statement requesting that the owners not remove original windows or doors from the house or accessory buildings. By voice vote, the HPC unanimously agreed to carry the application to March 27, 2012; the hearing will take place at the Plainfield City Hall Library Meeting Room, at 7:30 PM- no additional notice is required.

IV. New Business

1. Chairwoman Gurshman announced that the Planning Board Chairman has called for a joint meeting between the Planning Board, Zoning Board, and Historic Preservation Commission. The meeting is set for Saturday morning, March 24; additional details will soon follow.

Ms. Turner Kavanaugh left the meeting at 9:24 PM

2. Consideration of Proposal for Historic Preservation Consultant Services for 2012: Gail Hunton submitted a proposal for historic preservation consulting services for 2012 in an amount not to exceed \$3,500.00. Scope of services include: attend HPC meetings, provide design review and technical assistance on historic preservation, prepare Certificates of Appropriateness, prepare nominations for local landmark and historic district designations, review City Hall restoration plans, and provide assistance for historic preservation matters to the City as needed. Larry Ferrara made a motion that the Historic Preservation Commission hire Gail L. Hunton for historic preservation services for 2012 as outlined in a Scope of Services dated January 21, 2012 at a rate of \$95.00 per hour, not to exceed \$3,500.00. Mr. Favazzo seconded the motion. There being no discussion, the motion was passed unanimously by voice vote.

3. **Adoption of the 2011 Year End Report for the Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission**

Vice Chairman Michelson made a motion to approve the revised 2011 HPC Year End Report and that it be distributed to the Mayor, City Council, and Planning Board. Mr. Ferraro seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

V. Unfinished Business

1. Revisions to Certificate of Compliance to Reflect Historic District / Landmark Status: carried to 3/27/12

VI. Staff Report

1. Properties in Historic Districts / Historic Sites with Code / Maintenance Violations. Mr. Bauman provided the HPC with an update on each of the properties listed: 810 Central Avenue, 957 Central Avenue, 200 East Ninth Street, 307 Franklin Place, 340 Franklin Place, 900 Madison Avenue, 117 North Avenue, 187 North Avenue, 715 Ravine Road, 850 Terrill Road, 811 Third Place, 512 Watchung Avenue, and 563 West Eighth Street.

Mr. Westlake mentioned the status of the porch work at 811 Third Place. The porch ceiling repairs were made with plywood rather than tongue and groove as discussed at the 1/24 HPC meeting. The base of the porch columns were inappropriately replaced, the porch roof is sagging terribly, and the hollow wood columns were closed up. Mr. Bauman offered to prepare a follow up letter to the owner and realtor informing them of the disparities cited by Mr. Westlake.

2. 2012 Grant Rounds: Certified Local Government & NJ Historic Trust. Mr. Bauman informed the HPC that there are several grant opportunities available for Certified Local Governments like Plainfield. Mr. Favazzo and Mr. Bauman agreed to work together on gathering information on submitting a CLG grant for another historic preservation workshop session.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, Ms. Jasper made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Favazzo, all voted in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 9:51 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Bauman

Scott Bauman, AICP, PP
Principal Planner / HPC Secretary
Plainfield Planning Division
Prepared: March 14, 2012
HPC Approved: March 27, 2012