



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



Adrian O. Mapp, Mayor

William H. Michelson, Chairman
 Lawrence T. Quirk, Vice-Chairman

MEETING MINUTES- PLAINFIELD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 28, 2017, 7:30 PM, CITY HALL 1ST FLOOR LIBRARY, 515 WATCHUNG AVENUE, PLAINFIELD, NJ

Call to Order and Public Notice

Chairman Michelson called the meeting to order at 7:34 P.M. and in conformance with the Open Public Meetings Act read aloud the following: "In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, this is a regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Plainfield. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the annual meeting schedule was published in the Courier-News, and copies of the meeting schedule are posted in the offices of the City Clerk and Planning Division. I ask that everyone including Commission members please turn their cell phones to silence or vibrate and not take or send any electronic messages during this meeting."

Roll Call

2017 Historic Preservation Commission Name, Class Designation (Term Ends)	1/24/17	2/28/17	3/28/17	4/25/17	5/23/17	6/27/17	7/25/17	8/22/17	9/26/17	10/24/17	11/14/17	12/19/17
John Favazzo, Class A (12/31/2017)	X	X										
Bill Garrett, Class B (12/31/2019)		X										
Sandra Gurshman, Class B (12/31/2018)	X	X										
William Michelson, Class B (12/31/2018)	X	X										
Lawrence Quirk, Class A (12/31/2017)	X	X										
Gary Schneider, Class C (12/31/2019)	X											
Reginald Thomas, Class A (12/31/2018)	X	X										
Regular Member #8 VACANT (4 year term)												
Regular Member #9 VACANT (4 year term)												
Alternate Member #1 VACANT (2 year term)												
Alternate Member #2 VACANT (2 year term)												

Also present: HPC Consultant Barton Ross, and HPC Secretary Scott Bauman

Presentation of January 24, 2017, Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Gurshman made a motion to adopt the January 24, 2017, meeting minutes as presented; Vice-Chairman Quirk seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

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New Business

1. Certificate of Appropriateness Application HPC 2016-17 (Second Hearing)
777 Belvidere Avenue. Block 904, Lot 10. Netherwood Heights Historic District
Dr. Caroline McCagg- Applicant & Property Owner

Commissioner Thomas recused himself from the hearing, as the applicant is a former client of his. The applicant was not present. Chairman Michelson informed the Commission that the applicant is considering removing the fence, eliminating the need for a Certificate of Appropriateness and zoning variances. Mr. Bauman offered to prepare a letter to the applicant requesting that the fence be removed by March 24, 2017, four (4) days before the March 28 Historic Commission meeting.

Chairman Michelson opened the meeting to the public; no one commented on the application and Chairman Michelson closed the public portion of the meeting. Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Garrett, to carry the application to March 28, 2017 at which time it will be dismissed with prejudice if the applicant does not appear or contact the Commission; the motion passed unanimously with Commissioner Thomas abstaining.

John Favazzo (YES)	Bill Garrett (ABSENT)	Sandy Gurshman (YES)	William Michelson (YES)
Lawrence Quirk (YES)	Gary Schneider (YES)	Reginald Thomas (ABSTAIN)	

Old Business

1. Historic Preservation Survey for District Expansions

Chairman Michelson reported that he is working with Planning Director William Nierstedt on the wording needed for the request for proposals (RFP). The city cannot proceed without an RFP - it is a federal requirement. As per the request of the State Historic Planning Office, Chairman Michelson is compiling a list of the properties that are part of the survey.

Discussion

1. Informational Hearing: Site Improvements to the Plainfield Public Library

Commissioner Gurshman recused herself from the informational hearing. Tina Marie Doody and Peter Rajcevic of the Plainfield Public Library, 800 Park Avenue, introduced themselves to the Commission. Mr. Rajcevic told the Commission that the Library is proposing two (2) projects - exterior HVAC enclosure, and expansion of the stair and ramp repair and refinishing.

Mr. Rajcevic said the library is undergoing internal renovations, and there is a need for more air conditioning capacity which requires a new condensing unit; the condensing units are outside, near the side of the building that faces the corner of Ninth Street and Park Avenue, across from the Antique Castle. Mr. Rajcevic distributed to Commission members a handout with a picture of the existing screening, and a computer-aided drawing showing the new screen extension. The screening material is made of aluminum. Chairman Michelson requested that they find out if it is feasible to make the top of the panels be level with each other rather than having different grade levels.

Mr. Rajcevic said the second project for new stairs along Park Avenue involves \$80,000 in CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) federal funds and is on a tight time schedule. The project consists of HVAC enclosure, capping with bluestone slabs the concrete stairs around the building on the side facing

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Park Avenue and part of the side facing West Ninth Street, on either side of the service ramp. The stairs facing College Place and West Eighth Street are not part of this project for now. Mr. Rajcevic opined that bluestone capping is less expensive than constructing new stairs and he would love the stairs to be granite but it would be cost prohibitive. Mr. Rajcevic added that the stairs are actually the ceiling of the lower level, and there would be a high risk of damage if they tried to remove and replace the steps.

Vice-Chairman Quirk asked Mr. Rajcevic to bring a bluestone sample to the next meeting. A discussion ensued over how the cap would look over existing concrete steps, and whether the slabs would be flat or irregular. Commission members reviewed site plan and construction details prepared by Arcari + Iovino Architects, PC, dated 02.03.2017.

Commissioner Thomas requested that a full scope of work be part of any application submission. Vice-Chairman Quirk asked about the new signage for the building; Mr. Rajcevic said that project along with a flagpole and ramps are part of a second project and are not part of this application. Vice-Chairman Quirk commented that he was having trouble seeing the steps as bluestone, and should funding be delayed on a phased project, there could be a mismatch in materials on the stairs. Commissioner Favazzo agreed with Commissioner Quirk and added his concerns over water and ice issues. Commissioner Favazzo added that the concrete building is a warm shade, and the bluestone has a cool shade. A discussion ensued over different materials that could be used to cap the steps.

Chairman Michelson opened the meeting to the public; John Schunck of 114 Elm Place, Cliffwood Beach, commented on the lifespan of bluestone versus concrete. No one else from the public commented; Chairman Michelson closed the meeting to the public. Mr. Rajcevic and Ms. Doody thanked the Commission for their time; they anticipate making a formal Certificate of Appropriateness application in time for the March 28 meeting.

2. Informational Hearing: Window Replacement at 818-20 2nd Place, Block 829, Lot 6

Joy Spriggs, Esq. of 201 East 5th Street, introduced herself as an attorney representing the property owner; John Schunck of 114 Elm Place, Cliffwood Beach, introduced himself as a general contractor working for the property owner. Chairman Michelson informed the Commission that window removal occurred at the property without approval, he visited the property, spoke with Mr. Schunck, and invited him to the meeting. Some windows replaced were vinyl, and others were original wood windows.

Ms. Spriggs said her client purchased the property on October 11, 2016 as a foreclosure; she distributed pictures of the building to the Commission. The windows on the second floor were already vinyl windows, and two (2) wood windows were replaced with vinyl windows on the first floor. Ms. Spriggs added that the owner did not know the property was in a historic district. Ms. Spriggs displayed pictures of the work being done to the inside of the building.

Chairman Michelson asked how many windows altogether were there; Ms. Spriggs said 41 windows total, 43 including basement windows. Ms. Spriggs continued by saying there is a great cost differential between wood and vinyl windows- \$900 for wood windows, and \$120 for vinyl windows. When asked if any wood windows have not been removed yet, Mr. Schunck said there were two (2) small windows, a third in disrepair; overall at least 30 vinyl windows were replaced before work stopped. Mr. Schunck added that

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there were no original windows on the second floor. Chairman Michelson asked how many wood replacement windows can the owner manage; Ms. Spriggs said she has the authority from the owner to commit to installing wood windows on the front façade.

Vice-Chairman Quirk commented that the side bay windows are significant to the building. Mr. Schunck suggested instead to install shutters on the upper floor windows so that the front façade looks original. Vice-Chairman Quirk said he would prefer wood windows on the bays rather than additional wood shutters on the upper floor. Mr. Schunck reminded the Commission that the bay windows were originally vinyl and replaced with new vinyl windows. A discussion ensued over the muntin bar patterns on the wood and vinyl windows.

Chairman Michelson thanked Ms. Spriggs and Mr. Schunck for attending the informational session; he suggested to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness for window replacement. Mr. Ross asked Ms. Spriggs to include spec sheet / cut sheet for the replacement windows.

Chairman Michelson opened the meeting to the public; no one from the public commented. Chairman Michelson closed the meeting to the public. Ms. Spriggs and Mr. Schunck thanked the Commission for their time; they anticipate making a formal Certificate of Appropriateness application in time for the March 28 meeting.

3. **Discussion: 852 Terrill Road, Block 921, Lot 15.2- Request to Delist Property as a Local Historic Landmark**
Chairman Michelson said the city wants to sell the property at auction; the building is gone, the barn is still there, and the historic designation runs with the land. Chairman Michelson said he would like to see the barn kept and restored, but the city is concerned about restrictions on the property. Vice-Chairman Quirk said it is time to move along, Commissioner Favazzo agreed. Commissioner Garrett suggested putting the city in touch with someone who could recycle the wood from the barn building.

After further discussion, Chairman Michelson agreed to call City Corporation Counsel, requesting him to prepare a Historic Preservation Commission resolution for placement on the March 28, 2017, meeting agenda.

4. **Discussion: Time Within Which Violations Involving Certificates of Appropriateness Must Be Abated**
When the Commission hears CA Applications that are filed because of a violation notice for work that was not approved by the Commission, there is no rule for how much time the owner should be spared from further violation notices. The Commission felt that two (2) years is too long, and six (6) months is more reasonable. The way the Municipal Court and Zoning Officer has been handling this issue is generally appropriate. Chairman Michelson pointed out that the Commission is not the Municipal Court, and that it should not even try to prevent the Judges from applying their discretion. This should be a discussion item, however, when updating the Land Use Ordinance.

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Reports

1. Community Outreach Committee

A. Annual Combined Board Meeting

Chairman Michelson informed Commissioners he will be participating in the annual combined meeting of the Planning Board, Zoning Board, Historic Preservation Commission, and Shade Tree Commission with the Mayor and several other officials and invited guests. Topics of discussion will include what to do when large houses in historic districts are eyed for non-residential uses, and what to do to publicize Plainfield's historic districts.

B. Historic Preservation Awards Program

The Commission agreed to work on a program to coordinate with Historic Preservation month in May 2017.

C. Newark Walking Tour App

Commissioner Favazzo reported that Prudential funded the walking tour app and it is proprietary and is not an easy app to plug into. After a brief discussion, Commissioners decided not to pursue a walking app tour for downtown Plainfield.

2. Ordinance Review Committee: Chairman Michelson reported no news on updates to the land use ordinance addressing historic preservation.

3. Architectural Review: Mr. Bauman directed the attention of the Commission to their meeting packets where letters approving work not requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness are attached.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Gurshman made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Commissioner Garrett; all voted in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 9:47 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Bauman

Scott Bauman, AICP, PP
Principal Planner / HPC Secretary, Plainfield Planning Division
Prepared: March 9, 2017

Approved by the Historic Preservation Commission: April 25, 2017