



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
MAY 23, 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 7:32 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
Mario Camino, Class A (12/31/2020)	n/a	n/a	n/a	X	X							
Aisha Eustache, Class C (12/31/2020)	n/a	n/a	n/a	X	X							
John Favazzo, Class A (12/31/2017)	X	X	X		X							
Bill Garrett, Class B (12/31/2019)		X	X	X	X							
Sandra Gurshman, Class B (12/31/2018)	X	X	X	X	X							
William Michelson, Class B (12/31/2018)	X	X	X	X	X							
Lawrence Quirk, Class A (12/31/2017)	X	X	X	X	X							
Gary Schneider, Class C (12/31/2019)	X		X		X							
Reginald Thomas, Class A (12/31/2018)	X	X	X	X	X							
Alternate Member #1 VACANT (2 year term)												
Alternate Member #2 VACANT (2 year term)												

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

Presentation of March 28, 2017, Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Gurshman made a motion to approve the March 28, 2017, Historic Preservation Commission meeting minutes as submitted; Commissioner Schneider seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

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Presentation of April 25, 2017, Meeting Minutes

Chairman Michelson noted that a change is needed to the last paragraph on page 5 to read: "Chairman Michelson made a motion to report back to the Zoning Board of Adjustment regarding the use variance, citing no objection to granting a use variance, so long as what the Zoning Board approves is of the same detail that the Historic Preservation Commission approved". Commissioner Thomas made a motion to approve the April 25, 2017, Historic Preservation Commission meeting minutes as amended; Vice-Chairman Quirk seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Presentation of April 25, 2017, Executive Session Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Eustache made a motion to approve the April 25, 2017, Historic Preservation Commission executive session meeting minutes as submitted; Commissioner Gurshman seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

New Business

1. Certificate of Appropriateness Application HPC 2017-04

957 Central Avenue. Block 759, Lot 13. Van Wyck Brooks Historic District

Applicant & Property Owner- Joshwa Money School, LLC

Commissioner Gurshman recused herself from the hearing, as she is a property owner within 200 feet of 957 Central Avenue. Applicant and property owner Jon Steingraber of 52 Spring Valley Road, Morristown representing Joshwa Money School, LLC updated the Commission on the progress he made since the April 25 meeting.

Regarding the first floor front door, Mr. Steingraber said he would fix the original door and reinstall it with new hardware. Regarding the light fixtures hanging from the wrap-around front porch ceiling, Mr. Steingraber said there are twelve (12) fixtures and he offered to remove a couple or change the lightbulbs to a lower wattage. With regards to the front yard floodlights, Mr. Steingraber counted six (6) and offered to remove them; Chairman Michelson commented that the floodlight bases are made of cement and contain visible product literature- removing them does not require approval.

Mr. Steingraber said he wants to reinstall the original second floor French doors and install spindles on the balcony. Mr. Steingraber brought in a sample spindle for the Commission to view- he would use this spindle for the balcony and railings will be the same as the ones found on the front porch. Mr. Steingraber will install tempered glass to the French doors before reinstalling them. Mr. Steingraber commented that he wants to leave the parapet walls in place, believing it is safer, even though he viewed a vintage picture of the house that did not show parapet walls on the sides of the balcony.

Chairman Michelson opened the meeting to the Commissioners for questions. Vice-Chairman Quirk asked Mr. Steingraber how he intends to address building code concerns for the second floor doors and balcony; Mr. Steingraber said the Construction Official said if he has a balcony, then he needs to have a door with tempered glass. Vice-Chairman Quirk asked if the doors would be operable; Mr. Steingraber replied yes. Vice-Chairman Quirk asked if the baluster sample he provided is the same that would be used across the front of the balcony; Mr. Steingraber said he would use the balusters if he were asked to remove the parapets. Vice-Chairman Quirk conformed that the first floor front door will utilize new hardware and that Mr. Steingraber will reduce the wattage in the light fixtures hanging in the front porch.

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New Business (continued)

Chairman Michelson asked about the flooring of the balcony; Mr. Steingraber said the flooring is flat roof rubber membrane, pitched slightly for drainage purposes. Commissioner Camino asked Mr. Steingraber about the balcony design and how to connect the spindles to the walls and how to match the railing height with the parapet walls. Commissioner Thomas commented on the hardware available for the front door and the balcony railing/parapet wall design. A discussion ensued over the type of hardware for the first floor front door.

Chairman Michelson asked about the driveway across the northern part of the property and parking lot in the northeast corner; while it was not part of the original application the Commission can accept an oral application on this matter. Mr. Steingraber said he would remove the concrete curb stops and the gravel parking area and plant grass seed in the area, but he would like to keep the concrete pad suitable for parking for one (1) vehicle. Commissioners expressed approval with Mr. Steingraber's proposal.

Chairman Michelson opened the meeting to the public. Arne Aakre of 915 Madison Avenue said he is glad Mr. Steingraber is repairing the first floor front door and using balusters to create a safe way to use the roof. Mr. Aakre cited concern over the baluster setup citing new construction has to be code compliant and in this case it would be 42 inches off the rooftop and balusters spaced no greater than 4 inches apart. Mr. Aakre is concerned the balcony proposal will not meet the building code- he should have a drawing, the building department will require one as well.

Sandy Gurshman of 957 Madison Avenue said the Commission approves tiny projects requiring sketches and the balcony is a significant portion of the house; she does not see how the Commission can approve the balcony without drawings. Commissioner Thomas suggested a caveat to receive a sketch before issuance of any Certificate of Appropriateness. Chairman Michelson commented that Ms. Gurshman's point is well taken and the balcony issue is complicating the applicant's goal of getting a Certificate of Occupancy for a one family dwelling.

Chairman Michelson closed the meeting to the public. Chairman Michelson wants the applicant to address the parking lot reduction via a sketch. Commissioner Thomas wants to see a sketch of the balcony rail. Vice-Chairman Quirk said he prefers a sketch showing an operable door with railings on the balcony. Commissioner Schneider commented that if the applicant had drawings made up they would be done with his application by now. Chairman Michelson suggested bifurcating with the balcony as a separate matter.

Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion to bifurcate the issue of the second floor balcony on the Central Avenue side, and to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for: 1) existing new front doors to be removed and the applicant is to repair, repaint, and reinstall the original front doors with hardware specifications to be approved before installation; 2) the twelve (12) hanging light fixtures on the front porch can remain permitted with no more than four (4) bulbs up to 40 watts each; 3) existing floodlight bases in the Stelle Avenue and Central Avenue sides of the property to be removed; 4) remove concrete parking bumpers and gravel parking lot on northeast side and replace with grass, and keep the concrete parking space previously used as a handicap access space, contingent with applicant providing a sketch of the property. Commissioner Eustache seconded the motion and the Commission voted unanimously by roll call vote.

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New Business (continued)

Mario Camino (YES)	Aisha Eustache (YES)	John Favazzo (YES)
Bill Garrett (YES)	Sandy Gurshman (YES)	William Michelson (YES)
Lawrence Quirk (YES)	Gary Schneider (YES)	Reginald Thomas (YES)

Chairman Michelson said the faster the applicant gets the property sketch and door hardware specifications to the city, the quicker the city can turn around the Certificate of Appropriateness; the balcony issue is carried to June 27 and the Commission will need sketches. He suggested the applicant talk to the construction official prior to submitting sketches. Mr. Steingraber said given the vote, he will put back the original door with tempered glass- the door will be inoperable and there will be no balcony. Mr. Steingraber withdrew the balcony portion of his application.

2. Certificate of Appropriateness Application HPC 2017-06
417 Stelle Avenue. Block 755, Lot 4. Van Wyck Brooks Historic District
Applicant & Property Owner- Alexandro Navarrete

Mr. Bauman informed the Commission that the applicant has served notice and the Commission has jurisdiction to proceed. Alexandro Navarrete of 417 Stelle Avenue introduced himself to the Commission. Chairman Michelson asked Mr. Navarrete to describe the work that was done without approvals. Mr. Navarrete said he installed brick pavers along the driveway perimeter, constructed and installed a brick mailbox structure in the front yard, installed brick pavers in a half-circle design at the front and base of the driveway, installed a brick paver walkway leading from the driveway to the side of the house, and installed brick pavers in the public sidewalk along the right-of-way.

Vice-Chairman Quirk asked what material was removed from the public sidewalk area to make way for the brick pavers; Mr. Navarrete said he removed asphalt and cracked bluestone before installing the new brick pavers. Vice-Chairman Quirk said he does not like the pavers in the sidewalk area, the brick mailbox structure, or the half-circle paver designs as they are out of character with the neighborhood; he would like to see the two half circles removed, the brick mailbox structure removed, and the pavers in the sidewalk removed and bluestone installed.

Commissioner Camino said he likes the half-circle pavers but he does not like what was done to the public sidewalk area. Mr. Navarrete commented that there are driveways along Madison Avenue that are fully paved with brick pavers and he does not know why the half circle design is an issue. Commissioner Schneider said he does not mind the circles but he does not like the mailbox or sidewalk area; Commissioners Garrett and Eustache agreed with Commissioner Schneider. Mr. Navarrete asked the Commission what kind of mailbox they would prefer; Vice-Chairman Quirk said a large mailbox attached to the house by the front door is fine. Chairman Michelson said he has a Victorian style mailbox bolted to the floor of his porch.

Chairman Michelson opened the meeting to the public. Arne Aakre of 915 Madison Avenue complimented Mr. Navarrete on saving the house and doing the work that he has done. Cynthia Smith of the Plainfield Public Works & Urban Development said that the owner needs a street opening permit for the work and that portions of Stelle Avenue are scheduled to be re-paved soon. Chairman Michelson closed the public portion of the meeting.

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New Business (continued)

After further discussion, Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow for after-the-fact approval for the removal of the brick mailbox structure and the removal of an inlaid brick half-round apron from the end of the driveway; approval for the replacement of brick pavers at the sidewalk and driveway apron with bluestone slabs of appropriate thickness and appearance to match what previously existed; approval of an already installed half-round brick inlaid paver pattern near the home's archway and a brick paver pedestrian walkway which extends to the left of the driveway to the side of the house; and approval of brick curbing and pavers which run along the edges of the driveway and any new asphalt paving as required to resurface the driveway. Commissioner Schneider seconded the motion and the Commission voted unanimously by roll call vote.

Mario Camino (YES)

Aisha Eustache (YES)

John Favazzo (YES)

Bill Garrett (YES)

Sandy Gurshman (YES)

William Michelson (YES)

Lawrence Quirk (YES)

Gary Schneider (YES)

Reginald Thomas (YES)

3. Certificate of Appropriateness Application HPC 2017-09

Hillside Avenue Resurfacing. Hillside Avenue Historic District, Putnam Watchung Historic District Applicant & Property Owner- City of Plainfield

Mr. Douglas Johnson, PE Project Engineer for Remington, Vernick & Arango Engineers, 101 Route 130, Cinnaminson, introduced himself to the Commission as the consulting engineer for the roadway resurfacing project. Mr. Johnson said the scope of work is roadway resurfacing of Hillside Avenue between Randolph Road and Berckman Street- 5,500 linear feet. The project goes through the Hillside Avenue Historic District and the Putnam Watchung Historic District. Hillside Avenue has a combination of concrete curb and sidewalk, bluestone curb and sidewalk, and sections with no curbing. To improve drainage the city is proposing having curbs and gutters the entire length, and replacing 2x2 inlets with new 4-foot wide inlets. The corners will have ADA compliant ramps where needed, signage will be replaced, new street signs will be installed on corners, and dead/dying trees or trees in conflict with the project will be removed and replaced at a 2 to 1 ratio. Chairman Michelson commented that of the 18 trees proposed for removal, he agrees with three. Mr. Johnson said he has an appointment pending with the Chairman of the Shade Tree Commission to discuss specific tree removals and plantings in the project area.

Chairman Michelson asked if all sidewalks are being replaced; Mr. Johnson said only driveway apron sidewalks or heaving areas- concrete will be replaced with concrete and bluestone will be re-set or salvaged bluestone will be used. Chairman Michelson asked if the roadway will change grade in places; Mr. Johnson said they are not cutting deep or raising the roadway but there will be an inch or two in grade change for drainage purposes. When asked about the ADA sidewalks and curb cuts, Mr. Johnson said the state and federal guidelines require a detectable warning surface and certain grade guidelines. The warning surface will be yellow in color as yellow is the last color lost to those who are vision impaired.

Commissioner Gurshman informed Mr. Johnson that the city has four (4) concrete tints so the new concrete used in the historic districts will not be bright white. Mr. Johnson said tinting the entire project would cost \$1.7 million without tint, and with the entire roadway concrete tinted it will cost an additional \$400,000, which includes 11,000 linear feet, driveway aprons and ADA ramps.

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New Business (continued)

Mr. Johnson summarized the tint costs in the following manner:

- 4 inch sidewalk cost \$95 to tint 70 square yards of concrete
- 6 inch sidewalk cost \$110 to tint 85 square yards of concrete
- Curbing and gutters are regularly \$45 per linear foot; with tint \$70 per linear foot
- Tint will increase the cost by 25 percent

Commissioner Thomas said that the model is to tint concrete in the historic districts and he estimates to tint the concrete in the historic district only will increase the project cost by \$200,000 up to \$1.9 million from \$1.7 million. Vice-Chairman Quirk agreed with Commissioner Thomas- tinting concrete is required in the historic districts and not having this as part of the estimate is a mistake. Chairman Michelson added that the tinting policy goes back a few years, and over time, all of the concrete in historic districts will be tinted; the fact that this roadway improvement started with an estimate that does not reflect tinting is disturbing. Mr. Johnson said the estimates are preliminary for discussion, not final.

Commissioner Gurshman asked Mr. Johnson what the city plans to do with salvageable pieces of bluestone; Mr. Johnson responded by saying salvageable bluestone will be stored at the Public Works Yard for future use. Chairman Michelson added that the city is starting a district expansion survey and that he would like to see the concrete tinted in those areas that are part of the roadway project as well.

Chairman Michelson mentioned the desire to use more decorative sign plates for street signs in historic districts, he would like to see an effort made on this, and he will follow up with Mr. Johnson with further information on how other historic districts worked with the city on the purchase and installation of street signs.

Chairman Michelson noted that no one from the public was present so there was no need to open the meeting to the public. Chairman Michelson made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following aspects of the project. The Certificate of Appropriateness covers parts of the Putnam-Watchung and Hillside Area Historic District, plus two (2) blocks on the south end of Hillside Avenue. The Certificate of Appropriateness shall include the following conditions: 1) new concrete for sidewalks, ADA ramps, and curbing shall be tinted in the historic districts; tinting material shall consist of pre-approved tints; 2) where removal of existing trees or the planting of new trees is required, applicant will select and plant trees and shrubs in consultation with the Shade Tree Commission for appropriate size, species and locations; 3) applicant shall reset all bluestone pavers in-kind, all discarded bluestone shall be salvaged and donated to the City Department of Public Works; and 4) applicant shall coordinate the replacement of decorative street corner name signs with the Planning Division to obtain appropriate details, specifications and identify funding sources for the purchase of the signs. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and the Commission voted unanimously by roll call vote.

Mario Camino (YES)
Bill Garrett (YES)
Lawrence Quirk (YES)

Aisha Eustache (YES)
Sandy Gurshman (YES)
Gary Schneider (YES)

John Favazzo (YES)
William Michelson (YES)
Reginald Thomas (YES)

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New Business (continued)

4. Certificate of Appropriateness Application HPC 2017-08

1020 Hillside Avenue. Block 820, Lot 5. Hillside Avenue

Applicant & Property Owner- Frank and Alexandra Pascale

Sean McKenna of 1220 Forest Hill Road, Plainfield, introduced himself to the Commission as an acting agent for the applicant and property owners Frank and Alexandra Pascale of 1020 Hillside Avenue. Mr. McKenna provided Chairman Michelson with a letter signed by Mr. & Mrs. Pascale authorizing Mr. McKenna to speak on their behalf.

Mr. McKenna reminded the Commission that on April 25, 2017, the Commission approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for a 6' high board on board cedar fence with lattice top to enclose an in-ground swimming pool. Mr. McKenna explained that the applicants had issues with the pool vendor and they have changed pool companies and pool design. Mr. McKenna distributed a picture of the pool to the Commissioners. The new pool is 19'x35'. The applicant is requesting a larger fence perimeter to 60'x40'; the Commission previously approved a 20'x30' fence perimeter.

Commissioners discussed whether or not the request requires a new application and hearing notice, or if the previous Certificate of Appropriateness can be amended. After discussion, the Commission decided that the Certificate of Appropriateness could be amended without further notice to property owners within 200 feet of 1020 Hillside Avenue.

Chairman Michelson noted that no one from the public was present so there was no need to open the meeting to the public. Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion to amend the previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness to take out references to the perimeter of the fencing used to enclose the in-ground pool. Commissioner Gurshman seconded the motion and the Commission voted unanimously by roll call vote.

Mario Camino (YES)

Aisha Eustache (YES)

John Favazzo (YES)

Bill Garrett (YES)

Sandy Gurshman (YES)

William Michelson (YES)

Lawrence Quirk (YES)

Gary Schneider (YES)

Reginald Thomas (YES)

5. Resolution of Appreciation for Services Rendered- Jan Jasper

On a motion made by Commissioner Gurshman, seconded by Commissioner Garrett and approved unanimously by voice vote, the Commission voted to approve the following Resolution of Appreciation for former Commissioner Jan Jasper:

PLAINFIELD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR SERVICES RENDERED

WHEREAS, Jan Jasper was appointed to the Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission on January 15, 2009, and served through December 31, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Jan Jasper served on the Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission with commitment, dedication, and demonstrated a progressive attitude, insight, and ability in the consideration of historic preservation policies and objectives of the City of Plainfield; and

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New Business (continued)

WHEREAS, Jan Jasper served with dedication and commitment, taking on assignments in addition to the monthly Commission meetings, and earning the high regard and recognition of all who worked with her; and

WHEREAS, Jan Jasper helped to provide outreach to home owners in historic districts; her concern for public outreach and an online presence of the Historic Preservation Commission on the internet established a standard of integrity and excellence toward which others might strive; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLAINFIELD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:

That this Commission does unanimously express its wish for good health and happiness in the future for Jan Jasper; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission appreciates Jan Jasper's dedicated service, that this resolution be spread upon the meeting minutes, and that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Jan Jasper.

The foregoing is a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Plainfield at its meeting on May 23, 2017.

Discussion

1. Preservation Awards for Property

Chairman Michelson asked Commissioner Camino to contact a candidate for the preservation award on behalf of the Historic Preservation Commission; Commissioner Camino agreed.

2. Meeting Packets

Commission members discussed the timeliness of receiving meeting packets, and whether improvements are needed to receive the packets earlier.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Commissioner Eustache; all voted in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 10:35 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Bauman

Scott Bauman, AICP, PP

Principal Planner / HPC Secretary, Plainfield Planning Division

Prepared: May 30, 2017

Approved by the Historic Preservation Commission: June 27, 2017