



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 27, 2018, 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 7:37 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

2018 Historic Preservation Commission Name, Class Designation (Term Ends)	1/23/18	2/27/18	3/27/18	4/24/18	5/22/18	6/26/18	7/24/18	8/28/18	9/25/18	10/23/18	11/27/18	12/18/18
Mario Camino, Class A (12/31/2020)	X	X										
John Favazzo, Class A (12/31/2017)	X	X										
William T. Garrett, Class B (12/31/2019)	X	X										
Sandra Gurshman, Class B (12/31/2018)	X	X										
William H. Michelson, Class B (12/31/2018)	X	X										
Lawrence T. Quirk, Class A (12/31/2017)	X	X										
Gary F. Schneider, Class C (12/31/2019)	X	X										
Reginald Thomas, Class A (12/31/2018)	X											
Regular Member 9 VACANT (unexp. term ends 12/31/2020)												
Alternate Member 1 VACANT (2 year term)												
Alternate Member 2 VACANT (2 year term)												

Also present: Historic Preservation Consultant Barton Ross, and Principal Planner Scott Bauman

Presentation of January 23, 2018, Meeting Minutes

Mr. Bauman requested that the Commission carry this agenda item to the March 27 meeting. Commissioner Gurshman made a motion to carry the presentation of the January 23, 2018, meeting minutes to the March 27, 2018, meeting; Commissioner Schneider seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

New Business

1. Certificate of Appropriateness Application HPC 2018-03. Applicant- City of Plainfield

930 Putnam Avenue. Block 642, Lot 5. Putnam Watchung Historic District

City Engineer Drew DiSessa of Pennoni Associates, 24 Commerce Street, Suite 300, Newark introduced himself to the Commission. Architect Kenneth Gruskin of 294 Morris Avenue, Springfield, and City Director of Administration and Finance Ron West also introduced themselves to the Commission.

Mr. DiSessa informed the Commission that the city intends to renovate the Dudley House; the city received a grant from the NJ Department of Community Affairs to renovate the building. The renovation will result in a dorm room style living arrangement for up to 18 homeless veterans, and improvements to the building's exterior. The city is receiving bids now, the plans were submitted to the Commission, and Mr. DiSessa is seeking the Commission's feedback. Chairman Michelson added that the Commission will not just submit feedback, the city is under the same obligation as a resident to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness. Chairman Michelson informed Mr. DiSessa that the Commission has no jurisdiction over the interior or mechanicals.

Mr. Kenneth Gruskin introduced himself as the architect who designed the renovation plans. Mr. Gruskin informed the Commission that the interior is gutted, outside work will consist of windows, painting, removing dead landscaping, and performing light repairs to the exterior. No new landscaping at this time. The city will add an accessible lift; ADA requires ramps but the city is asking for a lift. The Building Department or the Department of Community Affairs make the final decision. The front door is being replaced as well. The roof overhang, kitchen ductwork, and select wood siding on the upper level to be replaced with three coats of stucco; the rest of the façade will be cleaned, scraped, sanded, and painted. Windows will be replaced but will keep the wood frame. A discussion ensued over the number of window panes that are appropriate for the replacement windows. Old fencing will be removed from the property; no new fencing planned at this time.

Vice-Chairman Quirk asked if any signage was proposed; Mr. DiSessa said no signs are proposed now but there may be one in the future. Vice-Chairman Quirk asked questions about the status of two small windows on the west elevation and asked if a paint scheme was picked out yet; Mr. DiSessa said a paint scheme has not been picked.

Chairman Michelson asked why the small roof over the first floor rear entrance is being removed; Mr. Gruskin said the roof is in disrepair, and it does not serve any purpose- its removal helps clean up the building's exterior. Chairman Michelson said he liked the idea of removing the third floor siding and replacing it with stucco.

Commissioner Favazzo asked Mr. Gruskin for additional information about the replacement windows. Mr. Gruskin said the windows are MIWD Series 1500, vinyl double hung, no grids. Commissioner Garrett asked about doors; Mr. Gruskin said the old metal doors will be changed to new metal doors, keeping the same 6 panel look. When asked about air conditioning, Mr. DiSessa said there will be no air conditioning for the building, just heat. Commissioner Schneider said he likes the plan but not the vinyl windows; Mr. Gruskin said the cost difference between the vinyl windows and windows is about 60-70 percent. HPC Consultant Mr. Ross asked Mr. Gruskin to look into aluminum clad windows. Commissioner Favazzo added the proposed windows do not have a milled finish- they have a very modern look. Mr. Gruskin cited difficulty with funding a project and fitting it into the budget. Mr. Favazzo reiterated that the proposed windows are streamlined and modern looking- the style is correct but it would be like inserting something hyper-modern to an old house.

Chairman Michelson asked about the status of the bidding; Mr. DiSessa said they received one bid and it was over budget, the city is re-evaluating the work and a lot of the work may be done in-house instead of contracting out. When asked by Chairman Michelson what is the dollar difference between the proposed windows and aluminum clad, Mr. Gruskin estimated about a \$200 difference; Mr. Michelson roughly calculated that 38 new windows will cost about \$7,000 more. The Commission collectively agreed that the windows should be upgraded. Messrs. DiSessa and Gruskin agreed to review the window pricing.

Chairman Michelson asked the Applicant to explain the operation, staff, and employees. Mr. Ron West re-introduced himself and informed the Commission that the city will be working with Homefirst who will provide case management services. The city's obligation to the state is a deal with 25 persons over 2 years- this is transitional housing, not permanent housing which can sleep up to 18 homeless, male veterans at any given time. Mr. Gruskin added that the interior layout is like a dormitory- not a place you would live permanently. Chairman Michelson noted a portion of the backyard is used as a parking lot; he asked Mr. DiSessa how many spaces are available and are they needed at all? Mr. DiSessa said the parking lot is not being expanded and it is for 4 or 5 spaces, which includes 1 or 2 spaces for employees.

Chairman Michelson opened the meeting to the public. No one from the public commented on the proposal; Chairman Michelson closed the public portion of the meeting.

Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion to approve the renovations of the Dudley House which include: installing an accessible lift in a location at the southeast corner of the building as shown on the submitted A-2 site plan drawing; repairing the decorative wood porch elements on the north elevation facing Putnam Avenue; installing two new 6-panel metal doors located at the existing front and rear entrances; removing the kitchen exhaust vent at the first floor level on the east elevation; removing the wood siding at the third floor level on all four facades and replacing with smooth stucco siding; removing portions of the shed roof on the east elevation facing Richmond Street, installing new 1/1 high energy aluminum clad wood windows, removing the existing chain link fencing with no replacement at this time, and all other proposed exterior elements as shown in the submitted architectural drawing set prepared by Gruskin Architecture + Design, Inc. and dated 2-27-2018. Commissioner Schneider seconded the motion. Chairman Michelson asked for a roll call vote:

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

**2. Certificate of Appropriateness Application HPC 2017-16. Applicant- Yefry Rodriguez
1213-15 Putnam Avenue. Block 636, Lot 23. Putnam Watchung Historic District**

Mr. Bauman informed the Commission that the applicant served notice and the Commission has jurisdiction. Mr. Wellington Pena of 1215 Putnam Avenue and architect Mr. Raymond Foushee of 324 Chestnut Place, Piscataway, introduced themselves to the Commission. Mr. Pena said he was issued a stop work order for work he performed without a Certificate of Appropriateness including installing fencing, a retaining wall, cement walkway, and removing windows and installing new vinyl replacement windows. The fence material is wood. Vice-Chairman Quirk asked Mr. Wellington, if the work were approved, could he taper the concrete curb at the sidewalk; Mr. Pena said he would. Vice-Chairman Quirk asked, when installing the sidewalk and apron, did you use any concrete tint? Mr. Pena said he did not tint the concrete, he used standard white concrete color. Chairman Michelson said if the cement were approved, it would have to be tinted grey. When asked about window replacement, Mr. Pena said two windows were replaced on the second floor- one over the front door, and the second closest to the driveway. Mr. Pena said the windows he replaced were vinyl, not wooden. Further discussion ensued about the windows- Mr. Pena wants to replace additional windows and the Commission discussed these options with him.

Chairman Michelson asked Mr. Pena if he plans to pave the driveway; Mr. Pena said he is not planning to pave the driveway. Chairman Michelson asked Mr. Pena if he obtained a street opening permit when he installed the concrete driveway apron; Mr. Pena said he did not. Chairman Michelson asked Mr. Pena if he replaced the front garage door with a new metal door; Mr. Pena said he did not do that work- it was there when he purchased the property. When asked about the new fencing by Chairman Michelson, Mr. Pena said he removed the old wooden fencing, then built the concrete wall and installed the fence atop the wall.

Chairman Michelson opened the meeting to the public. Ronald Johnson of 181 North Avenue, Plainfield said he was zoning officer at the time when the original stop work order was issued, and there is a lot more work done that what Mr. Pena is saying. More than 3 windows were replaced, the front and side steps were changed out. Commissioner

Gurshman said remediation needs to be done, the work done was not done with good faith. Chairman Michelson added the Commission can either make conditions of approval, or deny an approval. Commissioner Schneider agreed with Commissioner Gurshman- a lot of remediation needs to be done. Vice Chairman Quirk told Mr. Pena he understands there was a municipal court case and a guilty plea was filed, Vice-Chairman Quirk asked Mr. Pena what he pled guilty to. Mr. Pena said he pled guilty to front door replacement and front window- that is it. Mr. Johnson showed Commissioners pictures of the property from his tablet that he took when he was the city zoning officer. Vice Chairman Quirk asked Mr. Pena to provide the court summons and guilty plea. After further discussion, Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion to carry the hearing to May 24, 2018. Commissioner Gurshman seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

**3. Certificate of Appropriateness Application HPC 2018-02. Applicant- Nova Terra Group, LLC
621 Belvidere Avenue. Block 911, Lot 1. Netherwood Heights Historic District**

Mr. Nuno Castainca of Nova Terra Group, LLC, 120 Wood Avenue South, Suite 508, Iselin, NJ introduced himself to the Commission and described the work he is proposing to the single-family dwelling at 621 Belvidere Avenue including: installation of new wood storm windows to all first floor windows at the main house; replacement of first floor sunroom vinyl windows; replacement of all second floor wood and vinyl windows; replacement of half-round copper gutters with 5" brown aluminum gutters and downspouts; restoration of all second floor wood shutters; repair of the slate roof; installation of metal grates at the existing open window wells; repair-in-kind of all walkways and the repaving of the asphalt driveway; installation of a 6'-0" high, 78'-0 long wood privacy fence; and replacement of two (2) metal garage doors at the attached carriage house with new metal doors.

The Commission discussed the merits of half-round style gutters, and the applicant discussed the difficulties and costs involved with installing new half-round gutters. Mr. Ross informed the Commission that he walked the property along with Chairman Michelson to inspect the windows and garage doors. When asked about the garage doors, Mr. Castainca said the metal garage doors are in disrepair and falling apart. Vice-Chairman Quirk noted that the garage lites are being reduced in size; he encouraged Mr. Castainca to shop around for garage doors with bigger windows. Commissioner Favazzo added that the original doors are Arts and Crafts style and the proposed replacement doors are not Arts and Crafts style. When asked if he considered composite wood instead of metal, Mr. Castainca said he did and each door would cost \$3,000 more than each metal door.

A discussion ensued over the various window styles on the house- 6 over 6 on the side and back; 8 over 8 to match the front, the new windows will be brown aluminum clad with wood interior. The windows will be simulated divided lite. Mr. Castainca said he is looking for appropriate basement window wells.

Chairman Michelson opened the meeting to the public. No one from the public commented. The Commissioners discussed the merits of voting now or carrying the application to the March meeting so the applicant can do additional research on the matters discussed at tonight's meeting. Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion to carry the application to the March 27, 2018, meeting. Commissioner Schneider seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.

4. Discussion: North Avenue Historic District Street Signs

Ronald Johnson of 181 North Avenue, and Sib Beyers of 94 Melrose Place introduced themselves as representatives of the Downtown Plainfield Alliance. The Alliance's mission is to preserve the North Avenue Historic District as a destination in Plainfield; the owners are feeling a little forgotten and with the plans for the upcoming pedestrian mall, new street signs will complement the project efforts. Mr. Johnson said the Downtown Plainfield alliance received grant funds from the Plainfield Cultural and Heritage Commission. The replacement of signs to one consistent signage is good for the neighborhood. The Commission discussed with Messrs. Johnson and Beyers the various street sign designs and lettering. A discussion ensued over whether to use an image on the signs or not. Vice-Chairman Quirk offered advice to Mr. Johnson, as he was involved in obtaining street signs for the Van Wyck Brooks Historic District. With several different ideas and advice to work from, Messrs. Johnson and Beyers thanked the Commission for their time. The Downtown Plainfield Alliance will soon file for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

- 5. HPC 2017-13. 810 Central Avenue. Blk. 760, Lot 6. Van Wyck Brooks Historic District. Yates Real Estate- Applicant**
- A. Resolution for Bulk and Height Variances. Commissioners read the Resolution prepared by Chairman Michelson, citing no objection to the proposed seven (7) variances from R-VWB-2 bulk requirements. Commissioner Gurshman made a motion to approve the Resolution as submitted, Commissioner Favazzo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.
- B. Resolution for Use and Density Variances. Commissioners read the Resolution prepared by Chairman Michelson, recommending that the Zoning Board deny the use variance and density variance. Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion to approve the Resolution as submitted, Commissioner Gurshman seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.

**6. Certificate of Appropriateness Application HPC 2018-01. Applicant- Gary Schneider
825 Carlton Avenue. Block 638, Lot 12. Putnam Watchung Brooks Historic District**

Mr. Bauman informed the Commission that Mr. Schneider adequately served notice to property owners within 200 feet of his property and that the Commission has jurisdiction to hear and decide the application. Commissioner Schneider recused himself from the hearing and introduced himself to the Commission as the owner of 825 Carlton Avenue.

Mr. Schneider informed the Commission that he intends to remove slate shingles on the main house, remove asphalt shingles on the garage, repair the wood roof decking, install new felt paper, and install new GAF Slateline asphalt shingles at the roofs of the main house and the detached garage. The slate color will be English Grey. Mr. Schneider said he chose Slateline asphalt shingles over slate shingles because he plans on selling the house soon, the existing slate is beyond maintenance, and installing asphalt shingles will be \$12,000 less expensive than installing new slate shingles. Mr. Schneider said every winter snow and ice pull more slate shingles down off the roof.

When asked how old the house is, Mr. Schneider said it was built in 1859. Commissioner Favazzo asked about the metal ridges; Mr. Schneider said the ridging is made of copper and he hopes to re-use it; Mr. Schneider added that he intends on maintaining the existing gutters. Any salvageable slate will be re-used by Mr. Schneider's roofer with other projects.

Chairman Michelson opened the meeting to the public. No one from the public commented on the application, Chairman Michelson closed the meeting to the public. Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal of slate shingles on the main house and asphalt shingles on the garage, and the installation of new GAF Slateline asphalt shingles at the roofs of the main house and the detached garage. Commissioner Garrett seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

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

Unfinished Business

1. Historic Preservation Survey for Expansions of Netherwood Heights and Van Wyck Brooks Historic Districts

Carried to March 27; Chairman Michelson reported that he is planning a presentation to the Netherwood Heights neighborhood association. Chairman Michelson said he will make a presentation similar to the one he and Vice-Chairman Quirk recently made to the West Eighth Street Block Association.

2. Poster Campaign

Commissioner Schneider reported to the Commission about his idea for a poster contest for recognizing historic preservation in Plainfield. Commissioner Schneider said he approached the duCret School of Art to commission student artists to create posters celebrating historic preservation. Commissioner Schneider envisions 20 to 30 posters displayed at the public library and the artist with the most impressive poster will be honored by the Mayor, then auction off the posters to benefit the library. Commissioners were encouraged by Commissioner Schneider's

presentation and initiative and they look forward to Commissioner Schneider following up with his idea at future Commission meetings.

3. Vacancies on the Historic Preservation Commission

Chairman Michelson said he will prepare a letter to Mayor Mapp informing him of the three vacancies on the Commission.

4. Commission’s Presence on the City’s Website

Chairman Michelson reported that he and Commissioner Gurshman met with City official Jazz Clayton-Hunt and members of the city’s Information Technology team to discuss the Commission’s presence on the city’s website. Without getting into details, Chairman Michelson reported that the meeting was productive and improvements to the city’s website should soon follow.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Gurshman made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Commissioner Favazzo; all voted in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 11:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Bauman

Scott Bauman, AICP, PP
Principal Planner / HPC Secretary, Plainfield Planning Division
Prepared: April 16, 2018

Approved by the Historic Preservation Commission: April 24, 2018