



**CITY OF PLAINFIELD**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION**  
**COMMISSION**  
 515 WATCHUNG AVENUE, ROOM 202  
 PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07060  
 Phone: (908) 753-3391



**Adrian O. Mapp, Mayor**

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

**MEETING MINUTES – PLAINFIELD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**NOVEMBER 26, 2019 – CITY HALL 1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR LIBRARY, 515 WATCHUNG AVENUE**

**Call to Order and Public Notice**

Chairman Michelson called the meeting to order at 7:35 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 Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission. 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 Attendance**

2019 Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission Name, Class Designation (Term Ends)	1/22/19	2/26/19	3/26/19	4/23/19	5/28/19	6/25/19	7/23/19	8/27/19	9/24/19	10/22/19	11/26/19	12/17/19
<b>Mario Camino, Class A (12/31/2020)</b>	X	ab	*	ab	ab	X	X	ab	X	*	X	
<b>John Favazzo, Class A (12/31/2021)</b>	X	X	C	X	ab	X	ab	X	X	C	X	
<b>William T. Garrett, Class B (12/31/2019)</b>	X	X	A	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	
<b>Sandra Gurshman, Class B (12/31/2022)</b>	ab	X	N	X	X		X	X	X	N	ab	
<b>William H. Michelson, Class B (12/31/2022)</b>	X	X	C	X	X	X	X	X	X	C	X	
<b>Lawrence T. Quirk, Class A (12/31/2021)</b>	X	X	E	ab	X	X	X	X	X	E	X	
<b>Gary F. Schneider, Class C (12/31/2019)</b>	X	X	L	X	X		X	X	X	L	X	
<b>Reginald Thomas, Class A (12/31/2022)</b>	X	X	L	X	X	X	X	X	X	L	X	
Member 9 (vacant- unexpired term ends 12/31/2020)	N a	na	E	na	na	na	na	na	n a	E	na	
<b>Gail Smith Alexander, Alternate Member 1 (12/31/2020)</b>	x	X	D	X	ab	X	X	X	X	D	X	
Alternate 2 (vacant- unexpired term ends 12/31/2020)	x	ab	*	na	na	na	na	na	n a	*	na	

**Order of Business**

Chairman Michelson reported that the Applicant in Application HPC 2019-16 had requested that it be carried to the December 17, 2019 meeting, and he granted the request.

Chairman Michelson rescheduled the presentation of the North Avenue Historic District by Steve Martini (Nishuane Group) and Drew DiSessa (Pennonni Associates, Inc.) due to scheduling issues. The presentation will be heard at the December 17, 2019 meeting.

### **Presentation of Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Schneider made a motion to accept the September 24, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented; Commissioner Camino seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

1. **Hearing #1: Certificate of Appropriateness HPC 2019-12. Applicant, Scott Liggions & Owner, Sandra Davis. 720 Madison Avenue. Block 715, Lot 3. Van Wyck Brooks Historic District**

Chairman Michelson called the applicant to the table. The applicant was not present. Chairman Michelson initially delayed the application hearing, awaiting the applicant's arrival. The applicant never appeared. Later in the meeting, a motion was made by Vice Chairman Quirk and seconded by Commissioner Garrett to dismiss the application without prejudice. A voice vote was taken and it was unanimously approved. The applicant may reapply to the HPC for approval with a waived application fee, but will be required to re-notice the neighboring property owners.

2. **Hearing #3: Certificate of Appropriateness HPC 2019-17. Applicant & Owner: Lynn Nolte 1210 Denmark Road. Block 908, Lot 2. Netherwood Heights Historic District.**

Chairman Michelson determined from the Affidavit of Service that proper notice had been served on nearby owners, and that the Commission has jurisdiction to hear the application.

Chairman Michelson called applicant Lynn Nolte and architect Greg Blasi of Vincentsen & Blasi Architects to the table. Previously, following a fire at the residence, a No CA letter was issued for windows, which were the only parts of the reconstruction involving an exterior feature. The new work consists of the construction of a rear addition to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, to accommodate a powder room and laundry, with a new window, porch roof, siding and crawl space below, and a change of window configuration in the living room.

Discussions between commission members and the architect regarding the new windows in the living room (west side) resulted in the Commission requesting Mr. Blasi to provide an elevation of the west side of residence, to make clear the request to change windows. Mr. Blasi agreed to do so. Mr. Blasi also requested that the selection of the material for the proposed standing seam metal roof (galvanized or copper) be at the owner's discretion, due to cost. The meeting was opened to the public, but no one asked to address the Application.

A Motion was made by Vice Chairman Quirk and seconded by Commissioner Schneider, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness as follows:

- Construction of an 8' x 14' 1<sup>st</sup> floor addition to the rear (south side) of the residence, with a crawl space beneath, containing a laundry and powder room;
- Construction of 6.5' x 16' open rear porch adjoining the addition, as shown on architectural plans of Vincentsen & Blasi Architects, sheets A-4 & A-5 and lot survey (exhibit A-1 in evidence);
- Porch roof for the new rear addition, to be standing seam by design, constructed of either galvanized aluminum (silver color) or copper;
- New porch siding for the new rear addition, wood to match the existing siding of residence;
- The new windows for the addition will be wood, consisting of a 2'4" x 2'4' fixed diamond paned center window, flanked on either by 2' x 3', 6-pane casement windows.
- The existing living room window on the west side of the residence is to be removed and replaced with two 6 over 1 wood windows. The architect will provide a revised sheet A-5 (#5 Side Elevation) reflecting the proposed window placement as approved by the commission.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved.

**3. Hearing #4: Certificate of Appropriateness HPC 2019-19. Applicant & Owner: Anthony Maya 814 Kensington Avenue. Block 638, Lot 8. Putnam/Watchung Heights Historic District.**

Chairman Michelson determined from the Affidavit of Service that proper notice had been served on nearby owners, and that the Commission has jurisdiction to hear the application.

Chairman Michelson called applicant Anthony Maya and a representative from Gonsana Construction Company to the table. Mr. Maya proposed to replace his existing deteriorated slate roof with a new slate-like roofing product made by Ecostar. The flat turret roof on the front façade was to be replaced in-kind with a rubber torch down roof. He proposes to repair the “Yankee” gutters, and if needed, to replace any portion thereof in kind, and to replace the chimney collar.

Discussions between Commission members, the contractor and owner regarding the selected slate-like replacement material ensued, as well as clarification regarding the rubber roof and chimney collar. Historic consultant Barton Ross had advised the Commission by e-mail that he had some doubts as to the quality of Ecostar roof shingles, however, the Applicant expressed a desire to stay with that product, and brought a sample shingle for the Commissioners to see.

The meeting was opened to the public by Chairman Michelson, but no one asked to speak.

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Quirk and seconded by Commissioner Alexander, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness, as follows:

- Replacement of the existing slate roof of the main portion of the residence, with a synthetic slate product by “Ecostar”, or GAF-approved 30-year “Slateline” product, with appropriate underlayment. The choice of the material is at the Applicant’s option. Gutter straps, if any, will be placed under the shingles;

- The flat roof of the turret on the front façade of the residence will be replaced with the same rubber torch-down material that currently exists, however, an existing area of asphalt patch is to be removed, and none of the new material shall be visible from the street;
- All “Yankee” gutters will be repaired or replaced, if necessary, to look and function exactly as they presently exist.

A roll call vote was taken and the Motion was unanimously approved.

**4. Informational Meeting Hearing #5, Owner LaQuita and Cleveland Jewett  
927 Central Avenue. Block 759, Lot 17. Van Wyck Brooks Historic District**

Chairman Michelson called Applicants LaQuita and Cleveland Jewett to the table. There was discussion that the meeting had to be informational because a proper Application has not been filed, nor were nearby owners served with notice. Mr. Michelson explained the 200’ radius information.

The contemplated Application involves porch restoration (roof, columns, balustrades, spindles, lattice, railing, ceiling, decking, etc.), soffit lights already installed without approval, trim on the second story, Yankee gutters and carriage house.

Various topics were discussed, including use of a standing seam tin roof, columns and decking. Two Corinthian columns are to be retained, and the balance are to be replaced with new columns similar in design to what is present, made of wood or composite material. Porch ceiling material is to look like bead board. Lattices need to be framed around the porch. Balustrades must be identical to what exists, and not pickets. The cement front walkway and concrete driveway apron need replacement, and must be tinted with C31 Shadow Slate to avoid a bright white appearance. The rest of the driveway will be asphalt. The Applicants were advised that they will need a street opening permit.

Vice-Chairman Quirk asked about previous unapproved repairs to the soffits, trim and gutters, and the installation of inappropriate high-hat lights. He indicated that these inappropriate items need to be addressed in the formal HPC Application.

Chairman Michelson requested that the Application from the Jewetts should also include the restoration plans for the carriage house.

Further discussion included the requirement for drawings signed and sealed by a licensed architect and/or structural engineer. The drawings as submitted have many inconsistencies and errors, and are not signed and sealed. The Jewetts stated that the submissions they had provided should suffice for an Application. Commission members disagreed, and stated again that the Application was not complete, and the drawings will not be approved by the Building Department unless they are approved by the HPC and are signed and sealed by an architect or engineer.

**Public Discussion**

Nancy Piwowar thanked Chairman Michelson for his participation at the recent meeting of the Raritan Millstone Heritage Alliance. In addition, Ms. Piwowar went on to state that efforts are being made to identify the location of the “Lost Fort of the Plainfield’s”, a Revolutionary War feature. Both Union and

Somerset Counties are aware of this effort, and support the research. Ms. Piwowar informed the Commission that she has spoken to the Mayor, the Planning and Zoning Boards, and now the HPC.

Ed Morris, a preservation-minded individual, read a statement regarding the benefits of removal of paint from windows versus the utilization of vinyl windows. He spoke of the historic character of the City, and the value of maintaining the integrity of the Historic Districts. Chairman Michelson thanked Mr. Morris, and informed him about a workshop held at the Plainfield Library a few years ago about window restoration, for which there had been an audience of 50 people.

### **Discussions**

Chairman Michelson requested a discussion of 118 North Avenue. The Applicant came into the Planning Office, requesting a change in use for the second floor from office space to residential. Since no exterior change to the building is proposed, the Chairman urged that the change of use can be addressed by the Architectural Review Committee, and a No CA Letter can be granted, notwithstanding the non-appearance by the Applicant and the lack of notice to neighboring owners. There is nothing for the Commission to decide, yet the Application cannot go to the Zoning Board of Adjustment without some action on our part. Planning staff will ascertain that there is no exterior change proposed, not even the change of a window.

It was agreed unanimously that a No CA Letter will be issued by the HPC and sent to the Zoning Board. It was also agreed that the HPC will advise the Zoning Board that we have no objection to the requested use variance, since the lack of parking and 100% lot coverage are pre-existing and indeed historical conditions. Chairman Michelson will advise the Zoning Board as to any questions it may have.

North Avenue Pedestrian Mall proposal: Presentation will be at the December meeting.

New Developments are underway on South Avenue. It was discussed that what has been happening in Plainfield, as opposed to Westfield, Cranford or Scotch Plains, falls short of the quality we would like to see. Though none of this has been occurring in the Historic Districts, the Commission has concerns about the adverse impact to Historic Districts from apartments and redevelopment adjacent to them. The Master Plan guides the redevelopment. Cost dictates appearance. North Avenue Historic District presents an opportunity for good design by a redeveloper.

Awards: Vice-Chairman Quirk indicated he would do the necessary work required for the awards presentation in May 2020. The recommended individual is our former Recording Secretary Scott Bauman; good choices for the individual sites include 115 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street, 340 Franklin Place and 900 Park Avenue.

It appears that changes have been made to work the Commission recently approved at 900 Park Avenue. The CA may have to be amended, to allow the Applicant's decisions. Particularly, a wood rear/side yard fence is being changed to wrought iron 4'- 6' high. Chairman Michelson said he would look at the property and bring any necessary discussion to our next meeting.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Quirk made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Commissioner Schneider. All voted in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 P.M.

