



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



Sharon Robinson-Briggs, Mayor

Sandra Gurshman, Chairwoman
 John Favazzo, Vice Chairman

Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
April 23, 2013, 7:30 PM, City Hall Library, 515 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, New Jersey

Name, Class Designation (Term Duration)	1/22/13	2/26/13	3/19/13	4/23/13	5/28/13	6/25/13	7/23/13	8/27/13	9/24/13	10/22/13	11/19/13	12/17/13
Vice Chairman John Favazzo, Class A (5/10/10 - 12/31/13)	X	X		X								
Lawrence Ferrara, Class C (1/18/11 - 12/31/14)	X	X	X	X								
James Galvin, Alternate #1, Class A (1/3/13 - 12/31/14)	X	X		X								
Bill Garrett, Class B (2/3/12 - 12/31/15)	X		X	X								
Chairwoman Sandra Gurshman, Class B (1/18/11 - 12/31/14)	X	X	X	X								
Jan Jasper, Class C (1/3/13 - 12/31/16)	X	X	X	X								
Patricia Turner Kavanaugh, Class C (1/3/12 - 12/31/15)	X	X	X	X								
Elizabeth King, Class C (1/3/13 - 12/31/16)	X		X	X								
William Michelson, Class B (1/18/11 - 12/31/14)	X	X	X									
David Westlake, Class A (1/3/13 - 12/31/16)	X	X	X	X								
Alternate Member #2 VACANT (2-year term)												
HPC Consultant Gail Hunton		X	X	X								
HPC Secretary Scott Bauman	X	X	X	X								

Call to Order and Public Notice for Regular Meeting

Chairwoman Gurshman called the regular meeting of the Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission to order at 7:36 PM and read the following into the record: *“This is a regularly scheduled meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Plainfield, Union County, New Jersey. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act in that a notice was published in the Courier News on January 4, 2013, and the notice of this meeting was posted in the City Clerk and Planning Division offices.”*

Public Session Adjourns to Executive Session in Accordance with the “Open Public Meetings Act”

Chairwoman Gurshman read the following into the record:

“While the Open Public Meetings Act (NJSA 10:4-6 et seq.) requires all meetings of the Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission to be held in public, NJSA 10:4-12(b) sets forth the types of matters that may lawfully be discussed in “Executive Session,” i.e. without the public being permitted to attend. The HPC has determined that one (1) issue is permitted by NJSA 10:4-12(b) to be discussed without the public in attendance and it shall be discussed during an Executive Session to be held on April 23, 2013, at 7:30 PM. The issue is “anticipated litigation in which the HPC is or may become a party, including matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer”. The party involved is the owner of 161-167 Crescent Avenue: 165 Crescent Avenue, LLC (file HPC 12-19), and the nature of the discussion involves the denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness. The length of the Executive Session is estimated to be 30

minutes after which the public meeting of the HPC will reconvene and proceed with business. The HPC will go into Executive Session for only the above stated reason.”

Ms. Turner Kavanaugh made a motion to adjourn the public session and enter into executive session; Ms. King seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Return to Public Session

At 8:30 PM, Mr. Galvin made a motion to return to public session; Ms. Turner Kavanaugh seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Adoption of February 26, 2013, Meeting Minutes

Ms. Turner Kavanaugh made a motion to approve the 2/26/13 meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Westlake seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote. Mr. Garrett and Ms. King abstained from voting.

Adoption of March 19, 2013, Meeting Minutes

Ms. Turner Kavanaugh made a motion to approve the 3/19/13 meeting minutes as submitted. Ms. King seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote. Vice Chairman Favazzo and Mr. Galvin abstained from voting.

Unfinished Business

**1. HPC 09-18: 226-232 Park Avenue; Block 245, Lot 8 (Courier News / Frost Building)
North Avenue Historic District / Applicant and Owner: Next Step to Collins, LLC**

Ms. Turner Kavanaugh made a motion to carry HPC 09-18 to the 5/28/13 meeting; Mr. Galvin seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

**2. HPC 12-20: 134-136 North Avenue; Block 314, Lot 8; North Avenue Historic District
Applicant and Owner: 134-136 North Ave., LLC**

Mr. Galvin made a motion to carry HPC 12-20 to the 5/28/13 meeting; Ms. Turner Kavanaugh seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

**3. HPC 12-21: 177-185 North Avenue; Block 313, Lot 12; North Avenue Historic District
Applicant and Owner: 175-177 North Ave., LLC**

Mr. Galvin made a motion to carry HPC 12-21 to the 5/28/13 meeting; Ms. Turner Kavanaugh seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

**4. HPC 12-22: 200-212 Park Avenue; Block 245, Lot 7.01; North Avenue Historic District
Applicant and Owner: The Bank on Park, LLC**

Ms. Turner Kavanaugh made a motion to carry HPC 12-22 to the 5/28/13 meeting; Mr. Galvin seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

New Business

**1. HPC 13-01: 1007 Watchung Avenue; Block 639, Lot 16; Putnam Watchung Historic District
Applicant & Owner: Elaine Burrell**

HPC Secretary Bauman informed the Commission that the Applicant / Owner had served adequate notice and that the HPC has jurisdiction. Ms. Elaine Burrell of 1007 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield introduced herself to the Commission and informed them that she is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish a wood frame garage building in the back yard. The structure has a dirt floor, it is unsafe and badly damaged from Hurricane Sandy.

Chairwoman Gurshman asked Ms. Burrell if she was planning to build a new garage. Ms. Burrell said she would like the option to replace or not; Chairwoman Gurshman informed Ms. Burrell if she chooses not to rebuild she could apply to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a variance, but if she chooses to rebuild, she would need to come back to the HPC with plans for approval. Mr. Garrett recalls the structure being used as a horse barn- he used to keep a car in that structure when he was in high school. Mr. Westlake agreed that the structure is unsafe, he took photographs of the structure and will email them to HPC Secretary Bauman for the file.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public; no one from the public commented. Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting. Ms. Turner Kavanaugh made a motion to grant approval for a demolition permit for the garage; Mr. Garrett seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.

2. HPC 13-06: 747 Dixie Lane; Block 908, Lot 6; Netherwood Heights Historic District

Applicant & Owner: Charles Weston & Robert Parente

HPC Secretary Bauman informed the Commission that the Applicant / Owner had served adequate notice and that the HPC has jurisdiction. Mr. Charles Weston and Mr. Robert Parente introduced themselves to the Commission; they are proposing to redesign their detached two-car garage consisting of: installing two new steel garage doors on the east elevation, adding a roof overhang and posts on the north elevation, installing two windows on the north elevation, installing a rake detail on north elevation, installing a six-panel entry door on the north elevation, installing new asphalt dimensional shingles, installing new leaders and half round tin gutters, and removing existing siding and installing new cedar shake siding.

The Commission reviewed the plans submitted by the Applicant and commented on the clarity and detail of the plan. Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public; no one from the public commented. Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting. Ms. Turner Kavanaugh made a motion to grant approval of the proposal as submitted with the condition that new gutter straps be placed underneath the shingles; Ms. King seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.

3. Informal Discussion: 225 Watchung Avenue; Block 312, Lot 3; North Avenue Historic District

Owner: Rahway & Plainfield Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

David Munro of 189 North Avenue East, Cranford, introduced himself to the Commission; he thanked them for the time to informally discuss proposed modifications to the school wing behind the Meeting House. The building was originally horse stables built in the mid-19th century, in the 1950s the stables were converted to a building that contained a kitchen, classrooms, a small library, and room for storage. The proposal calls for a 200 square foot expansion of the building envelope, new ceiling, larger library, more closet space, new Hardi-plank exterior siding, and new asphalt shingles. Besides the work to the accessory building, Mr. Munro informed those present that he also wishes to pave the stone parking lot. Before going through the expense of hiring professionals, Mr. Munro wants to hear what the Commission has in mind about the proposal. A discussion ensued over the proposed doorway / entrance, the type of new wood windows being proposed, the utilization of corner boards, and a gas fireplace.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public; no one from the public commented. Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting. Mr. Munro thanked the Commission for their time- there is no definite timetable for the proposal at this time.

4. Proposed Amendments: HPC 11-04; 1328 Watchung Avenue; Block 814, Lot 9; Broadway Historic District

Owner & Applicant: Kevin Oliver

Kevin Oliver of 1328 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield introduced himself to the Commission. Mr. Oliver is proposing a change in dimension to the garage that was originally approved by the Commission in May, 2011. Mr. Oliver wants to change the dimension of the garage from 28' x 28' to 24' x 32' - there is a net reduction of 16 square feet and the new design complies with the 5 foot side and rear yard setback requirements. The height of the garage will be reduced from 22' to 20'. The Commission reviewed the newly revised plans- Hardi-plank siding is being used, if shutters are being used, they should be functioning shutters- not the decorative shutters shown on the drawing. The garage will have corner boards. The window in the front that can be seen from the street will be wood frame; the remaining windows that cannot be seen from the street will be vinyl frame.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public; no one from the public commented. Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting. Mr. Westlake made a motion to grant approval to amend Certificate of Appropriateness to change the garage dimensions from 28' x 28' to 24' x 32', the front window above the garage bays shall be wood frame, the owner has the option to install a fixed 8-light sash window instead of a double-hung 4/4 sash window on the building front, and the window shutters (if being added), must be wood and sized to cover the entire window when closed- they must be fastened to the window frame, not to the siding. Mr. Garrett seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Committee Reports / Staff Report

1. **Architectural Review / Minor Application Review Committee:** Mr. Bauman informed the Commission on the property reviews performed by the Committee- proposals that did not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.
2. **Community Outreach / Historic Preservation Awareness Committee**
 - A. Postcard notifying owners in historic districts / locally designated historic sites: working on final draft and for comments from city officials. Recommendations include having a Spanish version of the post card available on the Commission's website.
 - B. Revisions to City's Certificate of Compliance to reflect historic district / landmark status: the Inspections Division is entering the historic district information onto each property card.
 - C. Spanish translation of Design Guidelines: Commission members discussed the merits about Commission applying to the Culture and Heritage Commission for funds to finance this project. The Commission was advised to submit applications quickly. Ms. Turner Kavanaugh said she would work with Chairwoman Gurshman on this project.
3. **Replacement of Green Brook Park Pedestrian Bridge- Green Brook Park Historic District**
 - **Background:** In June and October 2012 the City informed Union County and the SHPO that Planning Board review and Historic Preservation Commission review are required for this project. In November the County's consulting engineer Neglia Associates sent plans to Langan Engineering- the City's consulting engineer- to coordinate the bridge design with the NJDEP design standards for the Green Brook Walkway. Langan Engineering reviewed the plan and provided comments in December, 2012. In January 2013 HPC Consultant Gail Hunton spoke to Union County Engineering Department (Paul Leso) about Langan's comments. The discussion focused on a wooden footbridge on sheet 29.02; the design does not meet AASHTO requirements and the County cited concerns over the durability and maintenance of timber bridges. Ms. Hunton agreed to prepare a letter for Union County citing the durability of timber bridges. In February the Commission learned that the County has all of the plans and the specifications for all of the bridges are included in the plans. The HPC was asked to make sure that the bridge locations remain the same.
 - **Update:** no new news.
4. **Replacement of Pemberton Avenue Culvert PL-75: Cedar Brook Park Historic District**
 - **Background:** Ms. Hunton heard from the State Historic Preservation Office that Union County's consulting engineer agreed to make revisions to the culvert design- these revised plans have not yet been received by the City or the State Historic Preservation Office. Mr. Bauman will follow up with the County. The City and County are discussing the possibility of sharing the cost of the new culvert design by further sharing the costs associated with non-related roadway paving projects.
 - **Update:** no new news.
5. **Properties in Historic Districts / Historic Sites with Code / Maintenance Violations**
 - Mr. Bauman referred Commission members to the meeting packet which lists the properties of interest.

Adjournment of Regular Meeting

There being no further business, Ms. Turner Kavanaugh made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Galvin, all voted in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 10:01 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Bauman

Scott Bauman, AICP, PP
Principal Planner / HPC Secretary, Plainfield Planning Division
Prepared: May 15, 2013

HPC Approved: May 28, 2013