



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
August 27, 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	X	X		X				
Lawrence Ferrara , Class C (1/18/11 - 12/31/14)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
James Galvin , Alternate #1, Class A (1/3/13 - 12/31/14)	X	X		X	X	X		X				
Bill Garrett , Class B (2/3/12 - 12/31/15)	X		X	X			X					
Chairwoman Sandra Gurshman , Class B (1/18/11 - 12/31/14)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Jan Jasper , Class C (1/3/13 - 12/31/16)	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				
Patricia Turner Kavanaugh , Class C (1/3/12 - 12/31/15)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					
Elizabeth King , Class C (1/3/13 - 12/31/16)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				
William Michelson , Class B (1/18/11 - 12/31/14)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X				
David Westlake , Class A (1/3/13 - 12/31/16)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Alternate Member #2 VACANT (2-year term)												
HPC Consultant Gail Hunton		X	X	X		X	X					
HPC Secretary Scott Bauman	X	X	X	X	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 7:31 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.”*

Adoption of July 27, 2013, Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Michelson made a motion to approve the July 27, 2013, regular meeting minutes as submitted; Mr. Westlake seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote. Mr. Favazzo and Mr. Galvin abstained from voting.

New Business

1. Certificate of Appropriateness HPC 13-14: 328 Franklin Place; Block 642, Lot 25

Crescent Area Historic District / Applicant & Owner: Homefirst Interfaith Housing and Family Services

Mr. Bauman informed the Commission that the Applicant has served notice and the Commission has jurisdiction to hear the application. Lawrence Woodruff, Esq. of 201 South Avenue, East, Westfield introduced himself as an attorney representing Homefirst. Kathy Higgins, CPA, and Jennie Crespo both of Homefirst, 1009 Park Avenue, Plainfield introduced themselves.

Mr. Woodruff gave the Commission a brief background- in 2006 Homefirst acquired the 3 family dwelling and shortly thereafter a storm knocked down the detached garage on the property. Homefirst wanted to construct a parking lot for 6 cars but they were required to obtain approval from the Zoning Board of Adjustment since the construction of the parking lot is considered an expansion of an existing non-conforming use- three family dwellings are not permitted in the Crescent Area Historic District. The Zoning Board granted approval and one of the conditions was to apply for and obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness for the paved parking area, new curbing, lighting, refuse and recycling enclosure, and new concrete driveway apron.

Mr. Woodruff continued by saying that the proposed improvements will blend into the surrounding neighborhood, and an observer will not see much difference since most of the improvements are located in the rear yard. Chairwoman Gurshman asked about the proposed 6' wooden fence; Mr. Woodruff said it is being installed to screen the refuse area. Chairwoman Gurshman commented that the concrete for the driveway apron should be tinted grey to match the slate sidewalk. The Commission suggested that the slate sidewalk that crosses the driveway could be changed to concrete for durability, and if concrete is used, it shall be tinted grey to match the existing slate sidewalk. Chairwoman Gurshman asked about the Belgian block curbing; Mr. Woodruff said the block curbing is already installed.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public. Brian Munroe of 313 Franklin Place told the Commission that about 2 years ago the property owner removed the original bluestone sidewalk slabs and poured a concrete sidewalk- this was done without permits and as a result the property owner had to remove the concrete and install new bluestone slabs. With no further comments by the public, Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting.

Mr. Michelson made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for HPC 13-14 as per plans prepared by Mark E. Bess, AIA, signed and dated 5/22/2011, revised through 6/10/2013 with a suggestion- not a requirement- that driveway apron sidewalk be concrete rather than the existing slate sidewalk; new concrete shall be tinted grey to match existing sidewalk slate. Additionally, if intact flagstone sidewalk slabs are removed, they can either be used to replace existing broken slabs along the frontage of 328 Franklin Place, or they shall be collected by the Department of Public Works. Mr. Westlake seconded the motion and with no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

**2. Certificate of Appropriateness HPC 13-13: 817 Hillside Avenue; Block 630, Lot 24
Putnam Watchung Historic District / Applicant & Owner: Hubert & Brenetha Jennings**

Mr. Bauman informed the Commission that the Applicant has served notice and the Commission has jurisdiction to hear the application. Hubert Jennings and Brenetha Jennings both of 817 Hillside Avenue introduced themselves to the Commission. Mr. Jennings informed the Commission that he intends to remove the wrought iron railings on the front porch steps and install new wood railings and posts- as per his attached hand drawing.

Mr. Westlake asked if the wood railing for the steps will mimic the wood railing and spindles on the porch; Mr. Jennings affirmed and said the new railing will be the same as the ones on the porch. Mr. Westlake commented that the drawing shows the spindles terminating on the stairs- the spindles should have a bottom rail. Mr. Jennings agreed that his drawing should be revised to show a bottom rail. Mr. Michelson asked how the rail will terminate; Mr. Jennings said the stair rails will have a 90 degree turn so the top of the rail will meet the porch columns. When asked if the posts will have finials, Mr. Jennings responded that he is proposing caps. Chairwoman Gurshman asked if the rails were beveled to shed rain and snow; Mr. Jennings said the rails will be beveled.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public; no one from the public offered comment so Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting. Mr. Michelson made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for HPC 13-13 as per the submitted drawing prepared by Hubert Jennings with the conditions that 1) the wood stair rails shall include a 90 degree turn so the top of the rail will meet the porch columns; 2) the top rail shall be beveled; and 3) the spindles shall anchor to a bottom rail and not the steps themselves.

Ms. King seconded the motion and with no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Unfinished Business

1. Carried Since 2/26/13: Certificate of Appropriateness HPC 12-21: 177-185 North Avenue; Block 313, Lot 12 North Avenue Historic District / Applicant & Owner: 175-177 North Ave., LLC

Gabe Bailer of 675 Garfield Avenue, Jersey City introduced himself to the Commission as the representative of 177-185 North Ave., LLC. Mr. Bailer reminded the Commission that in July they approved new wood framed double hung windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors, and the cleaning / repointing of the brick façade. Mr. Bailer is back before the Commission to discuss the first floor front façade work consisting of cleaning existing and installing new decorative panels and brackets, repairing all window lintels and sills, installing new wood frame / clear glass doors, and installing new aluminum frame glass windows on the 1st floor storefront.

Mr. Bailer distributed updated plans, showing corbel and trim; one cornice on the right side is a little elevated. Mr. Bailer described the proposed work on each side of the building- the cornices will be constructed of Fypon. There is no awning proposed. Chairwoman Gurshman asked for drawings showing the projection of the corbel and cornices- Mr. Bailer said the as-built will match the plan; Chairwoman Gurshman said the plan does not show how far the cornice and corbels will project. Mr. Galvin said that nowhere do the plans say the cornice and corbels will be manufactured of Fypon; Mr. Bailer said Fypon is custom fabricating the items. Both Messrs. Westlake and Galvin questioned whether Fypon will customize.

Mr. Westlake asked Mr. Bailer if he was aware that the façade has cast iron features; Mr. Bailer said he was not. Mr. Westlake showed on a picture to Mr. Bailer and the Commission the location of cast iron columns. The Commission expressed their inclination to having the cast iron features preserved. Mr. Bailer said he was not planning on removing them; Mr. Westlake commented that if the cast iron features are not proposed to be removed, then the plan as proposed does not work out. Mr. Bailer suggested placing a note on the plan indicating that the cast iron features are to remain. Mr. Westlake said that the presence of the cast iron features should be acknowledged, but it should also be noted what is planned for them. Vice Chairman Favazzo added that the cast iron features are going to need to be integrated into the plan- his architect should explore, probe, and use cutaway tools to see what else is hidden- the cast iron is at street level and it is holding up the building- the proposed design will have to change.

Mr. Michelson commented that the updated plans have the same revision date as the previously updated plans- future revised plans should have a new revision date. Mr. Bailer said at this time his architect will have to inspect the site, and look at the columns- since Mr. Bailer is not an architect he cannot speculate as to whether the proposed design will reduce the structural integrity of the building and whether or not the plans incorporate the cast iron features.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public. Bernice Paglia of 124 East 7th Street asked if the bricks were painted on the top; Mr. Bailer said the bricks are painted. Ms. Paglia suggested to attempt to replicate multi colored facades in the area but with a more traditional color scheme; Chairwoman Gurshman said the Commission can make color scheme suggestions but not require them. Hearing no further comment by the public, Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting.

Chairwoman Gurshman told Mr. Bailer that the Commission will be carrying the application to September 24 in order for his architect to visit the site, inspect the cast iron columns and determine whether or not the presence of the columns affects the proposed design. Additionally the plans should be revised so the lower cornice is smaller than the upper story cornice. In the meantime, the Architectural Review Subcommittee will be happy to meet with the project architect prior to September 24.

Mr. Michelson made a motion to carry the application to September 24, 2013; Ms. Jasper seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.

New Business

1. Discussion: Identification cards for HPC members when making site visits

- Mr. Westlake distributed personalized identification cards to the Commission members present. The card is printed on heavy stock paper and contains the name of the Commission member, and the contact information for the Planning Division. The Commission approved the cards and expressed their appreciation to Mr. Westlake for preparing the cards.

2. Discussion: Creation of 501-C.3 for Lampkin House

- Mr. Bauman informed the Commission that he has received an underwhelming response to the email that was sent out a few weeks earlier seeking volunteers to help create the 501-C.3 non-profit organization. Mr. Bauman further informed the Commission that it appears that there is more interest from out of town residents in saving the structure.

Committee Reports / Staff Report

1. Architectural Review / Minor Application Review Committee:

Mr. Bauman asked the Commission to review the correspondence provided in the meeting packet for the following properties that underwent review by the Architectural Review Committee between 7/20/13 and 8/20/13:

- 8/8/13: 106 Crescent Avenue (approval for front porch repair)
- 8/13/13: 724 Berkeley Avenue (wood window replacement)
- 8/14/13: 705 Ravine Road (rear yard fence-cannot be seen from street- approved by Zoning Officer)
- 8/16/13: 820 Third Place (slate shingle roof replacement)
- 8/19/13: 957 Central Avenue (front porch repairs and in-kind replacement)

2. Community Outreach / Historic Preservation Awareness Committee

A. Postcard notifying owners in historic districts / locally designated historic sites

- Mr. Bauman is in the process of obtaining bulk rate postal rates.

B. Report: Meeting with local realtor concerning historic status of properties for sale

- Chairwoman Gushman informed the Commission that she along with Ms. Jasper and Ms. Turner Kavanaugh met with Jon Steingraber two weeks ago to discuss including historic property information on property listings for realtors. Ms. Turner Kavanaugh is planning to attend a Fanwood Historic Preservation meeting in September to discuss working together in a joint effort to approach the Union County Association of Realtors with the idea of including historic designation on property listings.

C. Enforcement

Mr. Bauman asked the Commission to review the correspondence provided in the meeting packet for the following properties that are in violation of the zoning ordinance:

- 8/6/13: 1119-1127 Watchung Avenue- 2nd Zoning Violation Notice for Outdoor Storage
- 8/13/13: 1200 Watchung Avenue- 1st Zoning Violation Notice for Railing Installation without a CA
- 8/19/13: 1119-1127 Watchung Avenue- Issuance of Summons for Outdoor Storage

Discussion Items

1. Update on Lampkin House / Union County Grant Application

- Mr. Bauman informed the Commission that the County is going to require that the property be listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places in order to receive grant funding. The nomination was not part of the financial plan but will now have to be- the city requested in writing to the county that the application be amended to include the cost of obtaining a nomination to the State and National Registers.

2. Update on Spanish Translation of Design Guidelines / Plainfield Cultural & Heritage Commission Application

- No new news.

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.

- In May the County provided revised bridge plans, and in June the Commission communicated to the County the following: 1) new construction should be as close to the original structure as possible, 2) the cross bracing on the outside of the railing system is not appropriate; instead a top rail and central rail system should be utilized, 3) other than the length and deck width, there are very few design similarities which the HPC understands would be hard to duplicate due to present-day bridge standards, 4) the project must be formally submitted to the city Historic Preservation Commission for review.
- **Update:** The Commission has not heard back from the County. Chairwoman Gurshman asked Mr. Bauman to follow up with the County.

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.

Property	Owner & Address	Chronology
810 Central Avenue Block 760, Lot 6 Van Wyck Brooks HD Abbot Manor HPC 12-14	Yates Real Estate, Inc. c/o Andre Yates POB 1121 South Plainfield NJ 07080	10/9/12: CA for removal of slate roof shingles, installation of GAF Slateline shingles, repair / rebuild of roof overhangs and built in yankee gutters, and replacement of downspouts and leaders. 5/17/13 & 8/12/13: letter to owner requesting a status update- no reply
957-963 Central Avenue Block 759, Lot 13 Van Wyck Brooks HD Coriell Mansion ZB 04-14 & HPC 04-22	Jonathan Steingraber 957 Central Avenue Plainfield, NJ 07060	7/23/13: Owner presented work proposals to the Commission 8/16/13: Follow up letter sent to owner
200 East Ninth Street Block 824, Lot 17 Crescent Area HD	Fabian Soria 200-202 East Ninth Street Plainfield, NJ 07060	May 2011: Fire in rear portion of house; previously boarded up 3 family. September 2011: Construction Official reports no update. February 2012: no change. 4/8/13: Inspections Division issues notice for re-securing of the rear door 6/12/13: Resident complains of trespassers into house- not secured
340 Franklin Place Block 642, Lot 28 Crescent Area HD HPC 07-05/ ZB 10-13	JC&H Development, Inc. Shelby Netterville PO Box 5149 Plainfield, NJ 07060	October 2010: Zoning Board approved use variance October 2012: Second resolution review; awaiting Certificate of Appropriateness application 4/8/13: Inspections Division issues notice to remove graffiti and removal of trash and debris
900 Madison Avenue Block 759, Lot 1 Van Wyck Brooks HD HPC 12-06	Jose Martinez 900 Madison Avenue Plainfield, NJ 07060	7/13/12: CA for wood windows- condition: cut sheet specifications prior to window purchase 5/17/13 & 8/12/13: letter to homeowner requesting an update- no reply
134-136 North Avenue Block 314, Lot 8 North Avenue HD HPC 12-20	Landmark Developers 675 Garfield Avenue Jersey City, NJ 07305	2/8/13: Vinyl windows installed on upper floors without CA 3/21/13: CA for upper floor wood windows 6/18/13: Applicant says it will take 8-12 weeks for windows to be made / shipped 7/3/13: CA for exterior façade renovation, first floor storefront window replacement 9/13/13: deadline for wood window installation

Property	Owner & Address	Chronology
801-807 Park Avenue Block 828, Lot 1 Crescent Area HD HPC 10-06	Lamont Gibson 448 Cliff Road Sewaren, NJ 07077	5/4/11: CA for removal of slate roof shingles, new Timberline shingles, gutter repair, ridge cap replacement. 11/28/12: Dismissed without prejudice proposal for wood cornice repair 4/8/13: Inspections Division issues notice for trash removal, and to repair / replace defective sidewalks 5/4/13: CA for slate roof replacement expires
1001-1005 Putnam Avenue Block 640, Lot 24 Putnam Watchung HD	Anne Maree 1003 Putnam Avenue Plainfield, NJ 07060	8/2/13: Inspections Division Certificate of Compliance Notice report 8/16/13: HPC follow up with owner concerning the 8/2/13 report
1362-1366 Randolph Road Block 13, Lot 40 Fitz Randolph House	Robert Tolleson 1362-1366 Randolph Road Plainfield, NJ 07060	4/26/13: Planning Division informs Inspection Division of a compliant that a window is boarded up.
1007 Watchung Avenue Block 639, Lot 16 Putnam Watchung HD	Elaine Burrell 1007 Watchung Avenue Plainfield, NJ 07060	5/6/13: CA for garage demolition- condition: new garage required to be constructed within 1 year of obtaining a demolition permit. \$500.00 held in escrow. 5/6/14: deadline for construction of new garage
1127 Watchung Avenue Block 638, Lot 9 Putnam-Watchung HD	Rashid Burney PO Box 86 Bedminster, NJ 07921	4/8/13: Inspections Division issues notice for removal of commercial vehicles and to repair and replace fence 5/10/13: 1 st zoning violation notice for outdoor storage of commercial vehicles 5/29/13: Property owner denied Certificate of Occupancy for home occupation use 8/6/13: 2 nd zoning violation notice- respond by 8/19 or court summons issued 8/19/13: court summons 9/19/13: court date
1220 Watchung Avenue Block 821, Lot 23 Putnam-Watchung HD	William Rose 1202 Watchung Avenue Plainfield NJ 07061	8/13/13: 1 st zoning violation notice for removal and replacement of front porch railing without a CA 8/26/13: issue 2 nd zoning violation notice
209 West Second Street Block 245, Lot 3 Sutphen House PB 10-10	Landmark Developers 675 Garfield Avenue Jersey City, NJ 07305	8/24/10: Planning Board referral to the HPC 9/16/10: Final approval granted; resolution compliance required. Awaiting CA application

Adjournment of Regular Meeting

There being no further business, Mr. Michelson made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Ms. King, all voted in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 9:06 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Bauman

Scott Bauman, AICP, PP
Principal Planner / HPC Secretary, Plainfield Planning Division

Prepared: September 3, 2013

HPC Approved: 9/24/13