



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
October 22, 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	X	X		
Lawrence Ferrara , Class C (1/18/11 - 12/31/14)	X	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	X			
Bill Garrett , Class B (2/3/12 - 12/31/15)	X		X	X			X		X	X		
Chairwoman Sandra Gurshman , Class B (1/18/11 - 12/31/14)	X	X	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	X	X		
Patricia Turner Kavanaugh , Class C (1/3/12 - 12/31/15)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X		
Elizabeth King , Class C (1/3/13 - 12/31/16)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
William Michelson , Class B (1/18/11 - 12/31/14)	X	X	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	X	X		
Alternate Member #2 VACANT (2-year term)												
HPC Consultant Gail Hunton		X	X	X		X	X			X		
HPC Secretary Scott Bauman	X	X	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 7:33 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 September 24, 2013, Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Michelson made a motion to approve the September 24, 2013, regular meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Garrett seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote. Mr. Ferrara abstained from voting.

New Business

1. 1362-1366 Randolph Road; Block 13, Lot 40; The Fitz Randolph House

Mark Tolleson of 1366 Randolph Road introduced himself as the owner of the Fitz Randolph House. Chairwoman Gurshman welcomed Mr. Tolleson to the meeting and asked that he please inform the Commission as to what work he has performed on the house and what work he is planning to undertake.

Mr. Tolleson informed the Commission that he is a rabid preservationist and he takes his stewardship role very seriously. His most recent work on the house began as fixing a window sill which turned into wall repair. He commenced the work, repaired what was existing, and put everything back exactly as he found it.

With regards to the window sill repair that turned into wall repair, Mr. Tolleson told the Commission that the wall was down 6 inches, and out around 8 inches; he did work to stabilize the wall, re-laid nogging, and rebuilt the window frames.

Ms. Hunton arrived at 7:40 pm.

When asked about any future projects, Mr. Tolleson said he would like to go back to what he believes to be the original exterior wood siding to 4.5 to 5 inch wide siding, rough side out rather than the present 10 inch wide lengths. Mr. Tolleson told the Commission that he did some repair work to the sashes at the back of the house; he gave credit to the previous homeowner for doing as much as he could do. Chairwoman Gurshman asked about the condition of the roof; Mr. Tolleson said the roof was solid.

Ms. Turner Kavanaugh arrived at 7:43 pm.

Chairwoman Gurshman asked Mr. Tolleson if he knew why the Commission reached out to him; Mr. Tolleson responded that he did- because the house is landmarked. Mr. Michelson said when the roof was replaced, the house was not landmarked at that time. A discussion ensued about different places to obtain wood for window sills. Chairwoman Gurshman asked Mr. Tolleson about the boarded up window. Mr. Tolleson said he boarded it prior to Hurricane Sandy and the window behind the board is still intact but a little weak.

Mr. Westlake commented that the owner will have to be careful- anything that requires shoring he might want to run by the Building department. Mr. Tolleson assured the Commission that he takes old pieces off, refurbishes them, and puts them back, or fabricates what was there.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public; no one from the public commented and Chairwoman Gurshman closed the meeting to the public.

Chairwoman Gurshman said her understanding of what she heard is that the work Mr. Tolleson has done is like for like replacement and unless something else comes up, he should keep documenting what he is doing. With regards to the boarded window and the sash behind it, Mr. Tolleson said he is planning to fix it in the spring. Chairwoman Gurshman asked Mr. Tolleson to email Mr. Bauman a picture of the window from the inside; Mr. Tolleson said he would do so. Chairwoman Gurshman thanked Mr. Tolleson for attending; Mr. Tolleson thanked the Commission for their time.

2. 716 Watchung Avenue; Block 831, Lot 1; The Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church

Brad Needleman of 88 Meadowbrook Road, North Plainfield introduced himself to the Commission. Mr. Needleman told the Commission that earlier in the month he received building permits to replace 40 broken slate roof shingles at the Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church. Mr. Bauman added that the Architectural Review Subcommittee approved this work on October 15.

Mr. Needleman said as he began work he noticed a 3-foot area at the base of the roof where 3 separate steep roofs come down; the buildup of snow over time has torn up the gutters. Snow rails are typically installed in such areas to break up the snow on the roof to prevent avalanches; the only mechanism that is in place now are little round copper wires that are installed with the slates that are for the most part rotted off.

Mr. Needleman is requesting approval to install about 4 feet of snow rails. Ms. Hunton commented that the scale is small, and the proposal is a good, preventative measure. Mr. Westlake said he was ok with the proposal. Mr. Needleman thanked the Commission for their time.

Planning Division & Subcommittee Reports

1. Architectural Review / Minor Application Review Committee:

Chairwoman Gurshman asked the Commission if there were any questions about the correspondence provided in the meeting packet for the following properties that underwent review by the Architectural Review Committee between 9/13/13 and 10/15/13:

- 9/13/13: 829 Kensington Avenue- asphalt shingle roof replacement
- 9/20/13: 808 3rd Place- front porch replacement
- 10/1/13: 735 Belvidere Avenue- asphalt shingle roof replacement
- 10/15/13: 716 Watchung Avenue- slate shingle roof replacement (approximately 40 shingles)
- 10/15/13: 744 Watchung Avenue- soffit and fascia repairs

No questions from the Commission.

2. Community Outreach / Historic Preservation Awareness Committee

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

- Mr. Bauman informed the Commission that he looked into the bulk postal rates for the post card and it was best to go with standard mail instead. Mr. Favazzo said he was ready to obtain final permission from the library to use the images on the postcard.

Mr. Favazzo left the meeting at 8:17 pm.

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

- Chairwoman Gurshman asked that this item be carried to the November 19, 2013, meeting.

3. Ordinance Revision Committee

Mr. Michelson reported that he feels that there is no reason for the Commission to take action on solar panels in historic districts, or security grilles in the North Avenue Historic District until the Planning Board has begun reviewing this part of the ordinance. The Commission agreed and requested that Mr. Bauman keep them informed on any discussion of updates to the land use ordinance. After a brief discussion the Commission agreed with Mr. Michelson's findings.

Mr. Westlake said he came across preliminary and recommended guidelines for solar panels by the National Fire Prevention Association, and the Underwriters Laboratories; he feels that codification is coming down the line.

Chairwoman Gurshman recognized a member of the public; Nancy Piwowar of 1129 Myrtle Avenue said that the 3M Company makes a product called "safety and security window film" and that there are other ways to protect windows rather than using security grilles in the downtown.

4. Zoning Officer Approval / Denial Letters

Chairwoman Gurshman asked the Commission if there were any questions about the correspondence provided in the meeting packet for the following properties that underwent review by the Zoning Officer:

- 9/11/13: 1127 Watchung Avenue- approval for home occupation
- 9/23/13: 1202 Watchung Avenue- denial for front porch replacement and conversion from 2 to 3 family
- 9/25/13: 1215 Watchung Avenue- approval for rear deck replacement
- 10/1/13: 811 3rd Place- approval for basement window replacement
- 10/3/13: 202 Park Avenue- denial for new signage

No questions from the Commission.

5. Property Maintenance Code Violation Reports Issued by Inspections Division

Chairwoman Gurshman asked the Commission if there were any questions about the correspondence provided in the meeting packet for the following properties that underwent property maintenance code violations issued by the Inspections Division:

- 9/11/13: 715 Ravine Road, abatement date: 11/4/13
- 9/11/13: 740 Belvidere Avenue, abatement date: 11/4/13

Mr. Michelson commented that 740 Belvidere Avenue has been vacant for a long time. Mr. Bauman commented that the infractions called out against 715 Ravine Road are no different than the ones the Commission heard when the owner applied for and received a Certificate of Appropriateness in July 2012.

6. Certificate of Compliance Notices Issued by Inspections Division

Chairwoman Gurshman asked the Commission if there were any questions about the correspondence provided in the meeting packet for the following properties that underwent certificate of compliance inspections by the Inspections Division:

- 7/30/13: 1003 Putnam Avenue, re-inspection scheduled on or before 9/20/13

Mr. Bauman commented that he spoke with Inspections Division and the re-inspection for 1003 Putnam Avenue has not yet taken place.

7. Code Enforcement

Mr. Bauman referred Commission members to the meeting packet which lists the properties of interest.

Property	Chronology
202 East Ninth Street Block 824, Lot 17 Crescent Area HD	May 2011: Fire in house- a 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
1127 Watchung Avenue Block 638, Lot 9 Putnam-Watchung HD	4/8/13: Inspections Div. issues notice for removal of commercial vehicles and to repair fence 5/10/13: 1 st zoning violation notice for outdoor storage of commercial vehicles 9/10/13: court date rescheduled to 10/10/13 10/10/13: owner did not appear, bench warrant and fine imposed
1202 Watchung Avenue Block 821, Lot 23 Putnam-Watchung HD	8/13/13: 1 st zoning violation notice- removal of front porch railing and replacement w/o a CA 8/26/13: 2 nd zoning violation notice 9/12/13: court summons- court date 10/1/13 10/1/13: owner did not appear; awaiting new court date

Discussion Items

1. Update on Lampkin House / Union County Grant Application

- No new news.

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

- Mr. Bauman reported that the City was awarded a \$3,750 grant to fund the Spanish translation of the Design Guidelines. Ms. Piwowar of the Plainfield Cultural and Heritage Commission was in the audience and confirmed this news; she recently stopped by the City’s Finance and Administration office to drop off some paperwork involving the grant. Mr. Bauman agreed to follow up with the translation company to discuss executing a contract.

3. Cedar Brook Park Historic District: Replacement of Pemberton Avenue Culvert PL-75

- \$11,200 is needed from shared Park Avenue / Plainfield Avenue road projects in order to go ahead with the revised bridge design. Mr. Bauman agreed to 1) follow up on the City’s September 23 letter to County Engineer Tom Mineo, and 2) follow up with City Engineer Jackie Foushee as to availability of remaining funds from roadway projects.

4. Green Brook Park Historic District: Replacement of Green Brook Park Pedestrian Bridge

- In November 2012 Union County sent pedestrian bridge replacement plans to city and shortly thereafter the city sent the county comments. In May 2013 the county sent revised plans to the city and in June 2013 the city sent

revised comments. In September 2013 the City sent the county a follow up letter and has not yet received a response. Mr. Bauman agreed to follow up with the County.

Adjournment of Regular Meeting

There being no further business, Mr. Michelson made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Westlake, all voted in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Bauman

Scott Bauman, AICP, PP
Principal Planner / HPC Secretary, Plainfield Planning Division
Prepared: November 4, 2013

HPC Approved: November 19, 2013