



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



Adrian O. Mapp, Mayor

Sandra Gurshman, Chairwoman  
 Lawrence Ferrara, Vice Chairman

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE PLAINFIELD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**OCTOBER 28, 2014, 7:30 PM, CITY HALL 1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR LIBRARY, 515 WATCHUNG AVENUE, PLAINFIELD, NJ**

**CALL TO ORDER AND PUBLIC NOTICE**

Chairwoman Sandy Gurshman called the regular meeting of the Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission to order at 7:38 PM and in conformance with the Open Public Meetings Act read aloud the following: “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 February 8, 2014, and the notice of this meeting was posted in the City Clerk and Planning Division offices.”

2014 Historic Preservation Commission Name, Class Designation (Term Ends)	1/28/14	2/25/14	3/25/14	4/22/14	5/27/14	6/24/14	7/22/14	8/26/14	9/23/14	10/28/14	11/18/14	12/16/14
Lawrence Ferrara, Class C (12/31/14)	X		X	X	X	X	X		X			
James Galvin, Alternate #1, Class A (12/31/14)	X		X									
Sandra Gurshman, Class B (12/31/14)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
William Michelson, Class B (12/31/14)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Bill Garrett, Class B (12/31/15)	X			X	X	X		X	X	X		
Patricia Turner Kavanaugh, Class C (12/31/15)	X		X	X		X		X	X	n/a	n/a	n/a
Jan Jasper, Class C (12/31/16)			X		X		X			X		
Elizabeth King, Class C (12/31/16)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
John Favazzo, Class A (12/31/17)	n/a		n/a	X	X	X	X		X	X		
Larry Quirk Class A (12/31/17)	n/a		n/a	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Regular Member #9 VACANT (unexpired term ending 12/31/15)												
Alternate Member #2 VACANT (2 year term)												

*February 25 meeting cancelled*

**PRESENTATION OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2014, MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Quirk made a motion to approve the September 23, 2014, meeting minutes as presented; Mr. Garrett seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote. Ms. Jasper abstained from voting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- Resolution in Memory of Commissioner Patricia Turner Kavanaugh**  
 Chairwoman Sandra Gurshman read aloud into the record the following:

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**NEW BUSINESS (continued)**

**PLAINFIELD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, The Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Plainfield notes with sadness the death of Commissioner Patricia Turner Kavanaugh, a highly esteemed resident and outspoken advocate of Plainfield, who passed from this life on October 5, 2014; and,

WHEREAS, Throughout her tenure on the Plainfield Historic Preservation Commission from 2002-2014, Patricia Turner Kavanaugh served with dedication and commitment, taking on assignments in addition to the monthly Commission meetings, and earning the high regard and recognition of all who worked with her; and

WHEREAS, Dedicated to the community-at-large, Patricia Turner Kavanaugh gave generously of her time and energy as a volunteer on the Architectural Review Committee; her concern for historic buildings and their owners established a standard of integrity and excellence toward which others might strive; now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLAINFIELD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:**

That this Commission hereby honors the memory of Patricia Turner Kavanaugh, and extends profound sympathy and sincere condolences to the members of her family; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a duly authenticated copy of this resolution, signed by the Chairwoman and attested by the Secretary, be transmitted to the family of Patricia Turner Kavanaugh.

The foregoing is a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Plainfield at its meeting on October 28, 2014.

Mr. Quirk made a motion to adopt the resolution as read; Ms. Jasper seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by voice vote.

**2. New Certificate of Appropriateness Applications**

A. HPC 14-11. 171-175 North Avenue. Block 313, Lot 3. North Avenue Historic District

Applicant & Owner: Green Venture Properties, LLC, c/o: Joseph Ponsoda

Mr. Bauman announced that the applicant performed the required notification to property owners within 200 feet of the property and the Commission has jurisdiction to hear the application.

Joseph Ponsoda of PO Box 2611, Elizabeth, introduced himself to the Commission. Mr. Ponsoda is seeking after-the-fact approval for the installation of vinyl windows he installed on the first floor, rear elevation of his building. Mr. Ponsoda told the Commission that last November there was a fire in the building that damaged the first floor apartment- he replaced the wood windows with new vinyl windows. Mr. Ponsoda added that he did not change the window configuration and there was no change to the structure.

Mr. Quirk asked if the windows on the upper floors are wood; Mr.Ponsoda responded yes. Mr. Quirk asked Mr. Ponsoda if he knew the property was in a historic district; Mr. Ponsoda said he knew but had

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forgotten. When asked why he used vinyl windows Mr. Ponsoda said he did not think about it and he just wanted to close up the window openings. A discussion ensued over whether the rear elevation can be seen from the street- the location of the windows was verified by HPC Secretary and Principal Planner Scott Bauman who took the pictures of the building- the rear elevation is visible from Gavett Place.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public. Gary Schneider of 825 Carlton Avenue said when the demolition of the building that shared a common wall with Mr. Ponsoda's building created this problem. The Commission informed Mr. Schneider that the city demolished that building over a decade ago and that the windows were replaced less than one year ago so the rear wall of the building was already visible when the windows were replaced. Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting.

Chairwoman Gurshman said the Commission has purview, and the city's design guidelines tell us that vinyl is not an appropriate window material for buildings in historic districts. Mr. Quirk made a motion to deny the application as presented; Mr. Garrett seconded the motion and a motion passed by voice vote: Ferrara: yes, Garrett: yes, Gurshman: yes, Jasper: No, Quirk: Yes.

**B. HPC 14-13. 131 East Ninth Street. Block 828, Lot 9. Crescent Area Historic District**

Applicant: B&L Properties & Home Improvement. Owner: Elena Adolphus

Mr. Bauman announced that the applicant performed the required notification to property owners within 200 feet of the subject site and the Historic Preservation Commission has jurisdiction to hear the application. Mr. Garrett recused himself from the hearing since he owns property within 200 feet of 131 East Ninth Street.

Bill McNeill of 826 Hillside Avenue, Plainfield, introduced himself as the applicant and working on behalf of the property owner. Mr. McNeill informed the Commission that he proposes to remove an existing wooden staircase on the right side elevation and construct a new wooden staircase with railing, balustrades, and lattice. The foundation for the stairs has slipped from the house foundation wall. Pressure treated wood / deck boarding will not be used as the floorboards. The wood used for the stairs and trim will be Douglas fir and the deck boards will be installed parallel to the steps.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public. Rich Sudol of 313 Franklin Place asked Mr. McNeill how he planned to attach the stairway to the landing; Mr. McNeill described the process of fastening the stairway to the house foundation. Mr. Garrett of 126 East Ninth Street asked if lattice will be used and if so what kind; Mr. McNeill responded that he will be using lattice and it will be the same type that is being utilized on the stairway now. With no further questions, Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting.

Chairwoman Gurshman noted that the material list includes 12 feet of white Trex deck trim- Mr. McNeill was not sure why this was on the material list but he said he intends to use real wood only with this project. Chairwoman Gurshman said if that is not the case, Mr. McNeill should contact Mr. Bauman. Mr. Quirk made a motion to approve the application as submitted with the condition that 1) "Trex" decking material or any other synthetic material, or pressure-treated wood shall not be used; 2) treads shall be bull-nosed; and 3) the new deck boards shall run parallel to the steps- not perpendicular. Mr. Favazzo seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously by voice vote.

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C. HPC 14-14. 1030 Central Avenue. Block 744, Lot 2.01.

Individually Listed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places

Applicant: Thomas Connolly, AIA. Owner: duCret School of Art

Mr. Bauman announced that the applicant performed the required notification to property owners within 200 feet of the subject site and the Historic Preservation Commission has jurisdiction to hear the application.

Architect Margaret Hickey of Connolly & Hickey Historical Architects, POB 1726, Cranford, and Frank Falotico of the duCret School, 1030 Central Avenue, introduced themselves to the Commission. Ms. Hickey stated that her client wishes to restore the porte-cochere and masonry chimney of the duCret School. The chimney has gaping holes and is no longer used. The porte-cochere end wall lacks footings and has pulled the roof apart. The restoration will consist of taking the wall down, installing new footings, reinstalling the wall, and tying in the roof framing, replacing columns, and repairing any other existing components. The wooden steps going into the main entrance of the school are in bad shape and they will be rebuilt out of wood as shown on the plans.

Mr. Quirk asked Ms. Connolly: “when you are done will there be any difference in appearance?” Ms. Connolly replied that the appearance will be better than what it is now- there will be nothing else different from a visual perspective. Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public. Rich Sudol of 313 Franklin Place said the building is a great building and he is glad the owners are doing the right thing. Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting.

Mr. Garrett made a motion to approve the application as submitted; Mr. Favazzo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.

D. HPC 14-15. 716 Watchung Avenue. Block 831, Lot 1. Crescent Area Historic District

Applicant & Owner: Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church

Mr. Bauman announced that the applicant performed the required notification to property owners within 200 feet of the subject site and the Historic Preservation Commission has jurisdiction to hear the application.

Ms. Joan Van Pelt of 1776 Sleepy Hollow Lane, and Rev. Lynn Santulli of 716 Watchung Avenue introduced themselves to the Commission; they are proposing to 1) remove a flagstone walkway along the half circle facing Watchung Avenue and install curbing and grass in its place; and 2) replace a flagstone walkway leading from the church house to the staff parking lot with a new flagstone and tinted concrete walkway. Any salvageable flagstone will be re-used elsewhere on the property.

Chairwoman Gurshman asked if an area floods now will new stones be raised; Rev. Santulli replied that the new stones will not be raised but will be aligned and larger than the stones that are out there now. Mr. Quirk confirmed with Rev. Santulli that flagstone salvageable from the driveway perimeter will be used elsewhere on the property.

Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public; no one from the public commented and Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting. Mr. Quirk made a motion to approve the application as submitted with a condition that the new concrete be tinted in an acceptable color; Mr. Favazzo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote

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**3. Request for Time Extension of Certificate of Appropriateness: HPC 09-05: 947 Madison Avenue**

Applicant & Owner: Steve Baffoni of 947 Madison Avenue, Plainfield, introduced himself to the Commission and explained that he is requesting additional time to complete work approved in 2009- specifically the replacement of an asphalt driveway with brick pavers. Mr. Bauman informed the Commission that pursuant to §17:10-7H of the Land Use Ordinance, a Certificate of Appropriateness is valid for two years from date of issuance unless reasonable extensions are granted by the Commission.

Mr. Baffoni said he has not gotten around to doing the work; the brick pavers will still be grey to match the color of the roof. The driveway is a gravel bed now. Mr. Quirk asked if the brick pavers on his front lawn now are the ones being used for the driveway; Mr. Baffoni said those pavers are intended for his back yard.

With no additional questions from Commission members, Chairwoman Gurshman opened the meeting to the public. No one from the public commented on the application and Chairwoman Gurshman closed the public portion of the meeting. Mr. Quirk made a motion to approve a time extension of one (1) year from today's date (September 23, 2014); Mr. Garrett seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by voice vote.

**4. CY 2015 Budget Preparation for Historic Preservation Commission**

Mr. Bauman informed the Commission that the Planning Division is working on 2015 budget and requests need to be made soon. Citing the late hour as a reason not to discuss at this time, Chairwoman Gurshman carried this item to the November meeting. In the meantime, Mr. Bauman will communicate HPC budget concerns with a three-member subcommittee consisting of Chairwoman Gurshman, Mr. Quirk, and a person to be determined.

**DISCUSSION**

**1. Informational Meeting- 340-344 Franklin Place**

Raymond and Louise Ochse of 455 Valley Road, Watchung, introduced themselves to the Commission as the future owners of 340 Franklin Place. They are planning to close on the property at the end of November and they are in the process of getting bids for the roof work. They would like to use Slateline shingles and install a stockade fence along the side and rear yard lot lines for security purposes. Mr. Ochse said they do not want to construct the addition which a previous applicant presented to the Commission, and they are willing to construct an eight-foot wide front porch. They are retaining the original architect to redesign the parking area and the building footprint without the addition.

There was a discussion about whether Slateline shingles are flexible enough to be used in roof valleys. The Commission expressed a preference in having built-in gutters with external downspouts, but if hanging gutters are used, they should be half-round. Mr. Favazzo volunteered to research some gutter options. The new windows will be wood double-hung. After further informal discussion, Mr. and Mrs. Ochse thanked the Commission for their time and said that an application for Certificate of Appropriateness will be filed soon.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**1. Community Outreach / Historic Preservation Awareness Committee**

- Postcards. Mr. Favazzo reported that the Spanish translation of the postcard is complete and is in the process of being posted on the Commission's website. Cards will be mailed shortly.

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- Spanish translation of the Design Guidelines for Historic Districts and Sites. The professional services contract with the translator is under legal review, once the contract is approved the work can begin.
  - Revising Multiple Listing Service (MLS) forms to include historic designations. No report.
2. Ordinance Revision Committee. Mr. Bauman agreed to prepare a memo to the Planning Board concerning the draft digital sign ordinance.
  3. Architectural Review Committee. Chairwoman Gurshman provided the Commission with a summary of the properties that the Architectural Review Committee inspected over the last month. The corresponding review letters are included in the Planning Division Report which was included in the meeting packet.
  4. Planning Division Report. Mr. Bauman asked the Commission to review the report in their meeting packet.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Garrett made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Favazzo; all voted in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

*Scott Bauman*

Scott Bauman, AICP, PP

Principal Planner / HPC Secretary, Plainfield Planning Division

Prepared: December 10, 2014

Approved by the Historic Preservation Commission: December 16, 2014