

MINUTES OF THE MONTCLAIR HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
April 16, 2009

PRESENT: Ira Smith, Denis Orloff, Councilman Murnick, Andrew Hageman, Frank Rubacky, Diane Scotland and Commission Secretary Patrick Franco Jr.

ABSENT: Jonathan Perlstein and Christie Rule

ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm by Chairman Smith. Mr. Franco read the notice of compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act and indicated that appropriate notice was forwarded to the officially designated newspaper of Montclair and also posted in the Municipal Building. The schedule of meetings is also posted on Montclair Township's web site.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Minnow

HPC 2009-9
32A Church Street

Chairman Smith called for the representatives of this application to come forward. JC Aviles, Competitive Signs, and Cathryn Minnow, Applicant, came forward and were sworn.

The proposal calls for the existing awning frame to be re-covered with Red Sunbrella Canvas fabric with 5" high graphics in light blue. The window graphics includes 5" vinyl letters in the window and a logo on the door.

Chairman Smith asked what percentage of the window the children graphic would amount to. Mr. Aviles stated approximately 25%. Mr. Aviles stated the graphic measures 30 inches in height by 18 inches in width. Mr. Aviles stated that he will reduce the graphic size to comply with the 20 percent maximum window coverage.

Chairman Smith, upon hearing no further questions and discussion from the Commissioners, opened the meeting up to the public. No public comments were offered on this application and the meeting was closed to the public.

On a motion by Vice Chair Orloff, and seconded by Commissioner Scotland the Commission voted to approve the application with conditions in a vote of 5 ayes, no nays, and no abstentions.

The following are conditions of approval:

1. The window graphics will be reduced to 20% of the window coverage

2. Conceptual Review

Diamond Cycle
409 Bloomfield Ave

Chairman Smith called for the representatives of this application to come forward. Craig Cornell, Diamond Cycle, came forward.

The proposal calls for a new canvas and plastic canopy at the rear of the above referenced property which faces onto the Township Parking Lot on Glenridge Avenue. The canopy measures 24 feet by 24 feet and will be used to display bicycles, repair bicycles, and install car bicycle racks. The canopy will not be attached to the building but secured into the ground with posts.

Mr. Cornell stated that he has a 25 by 25 area at the back of his property in which he would like to locate the canopy. The canopy would be used seasonally and be taken down from October through March.

Commissioner Hageman stated that there is an existing 10 by 10 canopy there now.

Chairman Smith stated that the Historic Commission has adopted as a policy to improve rear entrances to buildings by making them look and function like front entrances. Chairman Smith stated that the concept is a good idea; however, he is concerned about the form, color, and material, and recommend the applicant consider an open gable end with a suspended sign.

Vice Chairman Orloff asked if the gable would have a panel for the business name. Mr. Cornell stated yes. Vice Chairman Orloff stated that the materiality that the Commission ultimately approves will be precedent setting.

Commissioner Scotland asked how it would be installed because there is a grade change. Mr. Cornell stated it would be anchored into the pavement and reinforced with hooks.

Commissioner Rubacky stated his opposition to the proposal as currently presented.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

3. Town Center Historic District West Expansion Nomination Report

Presentation by Wayne McCabe – McCabe and Associates, Inc.

Mr. McCabe introduced himself to the Commission and described the content of the report. The Town Center Historic District West Expansion Survey was conducted under the auspices of a professional services contract with the Township of Montclair. The project consisted of surveying 29 parcels, which form 20 properties at the west end of the commercial zone. These properties border on the west end of the Town Center

Historic District, which ends at the east side of Valley Road. The survey area is situated along Bloomfield Avenue roughly between South Mountain Avenue to the west and Valley Road to the east.

Mr. McCabe stated that the report determined there are sufficient historic significance and a high degree of architectural integrity. The area is characterized by cultural, transportation, and utility related properties. The majority of the properties are eligible solely as part of an historic district as they lack individual distinction. The exception is the Montclair Art Museum, which is also individually eligible for listing and thus a Key property within the district.

Mr. McCabe stated that the following actions need to be taken before the Nomination Report can be adopted:

1. The Historic Preservation element of the Master Plan should address the means by which such a buffer district can be developed and implemented in order to protect historic districts in the township.
2. A new buffer zone should be established by ordinance that would include: Ferrara's Auto Body shop (33-37 Orange Road), the commercial building at 27 Orange Road, the municipal parking deck, and DCH Autos (638-654 Bloomfield Avenue and 34 Valley Road).
3. The Historic Preservation element of the Township Master Plan should be amended to take into account those conditions that are unique to institutional uses and which are not otherwise encountered by uses within a historic district.

The Commission discussed the Nomination Report and agreed that Mr. McCabe did an outstanding job in both compiling and presenting the Report. The Commission agreed to support the steps by which the Nomination Report can be adopted.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS

Vice Chairman Orloff moved to memorialize the resolutions as submitted and seconded by Commissioner Rubacky in a vote of 5 ayes, no nays, and Commissioner Scotland abstaining.

1. HPC 2009-7 20 Lackawanna Plaza (Headed for the Stars)
2. HPC 2009-8 14 Park Street (Adi Hecht)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Orloff moved to memorialize the minutes of March 19, 2009 as amended and seconded by Commissioner Hageman in a vote of 5 ayes, no nays, and Commissioner Scotland abstaining.

Adjourn

At 10:00 pm, Commissioner Rubacky moved to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Commissioner Hageman.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick J. Franco Jr., recording secretary