

MIDDLETOWN PRESERVATION BOARD
Minutes: April 20, 1993

PRESENT

J. Bianco, Chair
H. Novicki
B. Corvo
S. Shapiro
B. Kronenberger
D. Vinci

ABSENT

N. Conaway-Raczka
D. Gallitto

ALSO PRESENT

C. Wilcox, staff

J. Bianco called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. in Room B-20 of the Municipal Building and staff distributed a draft of design guidelines which, when adopted, could become part of the North End CBD Urban Renewal Plan. (Members of the Board who were not also members of the Council or Redevelopment were given full copies of the Plan as well). Informal discussion of guidelines ensued, with staff's request that the Board's suggestions and comments be returned to the Municipal Development Office within the next week to 10 days. These will be incorporated into a final DRAFT to be presented to the Redevelopment Agency for an amendment to their plan in late May or June. Chairman Bianco reviewed the history of the former Design Review Committee and commented on his experience as an applicant to this type of review committee. He emphasized that the goal of the Board in creating Guidelines is that the goals of the guidelines themselves are clear. It is very frustrating for applicants to come up with good design in a vacuum, only to be turned down later by a review board which did not state what it would be looking for - up front. H. Novicki commented on the economic feasibility of attracting a lot of development activity; and S. Shapiro warned against adverse financial consequences of over-regulating. He did not want the guidelines to be so restrictive that development would be discouraged. B. Kronenberger felt most of the interest would be in the storefronts and J. Bianco reminded the Board that the economic and financial issues would not be in their purview. Those were issues for the Redevelopment Agency and Municipal Development Office. He went on to say that design review was not restrictive in and of itself..... that what they wished to accomplish was to give developers clear guidelines which would be good for both themselves and the City. B. Kronenberger noted it does not necessarily cost more to design appropriately; and a lot of improvement could be made by removal of inappropriate materials and signs which are existing now. Some more discussion ensued about "looks vs. expense" in cases where demolition and new construction would be cheaper than rehab. Chairman Bianco reminded the Board that "looks" was what they would be reviewing; that financial feasibility was the concern of the Redevelopment Agency; and that their recommendations were only advisory. The Board members agreed to "do their homework" and submit their comments to the Municipal Development Office.

Minutes

Upon a motion by S. Shapiro, seconded by H. Novicki, minutes of December 1992 and March 1993 were accepted unanimously.

Awards

J. Bianco reminded the Board that their vote at the last meeting for the preservation award ended with a tie for first place between Plaza Middlesex and the contiguous Middlesex Fruitery. Staff asked what the Board wished done to commemorate this event; and reminded them that May 9th - 15th was Preservation Week nationally. Consensus of items to be done by staff were:

- . Proclamations
- . Plaques (J. Bianco has artwork)
- . Descriptions of the two properties and their rehab (writing by D. Vinci)
- . Photographs (to be enlarged & exhibited)
- . Press Release
- . Letters to owners
- . Award Ceremony - tentatively set for Wed. May 12th at deKoven House to coincide with a lecture/workshop to be conducted by J. Bianco and A. Street on preservation. Awards might be at 6:30.

Other

Summer Hours: The Board agreed to: 1) have the awards ceremony be their May meeting; 2) meet in June at the regular time; 3) Not meet in July and August; and, 4) resume their regular schedule in September.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.


Cynthia G. Wilcox

CGW/lmk