

# MONTCLAIR CENTER **BID**

BID Office, January 7, 2015

In attendance: Gerold Sweeney, Michael Gillespie, Sue Schultz, Sharda Ramharack, Rich McMahon, Israel Cronk, Lisa Johnson, Robert Weber, Matt Silverman, Debbie Santiago and Luther Flurry.

Jerry called the meeting to order at 7pm.

Jerry congratulated Board members elected at our December Meeting to a 2015-2017 term. They included: Property owners Sharda Ramharack, Sue Schultz and Guy Kinley and Business Owners Lisa Johnson and Diane Israel.

Discussion of updates and vacancies led to discussions of the upside and downsides (landlord warehousing) of Valley and Bloom development. New tenants and activities in the Hahn Hinke building and 491 Bloomfield, across the street from the Hahn Hinke building.

Problems with on-street lighting, signage and a lack of consistency with Bloomfield Avenue trees were discussed. We will follow up with the arborist and look into an ordinance requiring retail establishments to stay lit at a certain level for certain hours. The feeling is that this will increase foot traffic, safety and commerce.

Israel Cronk led a conversation about the need to diversify our revenue to be less dependent on the assessments. Matt and Sharda agreed to sit on a fundraising committee.

The board unanimously re-elected Michael Gillespie to the Non-profit seat; Joann Smalls to the Resident seat; and Robert Weber to an At-Large seat. Matt Silverman was unanimously elected to an At-Large seat.

The sitting board officers were Nominated and unanimously re-elected: Phil Cantor, President; Jerry Sweeney, Vice President; Robert Weber, Treasurer; and Lisa Johnson, Secretary

The meeting adjourned at 7:52

## Updates

## Vacancies

Vacancies stubbornly stayed between 10 & 12% for all of 2014. Empty stores were slow to fill, but new tenants were generally stronger retailers than departing tenants. Downtown interest is high, particularly by nationals for large spaces. There were signs of good things to come at the December Historic Preservation (HPC) meeting : Changes to the Bloomfield Avenue side of the Hincke Building (Claridge Theater) were approved to accommodate a restaurant tenant, and renovations of 491 Bloomfield (old PNC bank, next to Chase/Morgan) were approved, where several new tenants have hand-shake deals. One is a ground floor Insurance Agent, which will require a variance.

<b>New</b>	<b>Coming Soon</b>	<b>Closed</b>
Miracle Origins 190 Bloomfield	Sprint 425 Bloomfield	Elevation Burger 367 Bloomfield
Elan Salon 208 Glenridge		Montclair Feed 191 Glenridge
Mish Mish Coffee & Food 215 Glenridge		Tutu Spoiled 30 S. Fullerton
Chocolate Works 42 South Park (Opening tomorrow, 1/8/15)		

## Events

Our next scheduled event is Ladies Night Out in March. Penciled in on March 13. We are talking to Yelp, NJ to see if there is something we can do together.

## Recognition

We have just learned that we were nominated for New Jersey's Favorite Downtown Arts District. Online voting started today, Jan 7 here: <http://www.jerseyarts.com/peopleschoice/> . If we win, that will be 3 in a row, but the competition has gotten stiffer each year. Other Montclair nominees include the Montclair Art Museum (3 nominations), Montclair Film Fest, Jazz House Kids, and Montclair State University (2 nominations). Please vote and please support Montclair Arts Institutions.

National Main Street Conference will be in Atlanta March 30-April 2. We hope to hear good news about the Great American Main Street Award there.