

MONTCLAIR CENTER BID

GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD WINNER 2015

MONTCLAIR CENTER BID – BOARD MEETING

February 18, 2026 | 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

In Person at The Montclair Mezzanine, 488 Bloomfield Ave, or via Zoom

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

Board Members in Attendance: Deborah Stymest, Nat Testa, Joann Smalls, Daniel White, Amir Kamal, Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa, Matt Horrigan, Ernst Goldman, Jacob Baccus, Karen Schloss-Diaz, Dave Placek, Brian Silver, Neil Grabowsky

Board Members via Zoom: Rahum Williams, Aminah Toler, Lamont James, Mary Cumella

Absent: Kristine Ellis-Petrik, Te’Nijah Bussey, Rachael Grochowski

Consultant: Jason Gleason (People & Places LLC)

The meeting was called to order by Board President Goldman.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were recorded.

III. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

A. BID Office

The board discussed the recent flooding of the BID office space caused by a burst pipe. The situation has prompted negotiations with the landlord over responsibility and compensation for the resulting damage. The board is weighing the possibility of vacating the space, with a working target of giving the organization roughly 30 days to transition to a new location should a move become necessary. The general sense of the board was that, while disruptive, the situation presents a reasonable opportunity to reassess the organization’s office needs going forward.

B. HR Committee / Transition Update

The HR Committee reported on its first formal meeting. Working with legal counsel, the committee has drafted a letter to three former employees who raised concerns, inviting them to share their experiences. The board was generally supportive of this proactive outreach as a responsible step. The committee also provided an update on the executive director search, noting that engaging a professional search firm is the preferred path forward.

VOTE

Motion to empower the Search Committee to engage one or more executive search firms to assist in hiring an Executive Director, with a budget of up to \$30,000.

Motion: Ernst Goldman

Second: Joann Smalls

Yeas: Deborah Stymest, Nat Testa, Joann Smalls, Daniel White, Amir Kamal, Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa, Matt Horrigan, Ernst Goldman, Jacob Baccus, Karen Schloss-Diaz, Dave Placek, Brian Silver, Neil Grabowsky

Abstain: Rahum Williams, Aminah Toler, Lamont James, Mary Cumella

Result: Motion passed.

C. Committee Chairs – Volunteer / Appointment

Board members were asked to submit their committee preferences to the executive committee within one week. Several members expressed interest in Marketing and Public Relations. A fuller discussion of committee assignments was deferred given time constraints.

V. CONSULTANT'S TRANSITION UPDATE

A. Month's Accomplishments

Jason reported that the organization remains in solid financial standing. Key recent accomplishments include: creating a strategic transitional framework, completing HR compliance correspondence, filing the amended 990, and securing the BID's email system through Real Solutions, work with landlord and executive committee members on loss of office issues. Transition to ACH payments and improvements to bill approval procedures are also underway, providing better financial oversight during the transition period.

B. Staffing / Vendor Update

Jason is currently managing compliance and day-to-day operations and has identified the need for support in the near term. The board discussed bringing on professional contracted services on short-term agreements to maintain marketing efforts and manage DMO obligations during the transition. Jackie will be returning on a limited basis (one day per week) to assist with DMO responsibilities, and new marketing vendors are being onboarded as approved by the Executive Committee. The board agreed that the incoming Executive Director should have the authority to hire their own Assistant Director rather than having that position pre-committed.

VI. TREASURER'S REPORT (Matt Horrigan)

Treasurer Horrigan provided a brief financial update. The organization is in good shape overall. The Financial Affairs Committee was asked to schedule a meeting to discuss potential budget reallocations in light of current operational changes.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. FIFA / World Cup Update (Jason Gleason, Dave Placek, Daniel White)

Dave Placek provided an update on the World Cup bid process, noting that progress through the official host committee channels has been slower than hoped. The BID is preparing to move forward independently if necessary, including developing a DMO marketing campaign to support local businesses during the FIFA period. Jason shared a list of limited agencies involved in the BID. A portal for businesses to register FIFA-related events is in development and is expected to be ready shortly.

B. Proposed Parking Changes – Move to Committee

The parking proposal was briefly discussed. The board agreed the matter warrants deeper review and will be moved to committee before returning to the full board. Jason agreed to circulate a refined parking proposal deck once it is received from the township.

C. Porchfest Proposal

Porchfest was raised as a possible BID-supported event. No formal action was taken; the item was noted for committee follow-up as no formal proposal has been received to date.

D. Earth Fest & Zine Fest

Both events were discussed in the context of the BID's 2026 programming calendar.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. BID Involvement in Annual Events

The board discussed the BID's role in several key annual events:

- **Pride Festival:** Dave Placek confirmed Pride is tentatively scheduled for June 13th, with a possible venue at Lackawanna Plaza. The board expressed general support for BID involvement.
- **Jazz Fest:** Discussed as an important downtown anchor event. BID participation was viewed favorably by the board.
- **Film Fest:** Flagged as another event where BID involvement could add value. The conversation touched on a broader desire to develop programming that drives traffic to Montclair's restaurants and downtown. Some board members suggested forming a dedicated events committee.

B. Main Street America Board Training – March 26th

All board members were encouraged to attend the Main Street America Board Training on March 26th. General enthusiasm for participation was noted.

C. 2026 Goals and Vision (Time Permitting)

A broader conversation on the BID's goals and vision for 2026 was noted on the agenda but deferred due to time constraints. This item will be carried forward to a future meeting.

IX. OPEN DISCUSSION

No additional items were raised.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was called to be adjourned by Board President Goldman. Matt Horrigan seconded. All were in favor. The next full board meeting will be Wednesday, March 18, 2026, 7:00 p.m. at The Montclair Mezzanine, 488 Bloomfield Ave, or via Zoom.