

MONTCLAIR CENTER BID

GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD WINNER 2015

MONTCLAIR CENTER BID – BOARD MEETING

January 21, 2026 | 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

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

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

Board Members in Attendance: Neil Grabowsky, Rachael Grochowski, Karen Schloss-Diaz, David Placek, Amir Kamal, Mary Cumella, Kristine Ellis-Petrik, Joann Smalls, Matt Horrigan, Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa, Ernst Goldman, Brian Silver, Matt Silverman, Deborah Stymest, Nat Testa, Jacob Nieman

Board Members via Zoom: Aminah Toler, Rahum Williams, Te'Nijah Bussey, Daniel White

Absent: Lamont James, Jacob Baccus

Staff: Lauren Barnas, Alex Brosseau

Consultant: Jason Gleason (People & Places LLC)

Public: Jeremy Pholwattana

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. As this was the first meeting of the new board year, introductions were made around the room. New directors were welcomed. The board also recognized the appointment of Jacob Nieman as the Township of Montclair's new Complete Streets Director and extended congratulations on his behalf.

II. ADOPTION OF DECEMBER MINUTES

The December minutes were reviewed. A minor correction was noted in the attendance section, and a clarification was requested in the Treasurer's Report to better reflect the nature of the \$237,000 referenced as DMO grant funding. With those amendments noted, the minutes were approved.

Motion: Matt Horrigan

Second: Rachael Grochowski

All in favor except: David Placek (Abstained)

Result: Approved with amendments.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jeremy Pholwattana of Downtown Montclair returned to follow up on his December presentation regarding Porchfest. He provided additional detail on the event's first-year success, over 6,000 attendees and 164 bands, and outlined his vision for a downtown finale on May 16th, including a main stage, kids' programming, and an unnamed high-profile closing act. He shared concepts of a plan for where he is seeking BID support. The board was generally receptive and asked that he submit a formal proposal using the BID's established funding request process. Staff will provide him with the appropriate form.

IV. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. Organization Discussion – Executive Session

Prior to moving into Executive Session, President Goldman provided context for new board members regarding the organizational transition that had taken place since December. Members of staff were present and expressed that they had concerns they wished to bring to the board's attention regarding how the transition was being handled. The board acknowledged those concerns, affirmed their seriousness, and committed to hearing from staff. It was agreed that staff would have the opportunity to return and be heard following the Executive Session.

The board moved into Executive Session to address confidential organizational matters. Two consecutive Executive Sessions were held. Upon returning to open session, no further public action was taken on these matters.

B. New Complete Streets Director – Congratulations to Jacob Nieman

The board recognized Jacob Nieman's new role as Complete Streets Director for the Township of Montclair and expressed enthusiasm for continued collaboration with the township on street safety, Vision Zero efforts, and related advocacy — all of which directly affect the BID district.

C. Conflict of Interest Forms

All board members were reminded to sign and submit their annual Conflict of Interest disclosure forms before leaving the meeting. This is a standing annual requirement.

D. Committee Sign-Ups

Board members were reminded that committee participation is required of all directors. Sign-up sheets were circulated. Chairs are needed for certain committees due to member transitions from the prior board year. All board members were encouraged to sign up before the end of the evening.

V. CONSULTANT'S TRANSITION UPDATE

A. Onboarding for New Directors

Gleason indicated he would be distributing an onboarding packet to all new directors in the coming days, covering BID operations, structure, and key information. He offered to meet with new directors individually or as a group.

B. Grant Reporting

Both of the BID's primary grants are in good standing. The Main Street New Jersey grant reporting has now been completed and submitted. The DMO grant (State Department of Tourism) is current and in compliance, with a minor administrative item being resolved on the state's end related to a FIFA-related allocation.

C. Office Security

Work is underway to secure the BID's IT systems and ensure communications are properly archived in compliance with OPRA and state requirements.

D. World Cup / FIFA Planning

See Old Business, Section VII.

VI. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Silver noted that a full written report will be shared at the February meeting. He reported that the BID closed 2025 approximately \$18,000 in the positive, driven largely by reduced staffing costs throughout the year. There were some line-item overages in operations. The full bridge report will be distributed to the board.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

1. World Cup / FIFA Planning (Daniel White)

Daniel White of the Montclair Township Economic Development office reported on an initial stakeholder meeting held to begin planning around the FIFA World Cup. Montclair is generally in-line with comparable communities in beginning this conversation. The BID and township agreed to develop programming in a parallel fashion, each building their own calendar while looking for opportunities to collaborate and coordinate. Next steps include developing outreach strategies to area businesses and organizations. There was interest from the board in exploring corporate sponsorship opportunities and activating private event venues within the district.

2. Parking Changes (Matt Silverman)

Vice President Silverman provided an update on parking policy discussions with the township. A proposal is being developed to extend meter hours during peak evenings to improve turnover and parking availability for businesses and visitors. A formal presentation to the town council is expected in February. The board noted this represents years of BID advocacy on parking and expressed appreciation for the progress.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2026 Programming – Committee Involvement Needed

Two upcoming programming opportunities were briefly discussed:

- **Earth Day:** The BID has been invited to partner with the Township Sustainability Office for an Earth Day event on Park Street, consistent with prior years. The projected BID cost is approximately \$1,500. The board was receptive.
- **Porchfest:** Following the public comment, the board discussed the event in general terms. No commitment was made; a formal proposal from the organizer is needed before further consideration.

IX. RECRUITMENT, NOMINATION, AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa)

A. Officer Elections

The Nominations and Elections Committee presented a slate of one candidate per officer position, arrived at through a nomination and confirmation process in the weeks prior. The slate was as follows:

- **President:** Ernst Goldman (re-election)
- **Vice President:** Neil Grabowsky
- **Treasurer:** Matt Horrigan
- **Secretary:** David Placek
- **Assistant Secretary/Treasurer:** Rachael Grochowski

Motion: Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa

Second: Joann Smalls

Yeas: Neil Grabowsky, Rachael Grochowski, Karen Schloss-Diaz, David Placek, Amir Kamal, Mary Cumella, Kristine Ellis-Pietrich, Joann Smalls, Matt Horrigan, Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa, Ernst Goldman, Daniel White, Brian Silver, Matt Silverman, Deborah Stymest, Nat Testa

Abstain: Aminah Toler

No Vote: Jacob Nieman, Te'Nijah Bussey, Rahum Williams

Result: Slate confirmed. Congratulations to the incoming executive officers.

X. OPEN DISCUSSION

No additional items were raised.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned. The next full board meeting will be Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 7 p.m. at the BID Office.