

MONTCLAIR CENTER BID

GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD WINNER 2015

MONTCLAIR CENTER BID – BOARD MEETING

March 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: Joann Smalls, Karen Schloss-Diaz, Matt Horrigan, Nat Testa, Amir Kamal, Ernst Goldman, Neil Grabowsky, Deborah Stymest, Daniel White, Jacob Baccus

Board Members via Zoom: Mary Cumella, Rahum Williams, Te’Nijah Bussey, Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa, Aminah Toler, Rachael Grochowski

Absent: Dave Placek, Brian Silver, Kristine Ellis-Petrik, Lamont James

Consultant: Jason Gleason (People & Places LLC)

The meeting was called to order by Board President Goldman.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were recorded.

IV. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

A. Executive Session

The board moved into Executive Session.

Motion to enter Executive Session: Ernst Goldman

Second: Dave Placek

Result: Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to return to open session: Ernst Goldman

Second: Dave Placek

Result: Motion carried unanimously.

Upon returning to open session, no further public action was taken on Executive Session matters.

B. HR Investigation – Update

Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa provided an update on behalf of the HR Committee. Letters were sent to former staff on Monday inviting them to schedule confidential meetings, with a two-week window to respond. A follow-up meeting with Jason is scheduled for early April to review HR matters and, once responses are received, the committee plans to schedule meetings with former executives accordingly. The board was generally supportive of the measured and process-driven approach being taken.

C. Transition Activities – Update

Jason's consulting contract, which had been scaled to two days per week, was discussed in the context of the organization's growing operational needs during the transition. The board agreed to expand the contract to three days per week. Additionally, the need for further part-time administrative support was discussed, with the board approving Jason's ability to engage up to two 1099 contractors to bridge operational gaps until an Executive Director is in place.

Motion to expand Jason Gleason's contract from two days to three days per week:

Motion: Neil Grabowsky

Second: Ernst Goldman

Abstain: Aminah Toler, Rahum Williams

Result: Motion carried.

D. Committee Formation – Finalize

Board members were reminded to finalize their committee assignments. Consultant Gleason noted that committee descriptions and sub-portals on Basecamp are being set up to support each committee's work. The Recruitment, Nominations, and Elections Committee composition was flagged as needing a formal board vote per the bylaws, as it must include business owners, property owners, and a member of the Township's Council.

V. CONSULTANT'S TRANSITION UPDATE (Jason Gleason)

A. February / March Updates

Grants, Compliance & Finance: Both primary grants remain in good standing. Compliance work is ongoing, including preparation of the DMO annual report and engagement of an auditing firm; an engagement letter will be brought to the Financial Affairs Committee for review. Additional completed items include the 2025 NJ Annual Report and a draft Unified Governance document for Executive Committee review. Financial processes continue to be streamlined through a centralized billing email and improved payment workflows. An annual budget packet has been prepared for presentation to council members for approval of the BID's 2026 budget.

Interim Staffing & Vendors: The marketing vendor team is actively working on a content calendar, brand refresh, and collaborative posts with Experience Montclair. The board discussed the value of establishing clear metrics and a monthly reporting cadence for social media and marketing performance.

Operations: The office is being vacated by April 11th as requested by the landlord. Jason is coordinating storage of remaining items and transition logistics. Outstanding conflict-of-interest forms are being collected from board members.

VI. TREASURER'S REPORT (Matt Horigan)

A. Budget Presentation with Township

Treasurer Horrigan noted that a budget presentation with the Township is forthcoming after submitting the prepared annual budget packet. No detailed figures were presented at this meeting.

B. Finance Committee Meeting – Quarterly Reporting

The Financial Affairs Committee meeting is to be scheduled ahead of the April 15th board meeting to review quarterly year-to-date BID budget figures and DMO year-to-date budget figures and to prepare quarterly reporting for the full board.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. World Cup Planning (Dave Placek)

Dave Placek provided an update on World Cup / FIFA planning efforts. Work continues to develop BID programming in coordination with the Township. A business registration portal for FIFA-related events is in progress. The DMO marketing campaign to support local businesses during the FIFA period is being developed in tandem.

B. BID Office Update and Options

The board discussed the status of the office space following the flooding and landlord negotiations. The landlord has requested the space be vacated by April 11th. The board reviewed options for transitioning to a new office arrangement and tasked Jason with coordinating the move and storage of materials.

C. Main Street America Board Training – March 26th

The Main Street America Board Training is scheduled for March 26th from 1–5 p.m. at the Montclair Mezzanine. All board members were encouraged to attend. Jason will send invitations and logistics details and will solicit participation for the walking tour portion of the day.

D. Events: Zine Fest & Earth Fest

Zine Fest is scheduled for March 28–29. Earth Fest is planned for April 26th. Both events were noted in the context of BID programming support. An informal request from the Porchfest organizer (Jeremy Powhlotanna, Downtown Montclair) for after-event cleanup support and banner purchase and hanging assistance was briefly raised. Jason will prepare a cost breakdown.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Committee Meeting Schedules

Committee chairs were asked to set meeting schedules and notify their members. The Placemaking Committee has a meeting confirmed for Monday the 23rd at 4 p.m. The Marketing Committee kickoff is to be scheduled by its co-chairs.

B. Main Street New Jersey Grant Application – Due April 28th

Jason flagged the upcoming Main Street New Jersey grant application deadline of April 28th. A standalone Basecamp thread will be created to collect board members' project ideas and suggestions.

C. Events: Pride, Jazz & Film Festivals

Jason presented a summary of the asks and proposed BID contributions for the Pride Festival, Montclair Jazz Festival, and Montclair Film Festival, covering both cash support and in-kind

contributions. The board discussed the community impact of these anchor events and the importance of BID involvement.

Motion to approve BID funding contributions for the Pride, Jazz, and Film Festivals:

Motion: Ernst Goldman

Second: Neil Grabowsky

Abstain: Rahum Williams

No Vote: Aminah Toler

Result: Motion carried.

IX. RECRUITMENT, NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa)

A. Executive Director Search Update

Daniel Garcia-Pedrosa reported that the committee has selected a search firm: Professional Management JPN. The firm will conduct the executive director search for a fee of \$12,000, with an estimated timeline of 10–12 weeks. The search process consists of four phases – preparation, marketing and outreach, screening, and selection – and includes the flexibility to cancel at any point if the board is not satisfied with progress.

The job description has been finalized, incorporating input from Deborah Stymest, and will be uploaded to Basecamp and shared with the firm. The search committee retains authority to make the final hiring recommendation, which will then be presented to the full board. The board discussed the importance of a fair, consistent process and confirmed that all direct applications received by board members should be referred to the search firm.

X. OPEN DISCUSSION

No additional items were raised.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was motioned to be adjourned by Board President Goldman at 9:16 p.m. The next full board meeting will be Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 7:00 p.m. at The Montclair Mezzanine, 488 Bloomfield Ave, or via Zoom.