

Documenters

POWERED BY CITY BUREAU & SIGNAL CLEVELAND

Landmarks Commission

Documenter name: Anna Truax

Agency: [Cleveland Landmarks Commission](#)

Date: Dec. 11, 2025

[See more about this meeting at Documenters.org](#)

Summary

- The Cleveland Landmarks Commission reviewed projects involving renovations, demolitions, and new signage, evaluating each with attention to the historic significance of the buildings.
- Design changes were considered to ensure consistency with the historic character and context of each property.
- New historic landmark designations, including for two churches and a building significant to Kamm's Corner, were approved following in-depth presentations on the history and cultural importance of the sites.

Follow-Up Questions

- Are there checks or processes in place to ensure consistency and objectivity across different commissioners and projects?
- What is the process for residents or property owners to nominate new buildings for historic landmark consideration? *[Editor's note: [Cleveland has lots of landmarks.](#) [How does the city designate them?](#)]*

Notes

CLEVELAND LANDMARKS COMMISSION

City Hall – Room 514 / WebEx Virtual Meeting (streamed on [YouTube](#))

9:15 a.m. — Dec. 11

[AGENDA](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Commission members

Michele Anderson

Mark Duluk

Chris Loeser (absent)

Calley Mersmann, director of Cleveland City Planning (had to step away about an hour into the meeting; replaced by Nate Lull from City Planning, who voted)

Robert Strickland, vice chair (absent)

Raymond Tarasuck Jr. (absent)

Julie Trott, chair

Deborah Gray, Ward 4 Cleveland City Council Member

Regennia Williams

Michael Sanbury

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

1. Case 25-077: Clifton/West Boulevard Historic District

Tabled Oct. 9

Safar Fine Casual Dining – 11526 Clifton Blvd.

Scope: Signage and awning

Ward: 15 (Council Member Jenny Spencer)

Representatives: Aldo Dure, BNEXT Awnings & Graphics

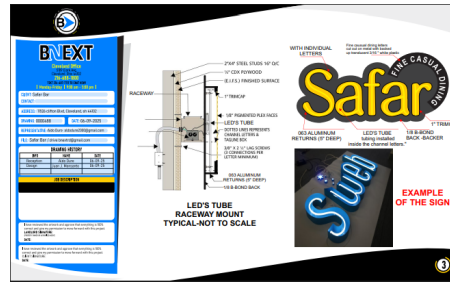
Timestamp [HERE](#)

The commission voted to “untable” the Safar Fine Casual Dining signage case and heard a presentation from the applicant. Dure of BNEXT presented revised signage plans. The update included LED neon-style channel letters on a raceway, refreshed window graphics, and keeping the existing awnings. Commission members were generally supportive, noting that the changes addressed previous feedback, though they had a few minor concerns about how the lettering lined up with the window mullions.

Overall, commissioners liked the revisions and emphasized making sure the alignment stayed consistent and that fasteners and electrical work went through the mortar joints.

Decision: Approved unanimously, with conditions regarding mullion alignment and installation through mortar joints.

Follow [this link](#) to see the full presentation!



2. Case 25-090: Lorain Variety Historic District

Kids Can Be Kids Learning Center – 11642 Lorain Ave.

Scope: Signage

Ward: 11 (Council Member Danny Kelly)

Representatives: Alicia Garcia, owner

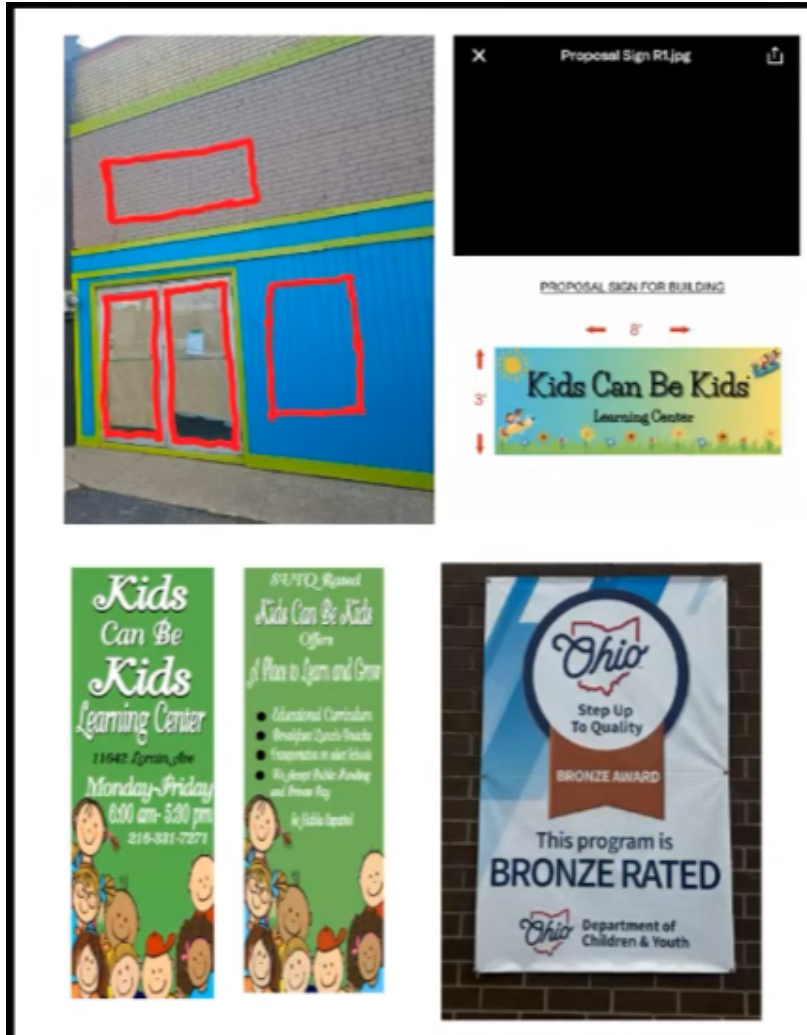
Timestamp [HERE](#)

The commission reviewed the signage plans for Kids Can Be Kids Learning Center at 11642 Lorain Ave. The applicant, represented in this meeting by her daughter and site administrator, Kathiana DeJesus (spelling unconfirmed), proposed swapping out temporary vinyl banners for aluminum composite panels and adding window decals for privacy and information. The Historic West Cleveland Design Advisory Committee supported the plan, an official said, recommending permanent materials and consolidating the signage. Commission members were also supportive, noting that some [variances](#) might be needed.

They commended the applicant for taking previous feedback into account and emphasized making sure the new signage is installed properly through the mortar joints and that old signage is removed. Trott, the commission chair, congratulated the applicant and thanked them for their work and in-person attendance.

Decision: Approved unanimously, with conditions to grant necessary variances and require installation through mortar joints.

Click [here](#) for more details



3. Case 25-091: First Methodist Church / Prospect Avenue Historic District

3001 Prospect Ave.

Scope: Fence replacement

Ward: 7 (Council Member Stephanie Howse-Jones)

Representatives: Bob Sparent, RJS Fence

Timestamp [HERE](#)

Presentation materials [HERE](#)

Bob Sparent of RJS Fence presented plans to replace the worn-out fencing around the south parking lot at First Methodist Church on Prospect Avenue to improve security while keeping a look that fits the historic district. The proposal replaces the existing 4-foot fences with 6-foot fencing (ornamental fencing on the west and south sides and chain-link fencing on the east) while keeping the same layout and the emergency access gate on Prospect Avenue.

Discussion focused on two issues: Whether [finials](#) should be added to the ornamental fence and the poor condition of the concrete curb around the lot. The applicant explained that finials were declined due to cost and because nearby properties use the same fence style. But he said they're committed to repairing the curb once the fence is removed, noting multiple areas of damage.

Commissioner Anderson expressed support for the project, noting recent break-ins at church parking lots and agreeing that improved security is reasonable. While she preferred finials for aesthetics, she acknowledged the significant cost and understood the applicant's reluctance.

Commissioner Duluk raised a design question about whether the corner fence posts would be larger than the others, given that the site is a corner lot. Sparent responded that corner posts are the same size as the others, with only certain functional posts differing in size.

The commission clarified that the existing fence, while older, is not historic (likely installed in the 1980s or 1990s). They also noted that the property is located in a retail zoning district, meaning a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals may be required. Overall, the commission supported the project, strongly encouraged exploring finials, and required that the curb be repaired as part of the work.

Curb Condition: reconstruct



Decision: Commissioners approved the project unanimously, allowing the fence to go in first for security as long as curb repairs are completed afterward, strongly encouraged exploring finials further without imposing it as a requirement, and expressed support for any zoning variances needed.

Curb Condition: typical condition



4. Case 25-092: Lorain Station Historic District

Related Case 25-088 approved Nov. 13, 2025

Kim's Caribbean Kitchen – 9615 Lorain Ave.

Scope: Pole signage

Ward: 11 (Council Member Danny Kelly)

Representatives: Aldo Dure, BNext Awnings & Graphics, Inc.

Timestamp [HERE](#)

Presentation materials [HERE](#)

BNEXT
Awnings & Graphics, Inc.
250-428-0888
[Map/Location] [150 sq. ft. 100 sq. ft.]

CLIENT: Kim's Caribbean Kitchen
CONTACT:
ADDRESS: 9615 Lorain Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio, 44102, U.S.A.
PHONE: 216-428-0888
DATE: 01-05-2025
EMAIL: aldodure@bnext.com
BNext Awnings & Graphics, Inc. 250-428-0888

DRAWING HISTORY

INFO	NAME	DATE
Perception	Aldo Dure	01-05-25
Design	Aldo Dure	01-05-25

NO SITE VISITATION

REFACING EXISTING POLE SIGN DOUBLE FACES

EXISTING POLE SIGN

COLOR SPECIFICATIONS

COLOR	CODE
GREEN	PANTONE 349 C
WHITE	PANTONE 100 C
BLACK	PANTONE 690 C

Customer Initials
for approval: _____

Sign Measurement
SIGNAGE REPRESENTS 64.0 SQ. FT.

2



Dure of BNext presented a proposal of a revised rendering of the existing pole sign. He proposed refacing the existing pole sign cabinet rather than installing a new structure, removing the phone number from the sign, and replacing the sign faces only.

The property has housed several restaurants over time, including Hobo Joe's and Babe's Soul Food, and historically featured a pole sign, including a well-known neon hot dog sign. In 2020, the commission approved new building signage with the condition that the pole sign be removed. While the upper portion was taken down, the pole itself was not. Between 2022 and 2024, a sign cabinet reappeared on the pole without permits or sign faces.

The current request seeks only to re-skin and install faces on the existing cabinet, not to add a new pole. The applicant emphasized their strong desire for a pole sign due to its visibility and advantage in advertising. They argued that a monument sign would be less visible and therefore less effective. There is historical precedent for reusing existing pole signs through the storefront renovation program, said Dan Musson, commission secretary.

Commissioner Sanbury, citing the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for historic properties](#), viewed the pole sign as an existing condition at time of ownership in 2020 and argued that the proposal is only a maintenance and aesthetic update rather than a

change in structure. Duluk asked whether approval would require a variance and whether the commission could grant or support one.

There was a split opinion: Some commission members pressed for a monument sign, while others pointed out that the pole sign fits the mid-century-modern building style in support of the applicant's desires.

Decision: Ultimately approved 6-1, with approval for any necessary variances needed to implement the applicant's proposal. Trott voted no.

5. Case 25-093: Shaker Square Historic District

Blace Building – 2860 E. 130th St.

Scope: Demolition

Ward: 6 (Council President Blaine Griffin)

Representatives: Woo Jun, City of Cleveland Demolition Bureau

Timestamp [HERE](#)

Presentation materials [HERE](#)

The application concerned the proposed demolition of the Blace Building, a condemned commercial office property at 2860 E. 130th St. within the Shaker Square Historic District. The building sits on approximately a quarter acre and has been vacant and condemned since February 2025, with ongoing nuisance issues including drug activity, trash, human waste, break-ins and squatters, Jun said.

The current owner, Cuyahoga Real Estate Group, has held the property for about three years and previously expressed interest in renovating it for use as a trade school, though no rehabilitation plans have been submitted, Jun said.



While the building has some historic character, its architectural significance is limited, as it was constructed in 1952, after the district's period of significance as outlined by the National Register Historic District nomination, said Landmarks Staff Member Jessica Beam.

Commissioners expressed serious concerns about public safety and the continued negative impact on the surrounding community,

with several members supporting demolition due to the lack of progress and ongoing conditions. Others urged caution, noting the building could potentially be rehabilitated and recommending the owner be given a final opportunity to act.

Under the applicable legal standards, the commission chose to table the application for three months to allow the owner to demonstrate meaningful progress toward renovation, with city staff directed to clearly communicate expectations and timelines. The motion passed by a 6-1 vote. Gray voted no.

6. Case 25-084: Cleveland Music School Settlement / Magnolia–Wade Park Historic District

Schematic review completed Oct. 23

The Music Settlement – 1560 Mistletoe Dr.

Scope: Renovation and addition

Ward: 9 (Council Member Kevin Conwell)

Representatives: Peter Bohan, Perspectus Architecture

Timestamp [HERE](#)

Presentation materials [HERE](#)





The commission reviewed the proposed renovation and addition at the Music Settlement, located at the corner of Wade Park Avenue and Mistletoe Drive. Presenters Peter Bohan (Perspectus Architecture) and John Williams (Process Creative Studios) outlined plans to remove a vinyl-sided garage and porch, restore the historic Grease House, and construct a two-story addition featuring classrooms, accessible entrances and an elevator. The design emphasizes accessibility, continuity with the existing architecture, and the use of materials (brick, metal panels, and trim) that complement the campus while clearly distinguishing new construction from historic structures.

Key updates and design adjustments:

- Brick color and texture refined to harmonize with existing buildings.
- Introduction of a “hyphen” between the addition and the historic house to reduce bulk and provide a softer transition.
- Alignment of horizontal elements and window proportions for consistency.
- Restoration of dormers, siding, trim, roof and windows.
- Mechanical screening for the elevator integrated into the roof design.

The commission expressed overall support for the Music Settlement renovation, including the hyphen and material selections, while noting concerns about the brick tone and the visual impact of the mechanical/elevator tower. Commissioners requested additional renderings from multiple street views, detailed site plans, and setback information to better assess neighborhood impact, and suggested exploring warmer brick tones or complementary materials to align with existing sandstone and brick.

The Greater Northeast Historic Design Review Advisory Committee recommended approval with conditions, requiring approval of final window and roof details and contextual renderings, Beam said. Applicants confirmed neighbor consultation and agreement.

Decision: Approved with condition that applicant submits the requested visualizations, detailed site plans, and minor refinements to color, materials and mechanical screening to Landmarks staff for final approval. The applicant reserves the right to bring those plans back to the commission. Approved 6 - 1. Anderson voted no.

CLEVELAND LANDMARK NOMINATIONS

Oswald Kamm Building

17209 Lorain Ave.

Ward: 17 (Council Member Charles Slife)

Second Mount Olive Baptist Church

757 Eddy Road

Ward: 10 (Council Member Anthony Hairston)

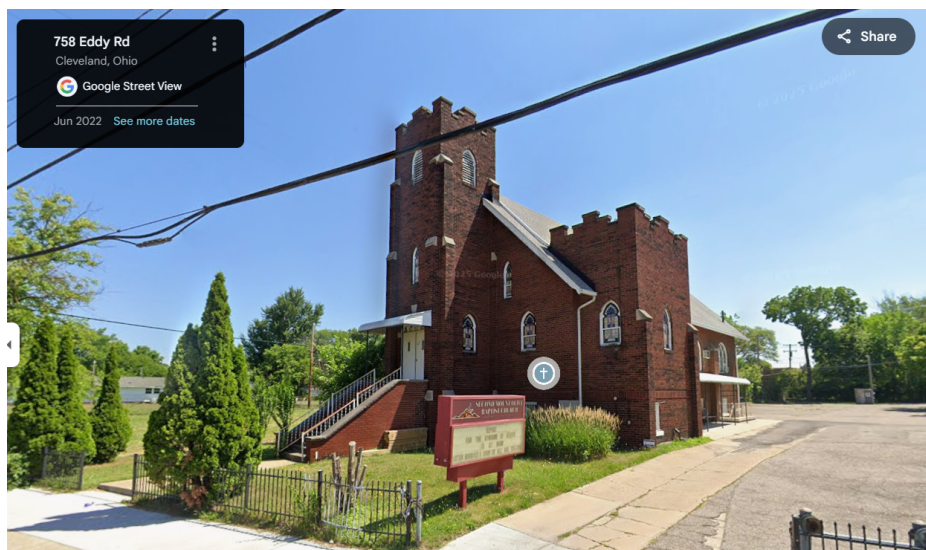
Mount Moriah Baptist Church

10101 St. Clair Ave.

Ward: 9 (Council Member Kevin Conwell)

Cleveland City Code: [161.04 Designation of Landmarks and Landmarks Districts](#)

Second Mount Olive Baptist Church



Timestamp [HERE](#)

Presented by Landmarks Staff Member Karl Brunjes.

Founded: 1917 by African American families from Alabama.

Current building acquired: 1961.

Community role: Hosts programs such as Head Start, youth mentoring, voter registration drives, community pantry and senior outreach.

Historical significance: Serves as a cultural and social anchor in the Glenville neighborhood.

Commission decision: Nominated as a Cleveland landmark – unanimously approved.

Mount Mariah Baptist Church (10101 St. Clair Ave.)



Ward: 9

Timestamp [HERE](#)

Brunjes presented.

Founded: 1946.

Current building: 1963, designed by architect Robert Madison, the first African American registered to practice architecture in Ohio.

Features: Stained glass windows by artist Douglas Phillips, significant in both religious and contemporary art communities.

Community role: Served as a center for cultural, social and educational programs.

Commission decision: Nominated as a Cleveland landmark – unanimously approved.

Oswald Cam Building (17209 Lorain Ave., Kamm's Corners)

Ward: 17 (Slife)

Timestamp [HERE](#)

Nate Lull presented.

Built: Circa 1898-1900 by Swiss immigrant Oswald Kamm.

Historical use: Originally a grocery store and post office; later housed restaurants, including Tony's Spaghetti House.

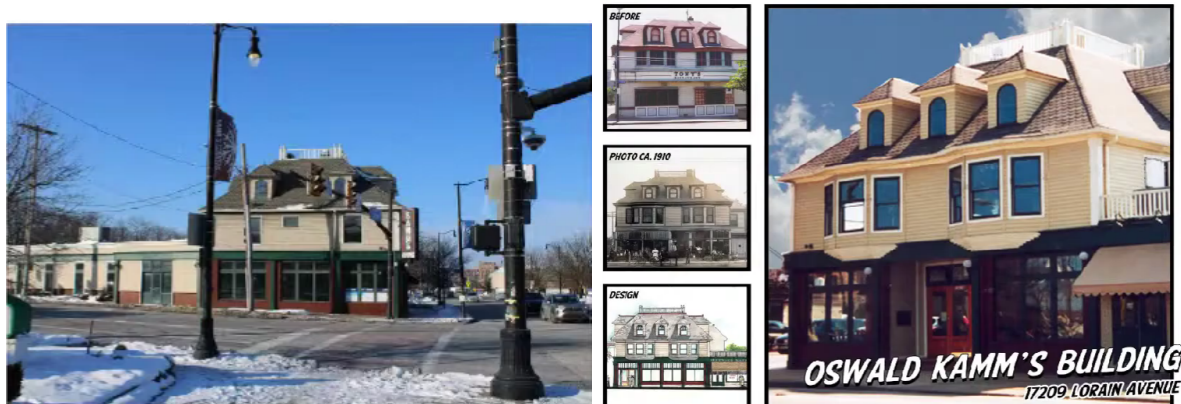


Significance: Building reflects development of Kamm's Corners neighborhood and serves as a familiar landmark.

Renovations: Several additions (1944, 1975, 1980, 2010) and a historically sensitive restoration in the 1990s.

Ownership: Future owner supports nomination; property is in the process of sale.

Commission decision: Nominated as a Cleveland landmark – unanimously approved (with one recusal — Lull).



DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The commission appointed the people listed at [this point in the meeting](#) to various local design review committees.

ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting: Jan. 8, 2026

According to the agenda, public comments are due by **noon on the Tuesday prior** to any regularly scheduled meeting. Comments should be submitted via email to **landmarks@clevelandohio.gov**, by phone at **216-664-2532**, or by letter to the Landmarks Commission office at City Hall.

If you believe anything in these notes is inaccurate, please email us at cleDOCUMENTERS@gmail.com with "Correction Request" in the subject line.