

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER**

**December 17, 2009
LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL**

Commission Members Present: Peter Schneider, Chair
Thomas Constantine
Timothy McCann
Michael Theerman
James Crowley
Janet Merrill

Staff Present: Edgar Luna, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schneider called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

CONTINUANCES – WITHDRAWALS

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon a motion by Timothy McCann and seconded by Michael Theerman, the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the minutes from the December 3, 2009 Historical Commission meeting (Commissioners Crowley and Merrill were not present at the December 3, 2009 meeting).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. 9 Earle Street (HC-2009-084) Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Michael Mason and Charles Wilmont, representatives for the petitioners, and Sonny and Nga Huynh owners and petitioners, presented the petition. Mr. Mason stated that the petitioners were seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to remove the existing siding and replace it with vinyl siding and, remove and replace twenty-four (24) windows with energy star rated vinyl windows. Chair Schneider reminded the Commission that the hearing for this project was continued from the December 3, 2009 meeting to allow additional time to the

petitioner to consider re-siding the front of the house with wood shingles, re-side the rest of the house with vinyl siding, restore the imbricate shingle style siding located on the gable sections of the house with like materials, repair and/or restore the front-bay windows with like materials, and replace the remaining windows with vinyl windows. He also indicated that the petitioner was asked to provide a cost estimate of the aforementioned restoration plan, versus re-siding the entire house with vinyl siding and replacing the twenty-four (24) windows with vinyl windows. In addition, Chair Schneider reminded the Commission that the petitioner had already been granted a Building Demolition Delay Waiver to remove and replace the roof. Mr. Mason stated that approximately two-thirds (2/3) of the exterior siding and windows have deteriorated beyond repair and could not be restored. He also indicated that the roof lines, soffits and fascia have rotted through to the rafters; therefore, in his opinion, replacement was the only option. Mr. Mason also stated that the severe state of decay of the exterior features of the house compromised the structural integrity of the building and would lead to further deterioration if not addressed promptly. In addition, Mr. Mason informed the commission that the restoration proposed by the Commission would cost \$43,860.00, and the restoration proposed by the petitioner would cost \$17,370.00. Deborah Packard, Executive Director of Preservation Worcester informed the Commission that said institution hired Architect Robert Para to evaluate the conditions of the house, and indicated that she and Mr. Para visited the house prior to it being sold to the Huynh family and indicated that in their opinion, the exterior features of the house were not as deteriorated as described by Mr. Mason. She also indicated that the front bay windows and the “scalped” (imbricate) shingle style siding located on the gable sections of the house were the most prominent and valuable exterior architectural features of the house, and urged the Commission to encourage the owner to preserve and restore them instead of replacing them. Mr. Huynh indicated that the \$23,490 cost difference of the two restoration plans was beyond his current budget and would, in fact, create an undue economic hardship for his family; therefore, he asked the Commission to consider granting the Building Demolition Delay Waiver based on hardship. Mr. Mason indicated that although the petitioners had limited financial resources, they had decided to make the following changes to their restoration plan: (a) the house will be re-sided with wood-grain, matte finish vinyl siding, (b) the imbricate shingle style siding on the gable sections of the house will be restored and/or replaced with vinyl siding of like design, (c) the front, second floor bay-windows will be restored with like materials, and the original glass will be retained, (d) the remaining windows will be replaced with vinyl windows, (e) the front 2nd and 3rd floor windows (except the bay windows) will be replaced with vinyl true-divided light windows, but the wood exterior moldings (i.e. casings), will be repaired and retained, and (f), the wood barge-board details (a.k.a. “gingerbread”) along the roof rakes will be restored and or repaired with like materials and design. Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 1-5 (Commissioners Schneider, McCann, Theerman, Crowley and Merrill voting no), that the proposed removal and replacement of the existing siding with vinyl siding, and the removal and replacement of twenty-four (24) windows with energy star rated vinyl windows was not detrimental to the historical and/or architectural resources of the City of Worcester; therefore, the motion failed and the Commission considered the

petition with respect to economic hardship. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-1 that the petitioner had demonstrated undue economic hardship; therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved based on economic hardship with the following conditions:

- The house will be re-sided with wood-grain, matte finish vinyl siding.
- The imbricate shingle style siding on the gable sections of the house will be restored and/or replaced with vinyl siding of like design.
- The front, second floor bay-windows will be restored with like materials, and the original glass will be retained.
- The remaining windows will be replaced with vinyl windows.
- The front 2nd and 3rd floor windows (except the bay windows) will be replaced with vinyl true-divided windows, but the wood exterior moldings (i.e. casings), will be repaired and retained.
- The wood barge-board details (a.k.a. “gingerbread”) along the roof rakes will be restored and or repaired with like materials and design.

2. 15 Massachusetts Avenue (HC-2009-088) Certificate of Appropriateness, and Building Demolition Delay Waiver: Mark Awad, owner and petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Awad stated that he was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to restore all windows on the first floor with like materials, and replace a section of siding on the second floor with white cedars shingles painted to match the existing color. He indicated that the proposed restorations were needed in order to address the damage cause by a recent interior fire. Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner Crowley, it was determined that the proposed restoration of all windows on the first floor with like materials, and the replacement a section of siding on the second floor with white cedars shingles painted to match existing color was appropriate and compatible with the preservation and protection of the Massachusetts Avenue Local Historic District as it relates to the historic and architectural value and significance of the site and structure; therefore, the Commission voted 6-0 to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness. Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed restoration of all windows on the first floor with like materials, and the replacement of a section of siding on the second floor with white cedars shingles painted to match existing color removal and replacement of the roof with asphalt shingles only was not detrimental to the historical and/or architectural resources of the City of Worcester; therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

3. 58 Millbury Street (HC-2009-089) Building Demolition Delay Waiver: David Pappas, representative for the petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Pappas stated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to install front store windows, install a masonry wall below the windows, install new siding on front of the building, and install two (2) front doors. Mr. Pappas stated that the proposed project included two separate buildings located on site, and indicated that both had remained

vacant for a long period of time. He also indicated that in his opinion, the proposed restoration of these two buildings would enhance the commercial development in the area. Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner McCann, and seconded by Commissioner Merrill, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed installation of front store windows, the installation of a masonry wall below the windows, the installation of new siding on the front of the building, and the installation of two (2) front doors were not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the City of Worcester; therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

- 4. 12 Claremont Street (HC-2009-090) Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Russell Haims, owner and petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Haims stated that he was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to remove and replace the four (4) windows with vinyl windows, and replace the front door with exterior-grade door with an oval shaped glass insert. Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner McCann, and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed removal and replacement of four (4) windows with vinyl windows, and the replace the front door with exterior-grade door with an oval shaped glass insert was not detrimental to the historical and/or architectural resources of the City of Worcester; therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.
- 5. 126 Lincoln Street (HC-2009-091) Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Richard Magdis owner and petitioner presented the petition. Mr. Magdis stated that he was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to remove and replace the back porch utilizing the basic same design, dimensions and materials. He indicated that the back porch was not original to the house and was added at a later date. In addition, he stated that the porch had deteriorated significantly and would need to be replaced in order to meet current safety codes. Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed removal and replacement of back porch utilizing the basic same design, dimensions and materials was not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester; therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.
- 6. 180 Main Street (HC-2009-092) Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Raymond Mantyla and Katherine Oftring representatives for 180 Main Street Associates, LLC presented the petition. Mr. Mantyla stated that they were seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to install eighty-nine (89) aluminum windows, clean, repoint and replace brickwork throughout the building as needed, and repair or replace existing entry ways as needed. Mr. Mantyla stated that this building was formerly known as the Plummer Building, and was built circa 1890. He further indicated that the structure is presently vacant, and most of the windows have been removed and boarded up for safety reasons. In addition, he stated that in his opinion, the restoration of the Plummer building will play a prominent roll in the downtown redevelopment of the City. Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner

Constantine, and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed installation of eighty-nine (89) aluminum windows, the cleaning, re-pointing and replacement of brickwork throughout the building as needed, and the repair or replacement of existing entry ways was not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester; therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- 7. Crown Hill Local District Update:** Mr. Luna informed the Commission that Neil Larson has confirmed his attendance at January 11, 2010 Crown Hill Neighborhood Association (CHNA) meeting, to discuss the goals and objectives of the project with the members of the neighborhood association.
- 8. City Hall Project – Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant Proposal:** Chair Schneider informed the Commission that this item would be continued to the January 14, 2010 meeting at the request of Division of Planning and Regulatory Services staff.
- 9. 29 High Street and 44 Portland Street Presentation:** Rick Kuczarski and Dan Benoit requested to address the Historical Commission regarding the redevelopment of these two historically significant structures. Mr. Kuczarski stated that the building located at 29 High Street (a.k.a.10 Chatham Street) was built in 1915 and was formerly known as the Young Women’s Christian Association as well as Worcester Center for the Performing Arts Building. The proposed project is to restore the building utilizing Massachusetts and Federal Historic Tax credits among other sources of funding. He also indicated that the structure located at 44 Portland Street which was formerly known as the Printers Building, will be restored for residential, retail and business uses also utilizing Massachusetts and Federal Historic Tax credits among other sources of funding. Mr. Kuczarski asked the Commission to issue Letters of Support for both buildings. Upon a motion by Janet Merrill and seconded by James Crowley, the Commission voted 6-0 to provide letters of support for both projects and instructed Mr. Luna to prepare such letters.

Adjournment: Chair Schneider adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM.