

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

July 23, 2015

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Kevin Provencher, Chair
Randolph Bloom
Devon Kurtz
Robyn Conroy
Karl Bjork-Alternate

Commission Members Absent: Timothy McCann, Secretary
Andrew Shveda, Vice-Chair
Cheryl Holley, Alternate

Staff Members Present: Stephen S. Rolle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Deborah Steele, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

Approval of the Minutes:

7/9/2015-Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission 5-0 to approve the minutes of 7/9/2015 with two edits.

Taken Out of Order

1. 200 Institute Road (aka 120 Institute Road- West Street-Alumni Gym (HC-2015-053))

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: WPI
Present Use: Campus Building
Year Built: Circa 1916
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed, NRD (National Register District),
NRMRA (National Register Multiple Resource Area)
Petition Purpose:

- Complete demolition of the building

Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission voted 5-0 to postpone the item until the August 20, 2015 Historical

Commission meeting and to extend the constructive grant deadline until September 4, 2015.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received June 30, 2015 and dated June 20, 2015.

Exhibit B: Postponement form from Attorney Samatha P. McDonald, dated July 17, 2015 and received July 21, 2015.

OLD BUSINESS

2. 104-106 Harding Street (HC-2015-045)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: GKN Sinter Metals, LLC
Present Use: Commercial Warehouse
Year Built: Circa 1910
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed and fka The Worcester Muslin Underwear Company

Petition Purpose:

- Complete Demolition of the Building

Mary Lou Armstrong and Bria Allen appeared on behalf of the petition.

Ms. Armstrong stated that this is a four-story, 16,000-square-foot brick building that was once part of a metal manufacturing complex between Green and Harding streets. It is the only building of historic note within the complex that is listed on the Massachusetts Cultural Resources Information System. She stated that Worcester Business Development Corp. is interested in acquiring the entire complex of buildings owned by GKN Sinter Metals LLC. and the plan is to raze the buildings, address environmental issues associated with the properties and make them “pad ready” for development.

Ms. Armstrong stated that the building at 104-106 Harding St. was built between 1900 and 1910. It was originally known as the Worcester Muslin Underwear Co. building and later became the David Pabolinski & Sons Underwear Manufacturing Co and the building eventually become part of a larger metal factory in the 1940s and 1950s and it shared walls with some of the other buildings in the complex.

Ms. Armstrong stated that because the property has a long industrial history related to metal manufacturing there are environmental issues inside the building and beneath its footprint. Large quantities of oil and hazardous materials were stored and generated in the building over the years.

Ms. Armstrong stated that PCBs have been found within the concrete component of the building, and there is soil and groundwater contamination within the building's footprint and that is why this building is vacant as it can't be occupied until a significant cleanup is done.

Ms. Armstrong stated that the cost of cleaning up the site has been pegged at \$2.6 million to \$2.8 million and theoretically this is for proposed future redevelopment.

Ms. Armstrong stated that GKN Sinter has been looking to sell the manufacturing complex, which is about 90,000 square feet in all, for years, but has had difficulty moving it largely because of the environmental issues.

Ms. Armstrong stated that the WBDC is excited to be able to clean up a large, blighted property. She stated that the WBDC wants to see the property become productive again, contribute to the community and generate taxes.

Ms. Armstrong stated that she is not privy to details regarding what WBDC's long-term development plans might be for the property and only knows that when the funding sources are secured for the (environmental) cleanup, they're going to purchase the property. She stated that they are going to clean it up and get it pad ready but was not sure from that point if they would continue to remain the owner and be involved in the redevelopment or sell it to another entity.

Ms. Allen stated that the building would not likely be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because of alterations that have been made over the years, including changes to its facade. Many of the window openings have been bricked in, and the building has been connected to other buildings. In addition, the masonry is deteriorating.

Ms. Armstrong stated that the WBDC had a feasibility analysis done that showed it would cost about \$174,000 to raze the building, compared to \$4.5 million for a historical restoration.

Ms. Armstrong stated that the WBDC is working with three funding sources in the hope of securing \$2.6 million to \$3 million and for that reason it would not be financially feasible for the WBDC to preserve and renovate the building.

Chair Provencher stated that if the building is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, it limits its value as a historic building and stated that he agreed with the reports provided that the building has been extremely compromised over the years and stated that the building has very limited historic value but the site has a lot of development potential.

Chair Provencher stated that the Commission takes a building demolition very seriously and that the Commission requires a lot of information and the burden is high to demonstrate why there would be an economic hardship not to allow the demolition of a

building like this but the applicant had done a very complete job of presenting detailed information in order that the Commission could make a decision.

Chair Provencher read a letter from Michael Covino, president and chief executive officer of Niche Hospitality Group stating that if the property is properly developed it would add to the new and exciting environment in the Canal District and would allow development opportunities and further encourage the rebirth of that part of the city.

Commissioner Conroy and Commission Bloom stated that they appreciated the amount of detail the applicant had provided in their application.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bjork and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 4-1 (Commissioner Conroy voting against that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received June 15, 2015 and dated June 15, 2015.

Exhibit B: Letter from Julie Holstrom, Senior Project manager re: 104-16 Harding Street received July 20, 2015 and dated July 20, 2015.

NEW BUSINESS

3. 14 Denny Street (HC-2015-051)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Petitioner: Jausz Bzura

Present Use: Three Family Residence

Year Built: Circa 1890

Historic Status: MACRIS-listed

Petition Purpose:

- Strip roof and apply new architectural shingles

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received June 24, 2015 and dated June 24, 2015.

Jausz Bazura appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Bazura stated that he would like to replace the roof.

Chair Provencher asked if asphalt shingles were currently on the roof. Mr. Bazrua stated that there was.

Chair Provencher stated that this is a straight forward application as the original material is long gone but asked what the condition of the perimeter of roof was.

Mr. Bazrua stated that area wouldn't need much work.

Chair Provencher asked if the soffit material at edge of roof was vinyl. Mr. Bazrua stated that he believed so.

Commissioner Bloom stated that due to the design of the roof it would be difficult to see from the street.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commission Bjork, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

4. 62 Suffolk Street (HC-2015-050)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Petitioner: Dayanet Aviles

Present Use: Three Family Residence

Year Built: Circa 1892

Historic Status: MACRIS-listed

Petition Purpose:

- Strip roof and apply new architectural shingles

Bob Brackett, the contractor appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Brackett stated that he is stripping the roof and applying new architectural shingles.

Chair Provencher asked if any work on edges of the roof. Mr. Brackett stated no as everything is intact.

Commissioner Bloom stated that this is another case where you cannot see the roof from the street.

Chair Provencher asked about the chimney. Mr. Brackett stated that it is intact but he will re-lead it.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bjork and seconded by Commission Bloom, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received June 23, 2015 and dated June 23, 2015.

5. 87 Commodore Road (HC-2015-049)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Alice Caldwell & Allen Padwa
Present Use: Single Family Residence
Year Built: Circa 1929
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed and fka Charles Kotsilibas Davis House
Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace existing shingles from house and garage roofs
- Remove and replace rail front flat roof
- Remove rubberized roofing from flat roof and install new surface

Alice Caldwell appeared on behalf of the application.

Chair Provencher stated that from the photos it looks like rail is rotten and asked if it was going to be replaced and what would it be replaced with.

Ms. Caldwell stated that it will be similar but the new railing will need to meet the current code requirements.

Commissioner Bloom asked if the railing was going to be painted to match. Ms. Caldwell stated that it would be and same color as background of the house.

Chair Provencher asked what would be the wood material. Ms. Caldwell stated that she planned to use the pressure treated wood that can be painted but doesn't rot like wood.

Ms. Caldwell stated that it would cost more to replicate and the railing would not meet code.

Chair Provencher asked if any work on perimeter of the roof. Ms. Caldwell stated not on the main roof but there would be on the flat roof as she getting is getting damage on flat portion as she gets leaks every time it rains.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bloom and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received June 22, 2015 and dated June 19, 2015.

6. 248 Salisbury Street & 2 Monadnock Road (HC-2015-052)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness

Petitioner: Robert Bartelson

Present Use: Single Family Residence

Year Built: Circa 1915

Historic Status: MACRIS-listed, NRD (National Register District), NRMRA (National Register Multiple Resource Area) and located in the Montvale Historic District

Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace existing asphalt shingle roof
- Replace existing gravel driveway with uni-lock turf pavers
- Construct a low stone wall along driveway to prevent erosion

Robert Bartelson appeared on behalf of the application.

Chair Provencher asked why the home has two addresses.

Mr. Bartelson stated that because it is a corner house and it was initially how the home was constructed

Mr. Bartelson stated that due to the bad winter he needs to replace the roof and it is currently asphalt shingle roof and on the driveway he would like to put turf pavers.

Chair Provencher asked if the pavers would be permeable. Mr. Bartelson stated they would be.

Chair Provencher asked if there be any maintenance issues as pavers are difficult to plow. Mr. Bartelson stated that typically he uses a snow blower so doesn't think so.

Chair Provencher asked where the stone wall would be. Mr. Bartelson stated it would be adjacent to the porch.

Commissioner Bloom asked how high the wall would be. Mr. Bartelson stated it would be three feet above grade.

Chair Provencher asked if the top of the wall would flash into the wall of the house.

Mr. Bartelson stated that he would have crush stone against the wall directly adjacent to the house.

Chair Provencher asked if there be a gap between the wall and the house. Mr. Bartelson stated that there would be a three foot gap.

Mr. Bartelson presented a photo of the proposed wall.

Commissioner Bjork asked if the type of stone wall is appropriate for the district.

Commissioner Bloom asked if the stonewall can be seen from the street. Mr. Bartelson stated that it could be.

Chair Provencher stated that he doesn't think Commission has any precedent for a stone wall in a district so the Commission needs to share its' opinions about how they feel about concrete masonry.

Commissioner Bjork asked if the applicant had any photos of a completed stone wall in the brochures he had brought as photos provided with application don't have enough detail.

Mr. Bartelson showed some photos from the brochure of what he planned to install.

Chair Provencher stated that what is being presented is not natural stone but looks like natural stone so doesn't find it objectionable.

Chair Provencher asked if the cap in the brochure would be the same. Mr. Bartelson stated that it would be.

Dean Alexandrou, 12 Monanock Road abutter to the property stated he was in support of the application.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Commission voted 5-0 that the

- Remove and replace existing asphalt shingle roof
- Replace existing gravel driveway with uni-lock turf pavers

- Construct a low stone wall along driveway to prevent erosion

is appropriate for the district. The motion passed and the Certificate of Appropriateness was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver and Certificate of Appropriateness received June 25, 2015 and dated June 25, 2015.

OTHER BUSINESS

Preservation Plan Update

Ms. Steele stated that Mr. Rolle would give an update on this item at the next meeting.

Communications Received:

- Letter from Massachusetts Historical Commission re: Stearns Tavern; dated July 8, 2015 and received July 13, 2015

Ms. Steele stated that Massachusetts Historical and the City of Worcester are working together on this item and as more information is available it will be provided to the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion the Commission adjourned the meeting at 6:52 p.m.