



The City of
WORCESTER

Historical Commission

Diane Long, Chair
Janet Theerman, Vice Chair
Steven Taylor, Clerk
Devon Kurtz
Donald Northway
Erika Helnarski
Tomi Stefani
Vanessa Andre, Alternate

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

Thursday, September 21, 2023

Remote participation via WebEx only:

<https://cow.webex.com/meet/historicalncommissionwebex> and
call-in number 415-655-0001 (Access Code: 1608081191).

Commissioners Present: Diane Long, Chair
Janet Theerman, Vice-Chair
Steven Taylor
Devon Kurtz
Erika Helnarski
Donald Northway
Vanessa Andre, Alternate

Commissioners Absent: Tomi Stefani

Staff Present: Michelle Smith, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Olivia Holden, Division of Planning and Regulatory services (DPRS)

Call Commission to Order – 5:30 PM

Approval of Minutes

No discussion.

Request for Leave to Withdraw

1. 6 Whitman Road (20-007-00030) – COA-23-19

Petition purpose: Replace windows, remove deck and replace with concrete patio, re-pave driveway, install walkway from the driveway to back patio

This item was approved as a Certificate of Non-Applicability at the 9/7/23 meeting.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Taylor the Commission voted six (6) to zero (0) to grant the withdrawal request.

Commissioner Northway joined the meeting at 5:37pm after the vote on item #1.

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

2. 51 William Street (02-046-00044) – BDDW-23-49

Petition purpose: Replace windows

Thomas Desimone, contractor on behalf of the applicant, explained that the homeowner would like to replace the windows as the repaired product will not be as energy efficient as a replacement and therefore not interested in restoration. Additionally, the aesthetic of the aluminum storm windows is not ideal for the homeowner, so they are proposing replacement with white vinyl PVC double hung windows.

Commissioner Taylor asked if there was any serious consideration for repairing the windows and stated that it is possible to repair in a cost-effective manner while also making them as efficient as a new window.

Commissioner Helnarski added that she would prefer to see numbers to compare the costs of repair vs. replacement and understand if there is a possibility for financial hardship before feeling comfortable with making a decision.

Commissioner Andre stated most studies show older windows are just as efficient as newer windows as long as a storm is installed in the older window.

Mr. Desimone reiterated that it is the homeowner wish to replace the windows.

Commissioner Theerman asked if the windows function properly; Mr. Desimone stated most of them need extensive repair and explained that some of them get jammed, some need glass repairs or replacements, and some don't lock very well.

Public Comment

None.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor the Commission voted seven (7) to zero (0) to close the public comment portion of the meeting.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor the Commission voted zero (0) in favor and seven (7) opposed that the proposed work, consisting of replacing windows would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous vote in opposition of the work, the motion did not pass and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 51 William Street was denied.

Certificate of Appropriateness & Building Demolition Delay Waiver

3. 14 Congress Street (03-026-00017) – COA-23-20

Petition purpose: Rebuild chimney, replace fence and gates

Rodger Comeau, applicant and homeowner of the property, stated he is looking to rebuild the chimney on his home and replace the fence that surrounds his home. Mr. Comeau plans to take the chimney down to the flashing and rebuild using the same bricks. If needed, he will rematch any bricks if he finds he needs more.

Commissioner Theerman asked what color mortar will be used; Mr. Comeau stated he will use off white to keep it looking older.

Commissioner Long asked if the new chimney design matches others in the Local Historic District; Mr. Comeau stated he has redesigned the chimney intentionally to match the majority of the homes in the area.

Mr. Comeau continued to explain that he intends to replace the entire existing stockade fence with a solid panel fence with hemlock wood.

Commissioner Long asked about the proposed work for the gates; Mr. Comeau said he is replacing the gates for maintenance and accessibility reasons. The material will match the fence and the hardware will be basic latching devices. The fence will naturally weather and he has no plans to stain.

Public Comment

None.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor the Commission voted seven (7) to zero (0) to close the public comment portion of the meeting.

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes, consisting of replacing the chimney, fence and gates at 14 Congress Street are appropriate for the Crown Hill Local Historic District. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the Certificate of Appropriateness for 14 Congress Street was approved.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed work, consisting of replacing the chimney, fence and gates, would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 14 Congress Street was approved.

Other Business

a. CLG Annual Report

Commissioner Long asked if all the Commissioner have read the report so they can take a vote.

On a motion made by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed to approve the CLG annual report as written.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted seven (7) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:10 p.m.