

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER
April 5, 2012**

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present:

Timothy McCann, Vice-Chair
Kevin Provencher, Clerk
James Crowley
Peter Schneider
Meagen Mulherin
Andrew Shveda

Staff Members Present:

Lara Bold, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Nancy Tran, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

Call to Order: – 5:31 pm

Commission Site Views:

Requests for Continuances, Postponements, Withdrawals

Approval of the Minutes: 03-22-2012

The Historical Commission accepted the minutes of the March 22, 2012 meeting.

New Business:

1. 16 Wachusett Street (HC-2012-013) Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Mohammad Djajbiti and Adam Gaval appeared on behalf of the application. They stated that they were before the Commission to seal off two windows on the third floor, wrap aluminum around the fascia of the building on the second and third floors, and remove wood and detail corbels from the second and third floors and to replace with soffits.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if the two windows were the ones furthest back. Mr. Djaibiti stated that would be correct. Mr. Djaibit showed on a poster board where the windows are located.

Commissioner Schneider asked what would happen with the dormer. Mr. Djaibiti stated they would also like to take the dormer off and make the roof line straight across and match them up with the shingles previously approved by the Historical Commission.

Commissioner Crowley asked what had changed in the interior of the property. Mr. Djaibiti stated the layout of the apartment has changed but they are only looking to seal off the two windows.

Commissioner Sheveda asked why the windows needed to be sealed. Mr. Djaibiti stated that is where the kitchen will be and the windows need to be blocked as that is where the kitchen cabinets will be as well as the plumbing stack.

Mr. Djaibiti stated the two windows on the second floor have been already been permitted to be sealed.

Commissioner Shevda asked whether the plumbing stack is new. Mr. Djaibiti stated that would be correct and everything would be insulated and they would like to remove the two windows as it will improve appearance of the property and the other option is just to cover the windows with plywood.

Commissioner Crowley stated that property owner cannot just remove the windows and board up with plywood without getting Historical Commission approval first and if the Commission voted to deny the request the windows would remain.

Commissioner Crowley asked whether permission was received to replace the shingles, to which Mr. Gaval stated he had.

Commissioner Mulherin asked whether Mr. Gaval had looked at an alternative plan. Mr. Gaval said the problem is that the kitchen cabinets go against the wall where the windows exist. Vice-Chair McCann asked what is on north side of the property where there are no windows are. Mr. Gaval stated there are windows for each bedroom.

Mr. Djaibiti stated that they have spent significant money on renovating the property to come up with a floor plan to make the property a lot nicer.

Vice-Chair McCann stated that applicant was also requesting to wrap aluminum around the fascia of the building on the second and third floor and to remove wood and detail corbels from the second and third floors and replace with soffits. Mr. Djaibiti stated that is correct. Mr. Djaibiti stated that he did not believe the corbels are from 1800's and they are deteriorated.

Commissioner Schneider asked Mr. Djaibiti to show on the pictures what corbels he was asking to be replaced. Mr. Djaibiti pointed out pictures where they are located. Commissioner Schneider asked why they could not be replaced. Mr. Djaibiti stated the soffits are deteriorated and cost would be too expensive.

Commissioner Crowley stated that all that had been presented is to replace the detail work at the top and the corbels in the middle and no information has been given about repairing it and he is not convinced that not much repair is needed and he sees no reason that these decorative elements need to be replaced and does not see a hardship.

Commission Shevda pointed out that just because something cost more does not make the case for economic hardship. Commissioner Crowley stated that all that has been presented is replacement cost and not repair cost.

Mr. Djaibiti asked the Commission if he obtained a letter from an engineer would that be sufficient. Commissioner Schneider stated applicant would need to find out how many of the corbels were deteriorating and were beyond repair and at this point he would not be in favor of replacing the corbels.

Mr. Djaibiti asked if he could have continuance to the next meeting in order to provide Commission with more information.

Commissioner Crowley stated in terms of hardship the Commission would want to look at the whole picture of what has and is being proposed at the property.

Vice-Chair McCann stated if the applicant would like they could split up the proposal and vote on the windows portion of the application at this time. Mr. Djaibiti stated he would be amenable.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Shveda that the proposed demolition to seal the two windows on the third floor is not detrimental to the architectural resources of the City. Commissioner Shveda and Commissioner Schneider voting yes. Vice-Chair McCann, Commissioner Crowley and Commissioner Mulherin voting no. The motion did not pass.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, that the proposed demolition to seal the two windows on the third floor would be an economic hardship to the applicant. Vice-Chair McCann, Commissioner Crowley and Commissioner Schneider voting yes. Commissioner Shveda and Commissioner Mulherin voting no. The motion passed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Mulherin, the Commission voted 5-0 that the request to place aluminum around the building's fascia on the second and third floors and the request to remove the wood and detail corbels from the second and third floors to replace with soffits be continued to the next meeting.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Adam Gaval, dated March 8, 2012 and received March 9, 2012.

2. 90-92 Elm Street (HC-2012-014) Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Lei Li appeared on behalf of the petition. The application before the Commission is to remove and replace the asphalt roof shingles with 30-year architectural shingles.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the proposed cultural or historic resources of the city. The waiver request was approved.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Lei Li Felico LLC, dated March 8, 2012 and received March 9, 2012.

3. 31 Heroult Road (HC-2012-015) Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Amy Chism, on behalf of Pickoff Properties, LLC, appeared on behalf of the applicant. The application before the Commission is to replace the roof with 30-year black architectural shingles (seeking retroactive approval) and to remove and replace siding with vinyl siding, remove and replace 16 windows with vinyl replacement windows; and remove and replace the deck in the rear of the house with pressure treated lumber.

Vice-Chair McCann stated this item was for retroactive approval of work already done.

Ms. Chism stated her client had purchased the property in February and had no idea it was a historic property. Ms. Chism stated a large limb had fallen and had damaged the slate in several places at the property and her client repaired the roof due to an impending storm.

Commissioner Schneider asked whether the roof was slate. Ms. Chism stated that was correct.

Commissioner Schneider asked if home owner had received permission from Inspectional Services to do the repairs. Ms. Chism responded that she did not get the prior approval.

Commissioner Crowley asked who did the repair work. Ms. Chism stated that employees of the owner performed the work.

Commissioner Crowley stated that the pictures presented do not show much damage to the roof. Ms. Chism stated the pictures were from 2008.

Commissioner Shveda asked if the owner had a copy of the inspection form when the property was purchased and that it would be helpful if that was provided to the Commission if there was a statement about roof damage. Ms. Chism stated she did not have that information.

Commissioner Crowley asked staff if Inspectional Services had done anything relative to a lack of building permit to do the repair. Ms. Bold stated she was unaware but she would follow up.

Commissioner Crowley asked whether Inspectional Services only concern now would be that the home owner received approval from Historical Commission or would there be any sanctions. Ms. Bold stated she was unaware of any fines.

Commissioner Crowley stated there was no information in the application about hardship. Ms. Chism asked if the homeowner could reapply with this information.

Ms. Chism stated the other item requested in the application was to replace siding with vinyl siding and showed a sample. Commissioner Crowley asked what is currently on the building. Ms. Chism stated she was unsure. Commissioner Crowley asked about the current condition of the siding. Ms. Chism stated it is to the point where it can't be repainted.

Commissioner Crowley stated in this case the Commission cannot determine the condition of the property with just the one picture and without more information cannot determine an economic hardship.

Commissioner Crowley asked if the roof on the addition to the property was slate or asphalt. Ms. Chism stated she did not know.

Commissioner Crowley suggested Ms. Chism consult with her client relative the property as the Commission would need more information before they could make a decision.

Ms. Chism stated the last item in the application is to remove and replace the deck in the rear of the house with pressure treated lumber.

Commissioner Schneider stated that he did not believe this is historically significant.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, the Commission voted 5-0 that the demolition of the deck is not detrimental to the historical or the architectural resources of the City.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, the Commission voted 5-0 to postpone the request to replace the roof with architectural shingles and to remove and replace the siding with vinyl siding to the April 22, 2012 meeting.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Pickoff Properties LLC, dated February 22, 2012 and received March 9, 2012.

4. 20 Temple Street (HC-2012-016) Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Michael Pagano, John Brennan and Rob Carroll from Lamoureux Pagano Associates appeared on behalf of the applicant, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Worcester-St. John's Church at 20 Temple Street. The application before the Commission is to; 1) Remove and replace windows and portions of the wall and install new windows at the former openings that are currently in-filled; 2) Remove and replace the EPDM roof with a new EPDM roof; 3) Re-point sections of the brick masonry wall; 4) Cement parge various areas of the wall.

Mr. Pagano stated they plan to file for a building permit for food distribution and soup kitchen at the location and that would be the primary use of the building. She stated the building is adjacent to the railroad and the scope of the work is to remove and replace windows and portions of the wall and install new windows at the former openings that are currently in-filled and remove and replace the EPDM roof with a new EPDM roof and re-point sections of the brick masonry wall.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if they were going to expand the openings or return them to the original size. Mr. Brennan state the plan is to level it out.

Commissioner Crowley asked if that was the original use of the building. Mr. Pagano stated it was originally used as an office for coal distribution and later for meat distribution.

Commissioner Crowley stated he didn't see any problem with the proposal.

Mr. Pagano that they were looking to do paint two colors but would not be anything garish.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Schneider and seconded by Commissioner Mulherin, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed project will not be detrimental to the proposed cultural or historic resources of the city.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Roman Catholic Bishop of Worcester, dated March 8, 2012 and received March 9, 2012.

Commissioner Schneider left meeting at 6:30 p.m.

5. 1 Lincoln Square (HC-2012-017) Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Rob Pare, project manager, appeared on behalf of the City of Worcester on this application. The application before the Commission is to remove and replace portions of the EPDM (rubber) roof with like materials; remove and replace roof drains; replace/repair the wall's mortar as needed; and re-point the limestone wall panels. Mr. Pare also stated that the roof is leaking and they are coming before the Commission to receive permission to do the work prior to applying for permits from Inspectional Services.

Mr. Pare stated the building has two air shafts that lead down from the front and are a good twenty feet deep and there is a small two inch roof drain at the bottom and has been very problematic and he believes best way to solve problem is to put small roof on the top of the two intake shafts with screen mesh around them to prevent leaking. Mr. Pare presented some photos of what was being proposed.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if anything was being removed. Mr. Pare stated that nothing was to be removed.

Vice-Chair McCann stated he did not have a problem with the roof replacement especially considering how endangered the building is and like to keep it up to building code in hopes building would be re-used in the future.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed project will not be detrimental to the proposed cultural or historic resources of the city.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by City of Worcester, dated March 8, 2012 and received March 9, 2012.

6. 15 Russell Street (HC-2012-018) Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Charles Wilmont, the contractor, appeared on behalf of the petition from Divexco Corporation. The proposal is to remove a left window and replace, enlarge the existing dormer and enlarge two existing window openings. Mr. Wilmont presented some photos of the proposal to the Commission.

Mr. Wilmont stated on page #2 of the application showed the room with no windows and page #3 showed the window in the hallway and page #4 showed the increase in the dormer.

Vice-Chair McCann asked whether this was a three-family home and if they were raising the dormer. Mr. Wilmont stated that that would be correct.

Commissioner Crowley stated that looking at the picture presented it looks they are going to be building interior space where the porch is currently located. Mr. Wilmont responded that would be above it and the detail and height of the porch will remain unchanged.

Commissioner Crowley stated he saw no problem with what was being proposed.

Mr. Wilmont stated that you would not notice the change when it is done.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Mulherin, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed project will not be detrimental to the proposed cultural or historic resources of the city.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Divexco Corporation, dated March 7, 2012 and received March 12, 2012.

Exhibit B: Property photographs and project plan submitted, received April 5, 2012.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

The Commission voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 PM.