



The City of **WORCESTER**

Historical
Commission

Devon Kurtz, Chair
Diane Long, Vice-Chair
Janet Theerman, Clerk
Randolph Bloom
Tomi Stefani
Mark Wamback
Erika Helnarski, Alternate
Steven Taylor, Alternate

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

Thursday, December 16, 2021

Worcester City Hall - Levi Lincoln Chamber,
with remote participation options available via Webex online at
<https://cow.webex.com/meet/historicalncommissionwebex> and
call-in number 415-655-0001 (Access Code: 1608081191).

Commissioners Present: Devon Kurtz, Chair
Janet Theerman, Clerk – *Participated remotely*
Randolph Bloom – *Participated remotely*
Tomi Stefani – *Participated remotely*
Erika Helnarski, Alternate – *Participated remotely*
Steven Taylor, Alternate – *Participated remotely*

Commissioners Absent: Diane Long, Vice-Chair
Mark Wamback

Staff Present: Michelle Johnstone, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)

Call to Order

Chair Kurtz called the meeting to order at approximately 5:30 PM, and took a roll call of members present.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 6-0 to approve the October 28 and November 17, 2021 meeting minutes.

New Business

1) **14 William Street (HC-2021-064) – Request for Building Demolition Delay Waiver**

David Walch, owner, joined the meeting remotely to speak in regards to the petition.

The Commission considered whether the property was eligible for listing in the National or State Registers of Historic Places, and subject to their jurisdiction.

Commissioner Bloom noted that the property was very highly altered, he believed it was questionable whether it remained eligible.

Commissioner Kurtz noted that the neighborhood and its historic character also needed to be considered.

Commissioner Theerman noted that she believed the property should be considered by the Commission.

Mr. Walch stated that he had been in support of listing the property to the National Register, he was unsure if it could be considered eligible.

Ms. Johnstone gave her opinion on the eligibility of the building for listing in the National Register, opining that while the property is likely ineligible for individual listing, it would be potentially eligible within a district.

On a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 0-6 that the proposed demolition at 14 William Street is not subject to the historic buildings demolition delay ordinance because the structure has been heavily altered and is no longer potentially eligible for listing on the State or National Registers and therefore grants leave to withdraw without prejudice to the application. The motion was denied, and the application proceeded as it normally would under the demolition delay ordinance.

Mr. Walch gave the Commission a brief synopsis of the work to be done; essentially to re-create what existed at the structure prior to a fire that destroyed a large part of the building. The chimneys, however, would be removed. He stated that he proposes using Azek or a similar material for trim, rather than wood, around the windows to aid in long term maintenance. Additionally, he stated that new HVAC condensers are proposed.

Commissioner Kurtz asked if the shape of the dormers would be replicated. Mr. Walch stated that he hoped to keep the same key details of the dormers and to keep the same look and feel.

Commissioner Bloom applauded Mr. Walch on making an extra effort to try to re-create what was there at the building before the fire.

Public Comment

No public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 6-0 to close public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition at 14 William Street would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having received a majority of yea votes, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A. Building Demolition Delay Waiver application form, dated November 24, 2021, and received November 26, 2021.

Communications

- A. Request from MacRostie Historic Advisors for letters of support for Massachusetts Rehabilitation Tax Credit allocations for Waldo Street Police Station, District Court & Insurance Fire Patrol, 1 Exchange Place; P. E. Somers Manufacturing Company, 35 Lagrange Street; L. Robbins Machine Shop; 42 Lagrange Street;

L. D. Thayer Manufacturing Company, 47 Lagrange Street; Harwood & Quincy Machine Company, 50 Lagrange Street; Washburn & Moen North Works Cotton Mill, 90 Grove Street; F. E. Reed Tool Company Factory Building; 90 Lamartine Street; J.A. Calvin Lofts, 98 Beacon Street; Elwood Adams Block, 156 Main Street; Worcester Boys' Club, 2 Ionic Avenue; The Worcester Art Museum (WAM), 55 Salisbury Street; Whitcomb Manufacturing Co. Factory, 134 Gold Street.

On a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to issue updated letters of support for the above properties.

- B. Request from PAL for letters of support for Massachusetts Rehabilitation Tax Credit allocations for the Cheney Ballard Building, 517 Main Street, and Worcester Boys' Club, Lincoln Square.

On a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to issue an updated letter of support for the above properties.

- C. Communication from MHC notifying the Worcester Historical Commission of a positive National Register Determination of Eligibility for the YWCA of Worcester.

No comment.

Adjournment

On a motion by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 6-0 adjourn at 5:56 PM.