



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, June 1, 2023

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: Diane Long, Chair
Janet Theerman, Vice-Chair
Steve Taylor, Clerk
Erika Helnarski
Donald Northway
Vanessa Andre, Alternate

Commissioners Absent: Devon Kurtz
Tomi Stefani

Staff Present: Michelle Johnstone, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Michelle Smith, Assistant Chief Development Officer

Call Commission to Order – 5:30 PM

Approval of Minutes – None

Old Business

1. 100 Chandler Street (06-17A-00008) – BDDW-23-11

Petition purpose: Replace windows (retroactive)

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 6-0 to continue the item to the July 13 meeting, with an extension of the constructive grant deadline to July 28, 2023.

Certificate of Appropriateness

2. 34 Monadnock Road (20-002-00009) – COA-23-6

Petition purpose: Scrape, repair & paint house, replace gutters

Colin & Colleen Whitworth, the owners, participated remotely.

They stated that the house was to be scraped and painted in a color scheme slightly different than what is existing. Additionally, they noted, any rotten siding would be replaced.

Commissioner Theerman asked for clarification on what the existing material of the gutters is and what would be used for replacement materials. Mr. Whitworth stated that existing gutters and proposed gutters are aluminum.

No public comment.

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

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed work at 34 Monadnock Road, consisting of repairing, scraping, and painting the house and replacing the gutters is appropriate for the Montvale Local Historic District. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed, and the Certificate of Appropriateness for 34 Monadnock Road was thus approved.

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

3. 16 Salisbury Street (01-004-00004) – BDDW-23-16

Petition purpose: Modifications to east elevations to accommodate connector to proposed addition, replace windows, replace doors, replace roof in-kind or re-install existing

Chair Long noted that this project has been approved twice before by the Commission, but the approvals had expired.

Representatives from Winn Development, Preservation Worcester and Epsilon Associates joined the meeting remotely to discuss. They noted that no changes have been made to the scope since the last approval was granted.

Public Comment

Deborah Packard of Preservation Worcester, a limited partner in the project, spoke in favor of granting the demolition delay waiver.

On a motion by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor the Commission voted six (6) to zero (0) to close public comment.

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historic or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed, and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 16 Salisbury Street was thus approved.

4. 360 Franklin Street (04-012-0000A) – BDDW-23-17

Petition purpose: Demolish portions of complex, reconstruct and modify elevations in Building L, replace all windows in Building L

Mark David, project manager for DCCI properties, joined by Dave Berryman, Principal of Newman Design Associates, presented the project in person.

Mr. David described the overall status of the various buildings on the site of the complex and described the scope of work, consisting of removal of two buildings and reworking one elevation of Building L. He also noted more parking would be added.

Commissioner Taylor asked why the existing buildings proposed for demolition would be more valuable as parking than as buildings. Mr. David described the hazardous materials and structural issues found throughout the buildings.

Commissioner Taylor asked for a ballpark guess on what it would cost to rehabilitate the buildings. Mr. David stated that it would likely cost approximately \$20 million.

Chair Long noted that the buildings that are proposed for demolition were constructed much later than the earliest buildings on the site and have much less historic significance than the rest of the complex.

There was discussion about the materials and methods of construction of the two buildings proposed for demolition.

Public Comment

Jonathan Ostrow of Worcester asked what the objective of the architect was when they put together designs for the new additions. Ms. Johnstone stated that the proponents had spent a long time working with DPRS staff to come up with a design that was complimentary to the historic building but not made to look historic.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor the Commission voted six (6) to zero (0) to close public comment.

The Commission stated that they would prefer to take two different votes: one for the windows and one for the demolition.

On a motion by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that a portion of the proposed work, consisting of replacing windows in Building L, 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 a partial Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 360 Franklin Street was thus approved.

And, on a motion by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted one (1) in favor and five (5) opposed, with Chair Long voting in the affirmative, that a portion of the proposed work, consisting of the demolition of two buildings at the complex, would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having failed to gain a majority affirmative vote, the motion failed and a partial Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 360 Franklin Street was thus denied.

Ms. Johnstone asked the Commission to provide examples of additional information they would like to see from the applicant so that they could re-petition the Commission.

The Commission stated that they would like to see written financial discrepancies between restoration and demolition, in addition to a report from a structural engineer.

5. 21–23 Crown Street (02-023-09+10) – BDDW-23-17

Petition purpose: Construct addition, new siding, new windows, new entrances, demolish garage

Chair Long noted that this project has previously come before the Commission, but the approval had expired.

Stephanie Page of Abby's House and Brian Lever of Epsilon Associated joined the meeting remotely to discuss the project.

Chair Long asked if there have been any changes to the scope since the last time the project came before the Commission. Mr. Lever noted that there had not.

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

On a motion by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition at 21–23 Crown Street, consisting of

constructing an addition, installing new siding, windows, and doors, and demolishing the garage 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 21–23 Crown Street was thus approved.

Communications

None

Other Business

A. Design Review Guidelines project updates

Ms. Johnstone gave an overview of a meeting attended by herself, Assistant Chief Development Officer Michelle Smith, Chair Diane Long, and Peter Benton, Principal of Heritage Strategies, LLC. She noted the highlights of the meeting, including the review of the scope and phasing. She also described the progress that has been made on the project thus far.

Chair Long stated that Mr. Benton expressed an interest in meeting members of the Commission. She stated that Mr. Benton seems great, and she is really looking forward to the project.

B. Appointment to the Community Preservation Committee

Ms. Smith gave an overview of the Community Preservation Act & Committee, and the need for representatives from various boards and commissions to serve in an advisory role on the Committee. She stated that the Historical Commission would need to select a delegate to the Community Preservation Committee. She explained term lengths and responsibilities.

Chair Long stated that she is interested in serving on the Committee but asked her fellow Commissioners if they also had strong interest.

Commissioner Taylor stated that a Community Preservation Committee seems like a great opportunity to better the city and recreate things that created a sense of community that have been lost.

On a motion made by Vice Chair Theerman and seconded by Chair Taylor, the Commission voted 6-0 to appoint Diane Long to the Community Preservation Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Chair Long, the Commission voted six (6) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:19 p.m.