

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

**July 22, 2010
LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL**

Commission Members Present: Peter Schneider, Chair
Thomas Constantine
Timothy McCann
James Crowley
Janet Merrill

Staff Present: Edgar Luna, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schneider called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

MINUTES

Mr Luna informed the Commission that the June 8, 2010 minutes will be ready for the August 19, 2010 meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. 73 Chandler Street (HC-2010-038) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Stephen Jones, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Jones stated that he was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove and replace one (1) exterior door with like materials, and (b), remove and replace ten (10) windows with clear, low E-tempered glass windows. Mr. Jones indicated that none of the windows to be removed, or the door were original architectural features of the building. He also stated that over the years, the building has been modified several times to accommodate the expanding commercial and retail business housed on site. Upon a motion by Commissioner Constantine and seconded by Commission Merrill, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester, therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.
- 2. 51 Freeland Street (HC-2010-039) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Nhung T. Duong, petitioner, presented the petition. Ms. Duong stated that she was seeking Building

Demolition Delay Waiver approval to remove and replace the asphalt roofing shingles with like materials. She indicated that the roof in place has deteriorated beyond repair, and indicated that the proposed roofing shingles will enhance the exterior architectural features of the house. Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Merrill the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester, therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

- 3. 31 Stoneland Road (HC-2010-040) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Richard McGrail, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. McGrail stated that he was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to remove and replace the asphalt roofing shingles with like materials. He also stated that the roof in place has deteriorated beyond repair and needed to be replaced. Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester, therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.
- 4. 1183 Main Street (HC-2010-041) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Greg O'Connor and Scott Dzik representatives for Eastern Orthodox management Corporation, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. O'Connor stated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) relocate and renovate existing porch stairs, (b) remove and replace one (1) window with an exhaust louver to allow installation of a handicapped lift, (c) install exhaust hoods on the west elevation and rear courtyard wall and install wall louvers on the gable ends of the roof and (d), remove seventy one (71) wood double-hung windows and replace them with vinyl-clad wood windows. Mr. O'Connor stated that the proposed renovations were located in the oldest section of the building, and indicated that the reason for the renovation was to comply with Building Code Regulations. He also indicated that the some of most important requirements were installation of a handicapped-lift and building a shaft, which required the closing of one window. Mr. O'Connor further added that the proposed project would also include installation of air conditioner units and bathroom ventilation exhausts in the 1970 building addition. Chair Schneider asked if these changes were visible from the street, and Mr. O'Connor stated that most of these changes were located within an interior court yard. Mr. O'Connor also indicated that the petitioner was planning to remove and replace seventy one (71) windows due to deterioration and/or disrepair. Mr. O'Connor stated that the windows slated for replacement were made of wood and appeared to be original to the building. He also stated that although the proposed replacements were six-over-two vinyl windows, the petitioner was planning to retain the wood surrounding the windows as well as the lintels. Chair Schneider asked Mr. O'Connor what color was the petitioner proposing for the windows, and Mr. O'Connor indicated that the color proposed was white. Chair Schneider stated that, in his opinion, an off-white color would be more appropriate for the windows. Commissioner Merrill suggested painting the windows black. Mr. O'Connor stated that the proposed windows were true-simulated divided light windows. Mr. O'Connor also indicated that the petitioner had considered window restoration, which was less costly than window

replacements; however, the petitioner realized that window restoration was unsafe therefore he chose to propose window replacement. He also stated that the cost for window replacement was \$120,000.00, and the cost for window restoration was \$80,000.00. Chair Schneider stated that based on such comments, the petitioner could not argue undue economic hardship. Mr. O'Connor agreed, and acknowledged that the petitioner was not planning to request approval based on undue economic hardship. Chair Schneider stated that although new windows are efficient at the beginning, their life-span usually lasts only ten (10) years, while the windows in place have been useful for than 100 years. Susan Ceccacci, Education Director for Preservation Worcester, express concern regarding the proposed window replacement versus window restoration, and offered assistance in providing contact information for window restorers in the area. Commissioner Crowley asked Mr. O'Connor what would be the petitioner's response if the Commission denied the window replacement petition. Mr. O'Connor stated that the petitioner most likely would decide to restore the windows in place. Ms. Ceccacci stated that the windows in place were an integral part of the architecture of the building, and indicated that Preservation Worcester was concerned with the proposed window replacement as it would have a negative impact on the historical integrity of the building. Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed (a) relocation and renovation of the existing porch stairs, (b) the removal and replacement of one (1) window with an exhaust louver to allow installation of a handicapped lift, and (c), the installation of exhaust hoods on the west elevation and rear courtyard wall and install wall louvers on the gable ends of the roof would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester, therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for these petitions was approved. The Commission then considered the proposed the proposed window replacement. Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 1-4 (Commissioners Schneider, McCann, Crowley and Merrill voting no), that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester; therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was denied. The Historical Commission then considered the Building Demolition Delay Waiver with respect to the petitioner's evidence related to undue economic hardship. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, the Commission voted 1-4 (Commissioners Schneider, McCann, Merrill and Crowley voted no) that the petitioner had demonstrated undue economic hardship. The motion failed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver based on hardship was denied.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- 5. Ken Burns Bridge Presentation:** Gary J. Bua of TranSystems, and Jeff Shrimton from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), presented the project. Mr. Shrimton stated that MassDOT was planning to remove and replace the Ken Burns Bridge over Lake Quinsigamond, as part of Governor Deval Patrick's Accelerated Bridge Program to repair and/or construct new bridges in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Mr. Bua stated that upon a visit to the site to conduct a preliminary evaluation of the conditions of the bridge, it was discovered that the bridge has deteriorated significantly.

He also indicated that the bridge inspection demonstrated severe spalling of the undersides of the deck and supports, severe cracks in the floor-beams between arch lines and support as well as spalls with exposed and de-bonded reinforcing at the keystone region of arch 4 in span 3 and at the spring line of arch 1 in span 4. Nevertheless, Mr. Bua indicated that the bridge was safe to use for the next five (5) years, although it would require on-going maintenance and regular follow-up inspections, and definitively needs to be replaced. In regards to the proposed bridge replacement, Mr. Bua stated that several design concepts were considered, but stated that after much consideration, TranSystems recommended a 5 Span Steel Deck Arch design as the best alternative in terms of design, cost, functionality and construction. Mr. Shrimton acknowledged that MassDOT had received the TranSystems report and bridge recommendation, but stated that MassDOT had not yet made a final decision on the matter. In addition, Mr. Shrimton stated that once MassDOT was getting closer to making a final decision, he would like to return and hold a joint meeting with the Worcester and Shrewsbury Historical Commissions for final comments and testimony. Chair Schneider thanked the presenters and indicated that the Worcester Historical Commission looked forward to the final presentation to provide comments.

Adjournment: Chair Schneider adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM.