

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

MARCH 17, 2016

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Andrew Shveda, Chair
Timothy McCann, Vice-Chair
Randolph Bloom, Clerk
Cheryll Holley, Alternate
Karl Bjork, Alternate

Commission Members Absent: Robyn Conroy
Devon Kurtz

Staff Members Present: Deborah Steele, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

Approval of the Minutes: February 25, 2016

Upon a motion Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of February 25, 2016 with one edit.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 6 Ripley Street/871 Main Street – HC-2016-009

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Main South Community Development Corp.
Present Use: Multi Unit Apartment
Year Built: 1870
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed- fka Jonas Heald-James Ketell Double House
Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace roof
- Repoint brick
- Remove and replace windows

Larry Benard from Main South Community Development Corporation appeared on behalf of the petition.

Mr. Benard stated that they will be doing a roof replacement which is part flat rubber and peak and for the peak portion they will be looking to do architectural shingles and on the flat portion they would like to do a rubber membrane and rubber membrane on the dormers. He stated that

they would also like to repoint the brick as the lentils on 6 Ripley are in rough shape and they will repair them.

Vice-Chair McCann stated that they would ask that that the mason for the project mix the mortar in such a way not to reveal where the repairs have been made.

Mr. Benard stated the windows on building now are a brown aluminum window and the color will change to a hunter green that will complement the brick and they will either go with either vinyl or aluminum and the pattern will be 2 over 1.

Chair Shveda stated that the windows do not look like they were original to the building.

Chair Shveda asked what the roofing material on the pitched roof was. Mr. Benard stated that it was asphalt.

Secretary Bloom asked if the original windows were 2 over 1. Mr. Benard stated that he did not know.

Vice-Chair McCann stated the Commission would suggest that maybe the applicant could go the Historical Museum and find original photos of the building and perhaps match the configuration.

Chair Shveda asked if any work would be done on the cornice of the roof. Mr. Benard stated that the wood would be repainted and they will match.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Worcester Historical Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application received February 17, 2016 and dated February 16, 2016.

2. 17-19 Grand Street– HC-2016-01

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Petitioner: Main South Community Development Corp.

Present Use: Multi Unit Apartment

Year Built: 1870

Historic Status: MACRIS Listed

Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace roof
- Repair siding

Larry Benard from Main South Community Development Corporation appeared on behalf of the petition.

Chair Shveda asked if the entire roof was flat. Mr. Benard stated that it was.

Mr. Benard stated the siding repair is minor as some of the cedar shakes have fallen off and they will replace and will then paint them.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if the diamond pattern on the cedar shakes on the frieze would remain. Mr. Benard stated that it would and the appearance on the shingles would not change at all.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Worcester Historical Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application received February 17, 2016 and dated February 16, 2016.

3. 898 Main Street– HC-2016-011

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Main South Community Development Corp.
Present Use: Multi Unit Apartment
Year Built: 1889
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka Horace Hobbs House
Petition Purpose:

- Repair slate roof on turret
- Repair asphalt roof with like materials
- Remove and replace windows
- Repair siding and front stairs

Larry Benard from Main South Community Development Corporation appeared on behalf of the petition.

Mr. Benard stated that they have not chosen the color of the windows yet but it will be something unobtrusive.

Mr. Benard stated that the slate on the turret needs to be repaired and they will replace if any of it has fallen off.

Vice-Chair McCann stated that with regards to the windows if applicant could check to see if there are any historic window photos and then try to match the pattern.

Chair Shveda asked if there was slate under the asphalt. Mr. Benard stated that he did not believe so.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Worcester Historical Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application received February 17, 2016 and dated February 16, 2016.

4. 976 Main Street – HC-2016-012

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Main South Community Development Corp.
Present Use: Multi Unit Apartment
Year Built: 1870
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka Fred Hopkins House
Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace roof
- Remove and replace windows
- Replace vinyl siding

Larry Benard from Main South Community Development Corporation appeared on behalf of the petition.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if the roof work was the mansard portion. Mr. Benard stated that it was the entire roof and they will use white on the roof but not on the mansard and part of the roof is asphalt and portions are flat.

Mr. Benard stated that the vinyl they plan to use is more rigid and showed an example of the product.

Clerk Bloom stated that the product being used would then resemble wood siding.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if the product was PVC based. Mr. Benard stated that he believed so.

Chair Shveda stated that none of the material being removed is historic and commends the applicant for making the building look better.

Vice-Chair McCann asked where the roof edge is tied into the mansard what the joint would look like. Mr. Benard stated that it will be a small wraparound and will match what is there is now.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Holley and seconded by Vice-Chair McCann the Worcester Historical Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application received February 17, 2016 and dated February 16, 2016.

5. 5-7 Beaver Street – HC-2016-013

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Main South Community Development Corp.
Present Use: Multi Unit Apartment
Year Built: 1892
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka The Beaver Block
Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace roof
- Remove and replace windows
- Replace vinyl siding

Larry Benard from Main South Community Development Corporation appeared on behalf of the petition.

Chair Shveda asked whether all the vinyl siding would be changed. Mr. Benard stated that it would.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if the first floor masonry would remain. Mr. Benard stated that it is good shape and it will remain.

Chair Shveda asked if the soffits at the crown will be treated and be wrapped in aluminum. Mr. Benard stated that it will depend on the vinyl they use.

Mr. Benard stated that he would also like to remove the boiler flue which will require the removal of a chimney below roof level. The Commission felt that was not a significant difference then what was advertised for the hearing.

Chair Shveda stated that this is a vinyl for vinyl window replacement.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if any of the stairwell windows were original. Mr. Benard stated no.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Worcester Historical Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition to include the removal of a chimney below roof level would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application received February 17, 2016 and dated February 16, 2016.

6. 974 Main Street – HC-2016-013

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Main South Community Development Corp.
Present Use: Multi Unit Apartment
Year Built: 1892
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka The Beaver Block
Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace roof
- Remove and replace windows
- Replace vinyl siding

Larry Benard from Main South Community Development Corporation appeared on behalf of the petition.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if the application referred to the addition when mentioning the block masonry. Mr. Benard stated yes and that it is not attached to the original building.

Chair Shveda stated there is brownstone detail. Mr. Benard stated that there was and it needs to be cleaned up as there was a bad fire in 1998 and the carving around the door has a lot of smoke damage.

Chair Shveda asked if it would be cleaned. Mr. Benard stated that it could. Chair Shveda stated that when it is cleaned a mild detergent should be used as chemicals could damage the brick and cause deterioration of the brick.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Worcester Historical Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application received February 17, 2016 and dated February 16, 2016.

The Commission expressed appreciation for the organization for maintaining these building and keeping the historical features.

7. 39 Irving Street – HC-2016-008

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness
Petitioner: GFV122 LLC.
Present Use: Lodging House
Year Built: 1892
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka The Beaver Block
Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace roof
- Remove and replace windows
- Replace vinyl siding

George Valeri along with Charbel Najem appeared on behalf of the petition.

Mr. Najem stated that they received initial approval in 2014 but after that a complaint was filed with the Architectural Access Board regarding the installation of a handicapped ramp and they went through process to receive approval for that and spoke with the building inspector who okayed the project.

Vice-Chair McCann asked is there would be any material removed from the building. Mr. Najem stated the ramp will be attached to the building and there is a small porch that was on the building that they are looking to be removed in order to install the ramp. Mr. Najem stated that the porch is pressure treated and not original to the building.

Chair Shveda asked if the photos presented would be similar type of ramp. Mr. Najem stated that it would be.

Mr. Najem stated they will also be adding a canopy and the access board did vote on that and in order to make it compliant the design being presented is one they have to use for the canopy.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if the decking would be composite. Mr. Najem stated that it will be composite.

Chair Shveda asked if it would be painted or unfinished in white. Mr. Najem stated it would be white.

Chair Shveda asked if the handrails on the building side would be directly mounted to the building. Mr. Najem stated that it would be mounted to the brick side.

Chair Shveda asked how the handrail would terminate. Mr. Najem stated that it will continue past the window to the flat side.

Chair Shveda asked on the new canopy in the front what type of material and color it would be. The applicant wasn't sure of what color was planned to be used and that was not included in the application therefore the Commission requested the applicant file a separate application to come

back before the Commission to discuss the canopy and asked the applicant to bring sample colors proposed for the awning.

The Commission discussed the various dimensions proposed for the ramp and the rails.

Chair Shveda asked if the railings system and the handrails would be painted steel. Mr. Najem stated that was correct and there is no wood in the railings.

Chair Shveda stated that it is up to the Commission to determine whether this ramp is appropriate for the district. Mr. Najem stated that it will look like the photos presented and not the plans.

Commissioner Bloom stated that something like this would not have not existed in the 1890's so the Commission would need to be somewhat flexible to what is placed there and what is proposed is fairly simple and thinks that would be preferable to something more elaborate.

Vice-Chair McCann stated that when this is painted black it will disappear into the façade.

Chair Shveda stated that the metal railings will be black and the post will be a composite material and left unpainted and asked about the rim boards whether they would be left white. Mr. Najem stated that it would be left white. Chair Shveda asked about the color of the composite board. Mr. Najem stated it would be grayish.

Vice-Chair McCann stated that the wrapped posts are the support footings.

Mike Kennedy from the Center of Living and Working appeared in support of the ramp as that allows people with disability to live there.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Holley the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed removal of the pressure treated porch on the side of the building and application of railing into the existing building would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Commission voted 5-0 that the removal of the pressure treated porch on the side of the building and application of railing into the existing building and compatible with the preservation and protection of the Crown Hill Local Historic District as it relates to the historic and architectural value and significance of the site and structure and voted 5-0 to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness Application received February 11, 2016 and dated February 10, 2016.

8. 14-16 Sycamore Street – HC-2016-015

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Centro Las Americas
Present Use: Multi Unit Apartment Building
Year Built: 1849
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka Williard S. Allen House
Petition Purpose:

- Demolish principal structure
- Renovate secondary structure for office use

Juan Gomez appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Gomez stated that Centro Las Americas has as signed a purchase-and-sale agreement with the South Middlesex Opportunity Council to buy the former People In Peril shelter at 701 Main St. He stated that the long-range plan is to turn the old PIP shelter, which for years had been a lightning rod for controversy and a magnet for crime in the Main South area, into a cultural and performing arts center. He stated that once it is done it will be a tremendous economic, cultural and morale boost to the neighborhood.

Mr. Gomez stated that Centro's strategy is to make a major investment in the Sycamore/Main street area, to help stabilize that part of Main South while also meeting the growing needs of the agency.

Mr. Gomez stated that Centro has purchased properties at 14, 16 and 18 Sycamore St., and is in negotiations to acquire two other properties on Sycamore Street and two others on Main Street, in addition to the former PIP shelter.

Mr. Gomez stated that Centro is facing a significant number of challenges because of their growth and stated that Centro is looking to make a serious investment to revitalize and beautify our neighborhood, promote economic development and return it to commercial vibrancy. He stated their current building at 11 Sycamore is a small and old building cannot meet the demands of that growth.

Mr. Gomez stated that the future plans are to historically restore and renovate a carriage house at 16 Sycamore St. and convert it to office space but agency wants to demolish a dilapidated former multi-unit home at 14 Sycamore St. to make way for a parking lot to meet their growing needs. Mr. Gomez stated that the home has become an eyesore and has fallen into great disrepair because it had not been maintained for years. He said there are health and structural hazards and presented a power-point presentation of condition of property. Mr. Gomez stated that he was surprised that the city had not condemned the house because of the inhumane conditions people were living in. Mr. Gomez stated that it would likely cost \$500,000 or more just to make the house habitable again.

Members of the Historical Commission stated they don't normally like to see historic buildings taken down to make way for a parking lot, a majority of the members felt it would be

economically unfeasible to attempt to restore the house but they also appreciate the fact that the Centro plans to historically restore and renovate the carriage house at 16 Sycamore Street.

Chair Shveda stated that the demolition would probably serve the public best and while it said, it's a net positive for the community.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Worcester Historical Commission voted 4-1 (Vice-Chair McCann voting against) that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application received February 17, 2016 and dated February 17, 2016.

9. Preservation Plan Presentation Update

Ms. Steele stated that they are looking for possible outreach meeting dates and an update will be provide at next meeting.

10. Communications

a. Communication from Epsilon Associates Inc., re: Letters of Support for

- 6 Jaques Avenue,
- 22 Ethan Allen Street
- 23 Wellington Street
- 23-27 Ethan Allen Street
- 26 Ethan Allen Street
- 33 Wellington Street
- 42 Wellington Street
- 46 Wellington Street
- 51 Wellington Street
- 718 Wellington Street

received March 1, 2015 and dated February 29, 2016

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission voted 5-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

b. Communication from Epsilon Associates Inc., re: Letter of Support – Central Building, 322-332 Main Street received March 1, 2016 and dated February 29, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission voted 5-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- c. Communication from Epsilon Associates Inc., re: Letter of Support – Worcester Courthouse, 2 Main Street received March 1, 2016 and dated February 29, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Commission voted 5-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- d. Communication from Epsilon Associates, Inc., re: Letter of Support – Abby's House, 52 High Street received March 1, 2016 and dated February 29, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Vice-Chair McCann the Commission voted 5-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- e. Communication from Massachusetts Historical Commission re: Worcester County Courthouse, 2 Main Street, received February 22, 2016 and dated February 17, 2016.

No comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion the Commission voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.