

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

June 22, 2017

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Andrew Shveda
Randolph Bloom
Robyn Conroy
Devon Kurtz
Courtney Escobar, Alternate

Commission Members Absent: Mark Wamback
Cheryll Holley, Alternate

Staff Members Present: Susan Arena, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Shveda at 5:30 pm.

Approval of Minutes

May 11, 2017

Upon a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Commission voted 4-0 (Commissioners Shveda, Bloom, Kurtz, and Escobar voted) to approve the meeting minutes from May 11, 2017.

Quorum was not available for a vote on the May 17, 2017 and June 1, 2017 minutes.

Old Business

1. 12 Scott Street – HC-2017-035

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Robert Brackett
Present Use: Multi-Family Residence
Year Built: c1869
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka Bridget Butler Three-Decker
Petition Purpose:

- Install vinyl siding (economic hardship)
- Enclose front porch (economic hardship)

A quorum was not available for this item.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 5-0 to continue the item to the July 6, 2017 meeting and to extend the Building Demolition Delay Waiver deadline to July 9, 2017.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated May 12, 2017 and received May 15, 2017.

New Business

2. 272 Highland Street – HC-2017-038

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Melinda Pham
Present Use: Single-family Residence
Year Built: 1890
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, within Hammond Heights National Register Historic District, fka E. S. Pierce House

Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace all windows

Melinda Pham, owner; Ha Pham, owner's daughter; and Ken Ducasse, Pella window representative, appeared on behalf of the application.

Ms. Ha Pham stated that windows are in very poor condition, and it is significantly less money to replace the windows instead of repairing them. Ms. Melinda Pham stated the quote for repair was approximately \$70,000 versus approximately \$45,000 for the proposed Pella replacements. Mr. Ducasse stated that each new window will match the original in size, and that all are 1-over-1 sash, which is consistent with the historic windows. He also explained the composition of the replacement windows.

Public comment:

- 1) Steven Bergo, abutter, inquired whether the replacement windows could be painted, to which Mr. Ducasse replied in the affirmative. He also noted that there were several stained glass windows that the previous owner had removed. He asked whether any had been repurchased. Ms. Pham's daughter replied that they had not and did not know where they are, but expressed their desire to retain the existing stained glass and restore them where possible.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Wambach, the Commission voted 3-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated May 15, 2017 and received May 18, 2017.

3. 4 Congress Street – HC-2017-039

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness
Petitioner: Emilio Mendez and Rukia Bilal
Present Use: Single-family Residence

Year Built: 1850

Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, within Crown Hill Local Historic District and Oxford - Crown National Register Historic District, fka James Andrews House

Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace six broken windows
- Replace walkway along the side of house
- Replace portion of wooden fence
- Repaint exterior

No one was present for this item so it was held to the end of the meeting.

Emilio Mendez and Rukia Bilal, owners, appeared on behalf of the application.

Chair Shveda briefly explained the review and voting process then asked the applicant to walk through the proposed work. Mr. Mendez stated that they'd like to replace six broken windows that are missing. He expressed his desire to match the existing windows, and stated he prefers vinyl. He stated that wooden windows cost a lot more, will require continual maintenance, and don't last as long. Chair Shveda led a discussion about preferred and appropriate colors and finishes, stating opposition to vinyl. Mr. Mendez stated that some of the windows have previously been replaced and are vinyl.

Regarding the replacement of the walkway along the east side of the house, Mr. Mendez stated that the current material is broken and he'd like to replace it with concrete or paver brick, preferably brick.

Mr. Mendez stated that the wooden fence is rotten and leaning, and that a portion of the fence is chain link. Part of the wooden fence is a lower picket/stockade toward the street, then rises to 6-foot high solid wood with lattice on top. He would like to replace the whole length, approximately 100' with solid wood with lattice on top, and include a matching gate.

For repainting, Mr. Mendez stated that he and his wife love the current color scheme, but that the house needs refreshing, so it will be repainted in the same colors.

Discussion returned to window options as Chair Shveda encouraged the applicant to explore a variety of options. He stated that the Commission would like to see more information on the proposed windows and the selected pavers. These two items would be continued to the next meeting to allow time for research.

Public comment:

- 1) Randy Bloom, neighbor at 2 Congress Street, added some information about the windows, stating that the house was remodeled c.1900, which is when the porch was added and the windows were changed to 6-over-1. He stated he believes all the windows in the main part of the house date to that period, and that some in the rear ell, former carriage barn, may be vinyl. In regard to the fence, Mr. Bloom reiterated that the front section of fence, running perpendicular to the street, starts with a lower picket fence then changes to solid with lattice. He sought clarification of how far back the 6' fence would start. Mr. Mendez stated he'd like to run the lower fence for 16 feet then transitioning. Mr. Bloom noted that this would increase the price, and he had agreed to help with the cost as it's unclear who the fence belongs to. He was also concerned about how the higher fence would change the streetscape. Chair Shveda

suggested adding one more 8' length of lower fence. Mr. Mendez stated he'd like to align with the front post of the porch for the transition. Chair Shveda agreed that this sounded reasonable, but encouraged him to discuss the details further with Mr. Bloom.

- 2) Jo Hart, Worcester, asked about the claim that the windows were broken, whether that referred to the glass or the wood. The applicant stated the wood and glass were broken and that the wood is rotted. Staff and Commission members clarified that they were damaged during firefighting efforts and that the frames and sashes were compromised.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed work, consisting of the replacement of a 100' section of fence, was not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 4-0 that the changes proposed to 4 Congress Street, consisting of the replacement of a 100' section of wooden fence with a low wooden picket fence to the face of the porch to transition to a 6' high wooden fence, and the repainting of the house in the same color scheme, are appropriate for the Crown Hill Local District and approved the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 4-0 to continue the remaining items, consisting of the replacement of six windows and the replacement of the walkway, to the July 6, 2017 meeting and to extend the Building Demolition Delay Waiver deadline to July 9, 2017.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated May 17, 2017 and received May 19, 2017.

4. 28 Newbury Street – HC-2017-040

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness
Petitioner: Van Nguyen & Hanh Bui
Present Use: Two-family Residence
Year Built: c1870
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, within Crown Hill Local Historic District fka Isabella A. and Elizabeth F. McCausland house

Petition Purpose:

- Wrap basement windows; Replace rear door; Cover window with plywood and paint; Repoint and paint foundation as needed (deleading)

Tim Hansen, City of Worcester Lead Abatement Program in the Economic Development Division, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Hansen stated that the work is being done in accordance with deleading protocols and that the scope involves mainly of scraping and painting to make intact. He noted that a piece of plywood on a basement window will be replaced and repainted.

Chair Shveda noted that the building had been vinyl sided previously and that little original material exists. There was some discussion to clarify the location of a window and a door to be impacted.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 5-0 that the changes proposed to 28 Newbury Street are appropriate for the Crown Hill Local District and approved the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated May 31, 2017 and received May 31, 2017.

5. 76 Franklin Street (aka 72 Franklin Street) – HC-2017-041 (See Item f)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Worcester Franklin Holdings LLC
Present Use: Mixed-use Building
Year Built: c1904
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka New Park Hotel
Petition Purpose:

- Replace windows and doors in existing or enlarged openings
- Replace Franklin Street storefront
- Add connector to 82-84 Franklin Street

Cindy Lee, architect with EMBARC Studio, appeared on behalf of the application.

Ms. Lee reviewed the scope of work, which includes blocking in a doorway, saw cutting several new openings for doors and windows along the west elevation of the building, aligning with previous openings that had been infilled with brick. Work also includes cleaning and restoration of the brick, replacing the storefront windows that are failing, and constructing a short (approximately 2-5 feet) connector to neighboring 82-84 Franklin Street to allow interior access between the buildings.

The Commission had no concerns about the proposal and noted that overall the work being done as part of The Grid project was a great improvement to work that had previously been done and is making the buildings more functional for current use. Commissioner Conroy stated that she felt the application was very thorough and clear and left no question about the scope of the proposed work.

A letter of support, dated June 22, 2017, from the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce was noted by Chair Shveda.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bloom and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated May 30, 2017 and received June 1, 2017.

6. 25 Westland Street – HC-2017-042

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Francis Stevens and Ana Maldonado
Present Use: Single-family Residence
Year Built: 1897
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, within Hammond Heights National Register Historic District, fka John M. Travers house
Petition Purpose:

- Install rooftop solar panels

Bill Manley, Direct Energy Solar representative, appeared on behalf of the application.

Chair Shveda briefly addressed the details of the proposal, confirming with Mr. Manly that the rails will be lagged to the rafter system, and the installation is reversible. Mr. Manly stated that no material will be removed from the house. The Commission had no concerns about this project.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated May 31, 2017 and received June 2, 2017.

Communications

- a. Communication from MHC re: PNF for Paris Cinema, 66 Franklin Street, dated May 19, 2017 and received May 26, 2017. *(See Item c)*
No comment.
- b. Communication from CBRE re: Section 106 review for 19 Church Street, Shrewsbury, dated May 24, 2017 and received June 5, 2017. *(See Item d)*
No comment
- c. Communication from MHC re: PNF review for Paris Cinema, 66 Franklin Street, dated June 8, 2017 and received June 14, 2017.
Taken with Item a. No comment.
- d. Notification from FCC re: Section 106 filing for 19 Church Street, Shrewsbury, received electronically June 15, 2017.
Taken with Item b. No comment.
- e. *Communication from MHC re: Memorandum of Agreement for demolition at Worcester State Hospital, dated June 12, 2017 and received June 15, 2017.
Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Commission voted 5-0 to concur with, and sign, the Memorandum of Agreement as provided.
- f. Letter of support from Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce re: application for 76 Franklin Street (HC-2017-041), dated June 22, 2017 and received June 22, 2017.

Taken with Item 5. No comment.

** Items requiring action*

Other Business

I. Discussion of Local Historic District Rules & Regulations

Staff initiated this conversation as there is a need to update the Rules and Regulations, which date to 1975, to incorporate the three existing LHDs as well as any future districts. This is an opportunity to assess the existing document and determine how to improve it so that it is most functional for the Commission and applicants.

Adjournment

Upon a motion the Commission adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.