



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

Thursday, February 24, 2022

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
Diane Long, Vice-Chair
Janet Theerman, Clerk
Randolph Bloom (Participated Remotely)
Steven Taylor, Alternate (Participated Remotely)

Commissioners Absent: Tomi Stefani
Erika Helnarski

Staff Present: Michelle Johnstone, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Stephen S. Rolle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)

Call Commission to Order – 5:30 PM

Approval of Minutes – February 10, 2022 – On a motion by Commissioner Long as seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the meeting minutes from February 10, 2022.

Old Business

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

1. 42 Kenwood Avenue – HC-2022-004 (MBL 22-018-00004)

Scott Hanson, the homeowner, joined the meeting remotely to speak in regards to the application. He stated that the intent of the application is to install new windows to match existing replacement windows on the home and for energy efficiency.

Ms. Johnstone stated that she did a site visit and noted that many of the existing windows are vinyl replacements.

Commissioner Taylor asked whether repair had been considered. Mr. Hanson stated that given that most of the wood windows do not operate given deterioration, he would like a replacement window.

Commissioner Theerman asked whether the black casement windows would be replaced in black or white to match the rest of the windows. The applicant noted that the windows Commissioner Theerman was referencing, in addition to basement windows, were actually dark green. The appearance of the casements would be changed entirely.

Commissioner Bloom stated that to him, this is one of the most architecturally interesting houses in the City. Commissioner Long agreed that it is beautiful.

No Public Comment

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to close public comment.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted five (5) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition at 42 Kenwood Avenue would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a majority vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 42 Kenwood Avenue was thus approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A. Building Demolition Delay Waiver application, dated December 27, 2021, and received January 18, 2022.

New Business

Leave to Withdraw

4. 39 Cedar Street – HC-2022-007 (MBL 03-035-00005)

5. 30 Fruit Street – HC-2022-008 (MBL 03-035-00010)

8. 41 Cedar Street – HC-2022-011 (MBL 03-035-00012)

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, 39 Cedar Street, 30 Fruit Street, and 41 Cedar Street were withdrawn without prejudice to the applications on a vote of five (5) in favor and zero (0) opposed.

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

2. 300 Southbridge Street – HC-2022-005 (MBL 05-012-00013)

Elena Despotopoulos, an attorney at Fletcher & Tilton, appeared in person on behalf of the owner, Dalfior Development, to speak in regard to the application.

She stated that Dalfior is a Boston-based development company that currently has the Sargent Card Clothing Company building at 300 Southbridge Street under agreement. She gave a brief history of the building, which was constructed in 1866, and described its condition.

She stated that the primary intent of the application before the Commission is to request approval to remove and renovate portions of the building.

Travis Blake, architect & Associate Principal at Sousa Design, participated in the meeting remotely. He experienced technical difficulties, and the item was held until later in the meeting.

3. 6 Oak Street – HC-2022-006 (MBL 03-034-00009)

Russ Haims of Hampton Properties appeared in person to speak in regard to the application. He stated that the property is a former Becker dormitory. He stated that the windows and roof would be restored to as close to the original condition as possible.

Mr. Haims stated that the intent of the application is to strip the existing clapboard and replace it with either new cedar or fiber cement. He stated that none of the trim would be altered, and that the color palette would remain similar.

Ms. Long noted that the application called for replacement of select windows. Mr. Haims clarified that that was no longer planned. He noted that the quality of construction was very high and that the windows are worth restoring.

Commissioner Taylor asked for more information on why Mr. Haims decided to restore the windows. Mr. Haims stated that his first choice would have to replace them, but given the size of many of the windows, custom windows would have needed to be made, and there are supply chain issues.

Commissioner Bloom asked what the new function of the building would be. Mr. Haims stated that it would be a new dorm for WPI.

Public Comment

No public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to close public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted five (5) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition at 6 Oak Street, consisting of the replacement of siding with either fiber cement or cedar to match the existing would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a majority vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 6 Oak Street was thus approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A. Building Demolition Delay Waiver application, dated and received March 2, 2022.

2. 300 Southbridge Street – HC-2022-005 (MBL 05-012-00013)

The technological difficulties for 300 Southbridge Street resolved.

Travis Blake walked the Commission through site context, existing conditions, and the overall proposal for the property, which is to rehabilitate the property and restore it to its historic appearance.

The Commission lauded the team for the proposed project.

Commissioner Taylor asked why the roof cap for the tower would not be replaced.

Mr. Blake stated that the team looked into replicating the historic roof cap, but it would be a large investment and it would be difficult to find the skilled labor to replicate the beauty of the original roof cap.

Public Comment

No public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to close public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted five (5) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition at 300 Southbridge Street as described [in the application

and in meeting discussion] would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a majority vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 300 Southbridge Street was thus approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A. Building Demolition Delay Waiver application, dated January 12, 2022, and received January 28, 2022.

6. 80 William Street – HC-2022-009 (MBL 02-047-00052)

Russ Haims of Hampton Properties appeared in person to speak in regard to the application. He stated the intent of the project, which is to restore the accessory garden structure at 80 William Street by removing the roof and creating a cedar pergola style covering and restoring the columns, tiles, and urns.

Commissioner Kurtz asked if the tiles were imprinted or smooth. Mr. Haims stated that they are smooth.

Public Comment

No public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to close public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted five (5) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition at 80 William Street consisting of restoration of the garden structure would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a majority vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 80 William Street was thus approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A. Building Demolition Delay Waiver application, dated and received March 2, 2022.

7. 53 West Street – HC-2022-010 (MBL 02-039-24+25)

Russ Haims of Hampton Properties appeared in person to speak in regard to the application. He stated that this building has many structural issues and that many portions of the buildings, including sashes, are in very poor condition.

He stated that the intent of the project is to replace all of the windows in the house with simulated divided light replacement windows except for decorative sash, which will be restored, and to paint the house.

Commissioner Kurtz asked if the building would be re-utilized as a dorm. Mr. Haims stated that it would.

Commissioner Theerman asked what would be used in one-light windows. Mr. Haims stated that they are deadlights that do not operate, so they would be kept as-is. Commissioner Theerman also asked if the bars would be removed from the windows. Mr. Haims stated that he would like to.

Mr. Haims stated that in one of the box windows, he plans on fabricating and installing a historically appropriate window.

Public Comment

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to close public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted five (5) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition at 53 West Street consisting of replacing most windows with simulated divided light replacement windows to match the existing grid patterns would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a majority vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 53 West Street was thus approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A. Building Demolition Delay Waiver application, dated and received March 2, 2022.

Communications

None

Other Business

- A. Public informational meeting regarding the Main and Franklin Streets Historic District with representatives from the Massachusetts Historical Commission and Public Archaeology Laboratory.

Ben Haley of the Massachusetts Historical Commission gave an informational presentation on the National Register.

Commissioner Bloom asked Mr. Haley for clarification on why one of the buildings shown in his presentation without a high level of historic integrity was listed to the National Register. Mr. Haley stated that it was listed under the Underground Railroad context, and the architectural integrity threshold is lower given that designation.

Commissioner Bloom asked if there were any other contexts that allow for a lower integrity threshold. Mr. Haley stated that it could be on a case by case basis, such as first period buildings that are significant only for their frame.

Erin Boyce of the Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. presented on the proposed Main & Franklin Streets Historic District, which is significant under Criterion A in the area of commerce, and Criterion C in the area of architecture as an intact collection of late 19th and early 20th century commercial Classical style buildings. The period of significance for the proposed district is 1851–1971. It contains 12 contributing buildings and 4 non-contributing resources. She gave an overview of the history, and location of the district.

The Commission did not have questions or comments.

Public Comment

No public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to close public comment.

- B. Commission officer annual elections.

Held.

Adjournment

Upon a motion made and duly seconded the Commission voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:10 p.m.