

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

**JANUARY 19, 2006
418 MAIN STREET, SUITE 400**

Commission Members Present: Peter Schneider, Chair
Tom Johnson, Vice-Chair
Tom Constantine
Jeanice Sherman

Staff Present: Joel Fontane, Division of Planning & Reg. Services
Robin Bartness, Division of Planning & Reg. Services
David Holden, Division of Code Enforcement
Heather Kamyck, Division of Economic Development

Regular Meeting: 5:30 pm

- 1- **Call to Order:** Chairman Peter Schneider called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.
- 2- **Approval of the minutes:** Upon a motion by Tom Constantine and seconded by Tom Johnson, the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the December 15, 2005 minutes.

Continuations:

- 3- **17 Southgate Place Demolition Delay:** Dave Holden read a letter he sent to City Manager Michael V. O'Brien, dated December 18, 2005, regarding this site. In his letter he stated, as the Building Commissioner for the City of Worcester, he determined that the building is dangerous to life or limb, as specified in section 121.2 of the Sixth Edition of the Massachusetts State Building Code, 780 CMR. He stated that there were a list of major deficiencies observed in the building and that the process to make the building safe must begin by noon the day following service of this notice. The Commission discussed various alternatives for preserving at least a portion of the historic structures, and expressed concern that the second oldest industrial building was slated for demolition. Staff explained that 17 Southgate Place was part of the South Worcester Industrial Park plan, an important economic development initiative of the City. Upon a motion by Tom Johnson and seconded by Jeanice Sherman, the Commission voted 4-0 to request the administration to provide a detailed report, prior to any demolition, regarding the feasibility of preserving the historical structures on site, including cost estimates for various preservation alternatives – to include a cost estimate for preserving a wall. Upon a motion by Tom Johnson and seconded by Jeanice Sherman, the Commission voted 4-0 to continue the Building Demolition Delay hearing to the next regularly scheduled meeting after that report is available for review and comment by the Commission.

New Business:

- 4- 2006 Historical Commission Goals and Objectives:** Commissioner Tom Johnson read of lists of goals and objectives he came up with for the Commission: 1) Review of local historical guidelines at the municipal level; 2) Make application for Massachusetts Preservation Project funds; 3) Define National Historic District boundaries; 4) Continue posting status of historic buildings with the certificates of municipal lien; 5) Monitor properties that are granted certificate of appropriateness, variances, etc.; 6) Look at local ordinances for designation of historic properties in addition to the MACRIS listed properties; and 7) Review tax assessment easements for private homeowners who rehabilitate their properties. Commissioner Johnson also mentioned he would like to see a running list on the agenda of old business items. Commissioner Sherman stated she would like to see the website continually updated, and that the City participates in the development and implementation of a signage program for all historic structures. She also stated the Commission should prioritize its list of goals, and the Planning Division should prioritize its goals for the Commission and that those lists could be discussed and combined at a later meeting.

Commissioner Johnson stated the Commission should send a letter of appreciation to Joseph Borbone at DPW for his support in the initial implementation of a sign program for the Local historic Districts.

Upon a motion by Tom Johnson and seconded by Jeanice Sherman, the Commission voted 4-0 to enter into executive session to discuss personnel matters at 6:47 p.m.

Upon a motion by Tom Johnson and seconded by Jeanice Sherman, the Commission voted 4-0 to end the executive session at 7:40 p.m.

Adjournment: Chairman Peter Schneider adjourned the meeting at 7:40 pm.