

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER  
January 23, 2014**

**LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL**

**Commission Members Present:** Timothy McCann, Chair  
Kevin Provencher, Vice-Chair  
Andrew Shveda  
Erika Dunn  
Karl Bjork  
Randolph Bloom

**Commission Members Absent:** None

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

**REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)**

**Approval of the Minutes:**

Upon a motion the Commission voted to approve the minutes of 6/27/13, 8/29/2013, 12/05/2013 and 12/19/2013.

**Unfinished Business**

**1. 15-17 Blackstone River Road (HC-2013-072) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver**

Charbel Najem from Capstone Realty Trust appeared on behalf of the application to remove all wood and metal windows, reframe as needed and replace with aluminum windows and panning to match existing style. He presented a report of the property's window conditions listing broken or fogged windows needing replacement. The remanufacture of windows cost an average of \$2,200 per window per window, totaling \$72,000 for all 32 windows. Replacement with historically accurate windows cost \$19,000 for material plus \$3,850 installation and labor. Mr. Najem stated there would be economic hardship to replace all the windows on the building.

Commissioner Shveda inquired whether the windows were insulated and the exterior frame color, to which Mr. Najem said they were not insulated and the trim would be of bronze color.

Commissioner Shveda stated he understood the economic hardship between the cost to replace versus repair.

Commission Provencher said he did not see estimates for window restoration and inquired whether Mr. Najem contacted Preservation Worcester for restoration resources. Mr. Najem stated he did not because he believed the assistance was only for non-profits and that his company is for-profit.

Chair McCann clarified that Commissioner Provencher sought for repair estimates.

Chair McCann stated that the Commission is interested seeing repair costs. Mr. Najem replied that repair is difficult and cost prohibitive even though he would prefer to repair the windows.

Commissioner Provencher said he would like to see cost data but he understood the applicant's reasoning. He suggested that Mr. Najem add a line in the report indicating the windows that are salvageable.

Commissioner Shveda stated the report states window repair when in reality the quote reflects replacement. Commissioner Provencher stated he recalled the quote estimate was \$73,000 to replace all windows.

Mr. Najem said the windows were not repairable.

Commissioner Shveda stated he believed that applicant has provided all the information required.

Chair McCann stated that there were few options for the applicant as some Commissioners think that not enough information was provided. He stated the applicant could go forward with the Commission's vote based on the provided information or ask for a continuance.

Mr. Najem requested that the Commission take a vote since his company has pledged \$600,000 to improve the building and that he appreciated the comments from the Commission.

Jo Hart, city resident, stated that she felt the City of Worcester has a window crisis and there is a difference between replacing and repairing.

Jon Provost, city resident, stated he thinks applicant's effort to restore the building is laudable.

Upon a motion the Commission voted 4-2 (Chair McCann and Commissioner Provencher voted against) to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

#### **List of Exhibits:**

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received on November 26, 2013 and dated November 21, 2013.

Exhibit B: Report on condition of windows received at the January 23, 2014 Historical Commission meeting.

#### **New Business**

### **2. 220 Salisbury Street (HC-2013-070) – Certificate of Appropriateness & Building Demolition Delay Waiver**

The item was continued to the February 6, 2014 Historical Commission meeting at the request of the applicant.

#### **Other Business**

### **3. Communication Received:**

- Letter from the MHC, re: 230 Park Avenue; dated November 22, 2013 and received November 25, 2013.

Ms. Steele stated she spoke with administration said there were no changes to the project proposed. Administration would notify the Commission should there be any modifications.

- Letter from Jennifer Doherty re: 1 Stowell Avenue, dated December 20, 2013 and received December 20, 2013

Upon a motion by Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Provencher the Commission voted 6-0 to have staff draft a letter of support.

- Electronic Communication from Deb Carey, Massachusetts Audubon Society, re: porch brackets, received December 13, 2013.

Ms. Steele stated that Ms. Carey appeared before Historical Commission last year for porch repair and wanted to provide the Commission images of original porch brackets found during repair.

- Letter from FCC re: Section 106 filing; 21 Heywood Street; dated November 27, 2013, received December 22, 2013 – No comment.
- 2014 Preservation Award. – No comment
- Letter from Epsilon Associates, Inc., re: Letter of Support, Worcester Junction Shops, 49-57 Hermon Street, 51-59 Jackson Street, 62-74 Beacon Street; dated December 26, 2013, received electronically December 26, 2013.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Provencher and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission voted 6-0 to have staff draft a letter of support.

- Letter from Epsilon Associates, Inc., re: Letter of Support, 2 Grove Street; dated December 26, 2013; received electronically December 26, 2013.

Upon a motion by Commission Provencher and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission voted 6-0 to have staff draft a letter of support.

- Letter from Jacobs Engineering, Inc., re: MassDOT Project No. 607422; dated December 24, 2013; received January 2, 2014 – No comment.

4. Commissioner Shveda requested that staff look into what would be needed to create a Historical subcommittee that would work on the creation of a Historical Commission website.

## **5. Election of Officers**

Upon a motion the Commission voted to appoint Kevin Provencher as Chair for 2014.

Upon a motion the Commission voted to appoint Andrew Shveda as Vice-Chair for 2014.

Upon a motion the Commission voted to appoint Timothy McCann as Clerk for 2014.

## **Adjournment**

Upon a motion by Chair McCann the Commission voted 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m.