

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

December 4, 2014

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Kevin Provencher, Chair
Andrew Shveda, Vice Chair
Timothy McCann, Clerk
Erika Dunn
Robyn Conroy
Karl Bjork

Commission Members Absent: Randolph Bloom

Staff Members Present: Stephen S. Rolle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Deborah Steele, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

Approval of the Minutes:

11/6/2014 – Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Secretary McCann the Commission voted 6-0 to approve the minutes of 11/6/2014 with edits.

11/20/2014-Not available

New Business

1. 26 Louise Street (HC-2014-075)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: 26 Louise Street LLC
Present Use: Three-family residence
Year Built: Circa 1900
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed, NRIND,NRMRA, formerly known as the David Hunt Three-Decker
Petition Purpose: Remove/replace siding and porch with like materials

Shiran Aguila appeared on behalf of the application. Mr. Aguila stated that he had been cited by the City of Worcester for peeling paint and he is looking to side the house and he would like to replace with like materials.

Chair Provencher asked if the entire house has to be encapsulated. Mr. Aguila stated that he would like to side the entire house and the balconies may also have to be rebuilt.

Chair Provencher asked if there was outstanding violations with City of Worcester. Mr. Aguila stated he is in court for peeling paint. Chair Provencher asked if it was lead paint related. Mr. Aguila stated he wasn't sure.

Chair Provencher stated that to his knowledge peeling paint is not something property owner can be cited for.

Mr. Rolle asked if the peeling paint was on the exterior. Mr. Aguila stated that it was. Mr. Rolle stated that it is likely that it is a lead paint issue.

Mr. Rolle asked when Mr. Aguila's court date was. Mr. Aguila stated that the court was waiting for the Historical Commission decision.

Chair Provencher stated that if it is a lead paint issue then it would change how the Commission would deliberate as it would be a substantial hardship but it is not clear at this point whether this is a lead paint issue or not and maybe this item should be continued.

Secretary McCann stated that he would not be comfortable as the Commission doesn't have any information or renderings of what the proposed rebuilt porches would like. Mr. Aguila stated that they would just be rebuilt but with vinyl siding.

Chair Provencher asked what Mr. Aguila's plans were for the trim. Mr. Aguila stated that everything would remain the same except for a few windows that are not salvageable so they will need to be taken down and the brackets on roof will remain.

Chair Provencher asked if the proposal is to remove the head casing on the windows and if he planned to put anything back. Mr. Aguila stated that it was as the majority of them that are damaged and he didn't plan to put anything in their place. Chair Provencher asked about the side casing. Mr. Aguila stated that the side casings will be covered with aluminum trim.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that in the proposal Item # 2 states to follow, the existing design they will cover all the face board with aluminum and vinyl soffit and also cover all the windows frames with aluminum and asked if that included the third floor soffit. Mr. Aguila stated that the side casings and all the brackets will remain there.

Secretary McCann asked if Mr. Aguila has spoken with his contractor about the brackets. Mr. Aguila stated that his contractor brought him to a similar historic property that had similar design.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if the corner brackets will remain. Mr. Aguila stated that the side casings will.

Mr. Rolle stated that he had reviewed the database and there is no citation for lead paint but it does show citation that property is badly deteriorated.

Secretary McCann asked if it was a public safety issue and if Commission had to continue would it cause a public safety issue with the porch. Mr. Aguila stated that he was in court over the siding.

Mr. Rolle stated that if the Commission would like more information staff would have to follow up and provide more information at another meeting.

The Commission discussed with the applicant what would be the options for the applicant in order that he could comply with court issue but also what the Commission could do in order to properly review the application.

Mr. Aguila stated that he was cited in September and was given 30 days and he offered some options, one of which was power washing, but Inspectional Services stated that would not comply and wanted a more permanent solution which would be the siding and he assumes the court will give him more time due to the fact the work cannot be done in the winter months.

Commissioner Bjork stated that he would like to address the issue today.

Secretary McCann, Commissioner Conroy and Commissioner Dunn stated they would like more information before they decide on the matter.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked whether the court would penalize the applicant while his application is pending.

Commissioner Bjork asked what additional information Commission is looking for.

Commissioner Dunn stated that she would like more information on the porch.

Commissioner Bjork stated that the citation only discusses the siding so could the Commission just vote on the siding and continue the porch portion. Chair Provencher stated that could be done.

Chair Provencher stated that as suggested that option is to break up application into two discussions and tonight they would discuss the siding and then applicant could ask for a continuance for the porch portion until another meeting.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that the MACRIS form shows the porch was rebuilt in 1925. Mr. Aguila stated the porch needs to be built to current code. Secretary McCann stated that is why Commission would like to see renderings from Mr. Aguila's contractor.

Mr. Aguila's stated that his concern would whether it would be code compliant. Chair Provencher stated that the Commission cannot approve anything that is not code complaint and suggested Mr. Aguila request to continue the porch portion of the application to next meeting. Mr. Aguila requested the continuation.

Mr. Aguila stated that his intent was to leave the fish scale siding in place and cover it.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that this property could probably be registered on National Register of Historic Places and not many three deckers could meet that criteria and to vinyl over it would negate that.

Secretary McCann informed the applicant he may want to look into historic tax credits to perform the work.

Chair Provencher stated that it is option but in this case there are time constraints due to applicant's court date.

Secretary McCann stated that a fair point to make but if the applicant was eligible for historic tax credits there may be other options to mitigate without doing vinyl.

Mr. Aguila stated that most of the casings around the windows are rotted out. Mr. Aguila stated that an aluminum trim will be installed between the fascia board and the brackets; which will be affixed with nails. The head casing on the third floor will remain intact.

Chair Provencher stated the Commission could move this along by just voting on the vinyl siding and just continue the other items until December 18, 2014.

Mr. Aguila asked if Commission could come and view the property and provide comments. Chair Provencher stated that it would be a violation of open meeting law.

Secretary McCann stated that Mr. Aguila's contractor is highly respected by the Commission and has done several projects before Commission and he will understand what the Commission's expectations will be.

Upon a motion by Secretary and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Commission voted 6-0 to continue the porch portion and the decorative casing portion of the application until the December 18, 2014 meeting and to extend the constructive deadline until January 23, 2015.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Commission voted 4-2 (Commissioner McCann and Commissioner Conroy voting against) that the proposed abatement of the wooden clapboard and wooden fish scale with vinyl clapboard and wooden vinyl fish scale in kind is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received October 27, 2014 and dated October 15, 2014.

2. 32 Lafayette Street (HC-2014-076)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Wayne Zaroznky
Present Use: Multi Family residence
Year Built: Circa 1885
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed, formerly known as the Joseph Robert House
Petition Purpose: Remove/replace roof with architectural asphalt shingles

Tim Wormer from On Top Roofing appeared on behalf of the application. Mr. Wormer stated that they just want to move existing roof covering and replace with architectural asphalt shingles.

Chair Provencher asked if it was standard architectural shingle. Mr. Wormer stated that it was.

Chair Provencher asked if there is any work proposed on the chimney. Mr. Wormer stated that just general reflash of the lead.

Chair Provencher asked what would happen with the roof edge. Mr. Wormer stated that it would be a standard drip edge profile.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Dunn, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received October 28, 2014 and dated October 28, 2014.

3. 38 Houghton Street (HC-2014-077)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Jeannette Thomas
Present Use: Multi Family residence
Year Built: Circa 1916
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed
Petition Purpose: Remove/replace porches with wood & vinyl shakes to match existing

Robert Brackett along with Jeanette Thomas appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Brackett stated that he plans to rebuild the porch to look the same way it looks now.

Chair Provencher asked if it had wood clapboard. Mr. Brackett stated that the house has all vinyl siding and it was done years ago.

Secretary McCann stated that the vinyl job done on the house was done very well.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if from the third floor down will the framing on second and third floor be removed and temporarily shored up the roof and was plan remove the columns and replace with pressure treated posts. Mr. Brackett stated that was correct.

Mr. Brackett stated that each level has four columns and the same spacing will be used. Mr. Brackett stated that the three arches on the front and two on the sides will remain. Also, the guardrails design will be reproduced and the baluster in the center portion of the porch on the second and third floor porch will be made out of pressure treated wood.

Chair Provencher stated this looked like a good proposal and his only concern was color but they don't have purview over color but if the pressure treated wood is left unpainted it will stand out.

Secretary McCann stated that considering the care the property owner has put into the property he is sure when the time comes to stain the property owner will want to do that as so much effort has been put into maintaining the historic characteristics of the house.

Chair Provencher asked if the soffits were vinyl. Mr. Brackett stated they are.

Commissioner Conroy stated that they had asked for plans from the previous applicant and she wants to make sure they are being fair to both applicants.

Chair Provencher stated that the difference is that the previous applicant was not able to provide sufficient amount of detail to convince Board of what the porch would look like when it was done but in this presentation the applicant showed that the porch would look like it does now after work is complete.

Secretary McCann stated that he agrees with Commissioner Conroy's point but the contractor for this project did a great job on his presentation and the contractor did give very specific answers to what is being done.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated he would like to point out that the one thing that makes this home significance is the porch and it makes the house so trying to keep it historically accurate is a benefit to the homeowner.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received November 6, 2014 and dated November 1, 2014.

4. 26 Harvard Street (HC-2014-078)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Worcester Health Group LLC
Present Use: Nursing home
Year Built: Circa 1850
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed, NRIND, NRMRA, formerly known as the Swedish Lutheran Home for the Aged

Petition Purpose:

- Remove/replace rear fire escape with enclosed egress stair;
- Remove/replace asphalt roof with architectural shingles;
- Repair building connector interfaces;
- Refurbish brackets, trim and mouldings; and
- Remove/replace front jalousie sidelight windows with fixed glass panel.

Brian Donahue from Donahue Architects appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Donahue gave an overview of the scope of the work. The proposed enclosed egress stairs are to replace fire escape. The Sister Lily Building has been abandoned as a living area for the rest home in recent years. The Jeppson Building currently houses the Level IV rest home. The proposed plan is to occupy the Lily Building with 11 residents of the rest home. To occupy this space, specifically the second floor where residents will live, the building must be brought to an acceptable standard of life safety. Working with Inspectional services in Worcester, the existing fire escape will be constructed at the rear to replace the current fire escape. What is being removed will be replaced with like materials and details will be provided to incorporate the stairs into the existing architecture. There will be also be a detailed restoration to interior spaces as part of the renovation.

The roof on this building is currently fiberglass asphalt shingles, in lieu of slate roof which was replaced at some point. There are numerous leaks and breakdown of existing materials which require reroofing of the properly. The proposed roofing will be a 40 year architectural shingle in a slate color.

At the front façade, there is connecting link which was constructed when the rest home was expanded in the 1920's into The Jeppson Building. The connecting link is in serious disrepair, with roofing links and infiltration through walls and flashing. The proposed plan is to renovate the connector and repair the interface with the Lily Building. The result will be the removal of one window (right side of Lily Building). The proposal is also to trim the new and existing Harvard Street facing windows of the connector with the detailed trim typical of the mansion.

Jalousie windows were installed at some point at the front Harvard Street entrance replacing original sidelights. These windows will be replaced with a fixed glass panel on each side of the main front door.

Chair Provencher asked if the proposal included any window replacements on the original mansion portion of the building. Mr. Donoghue stated that it did not and stated they are the original windows and at some point a storm window was put over them and the plan is to just try and refurbish what is there.

Chair Provencher stated that it was a well done presentation and doesn't find any objections to the proposal.

Mr. Donoghue stated with regards to the cupola on the building he is trying to get the building owner to replicate but it is very expensive.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received November 6, 2014 and dated November 6, 2014.

5. 31 Channing Street (aka 14 Windsor Street) (HC-2014-080)

Petition:	Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner:	31 Channing Street LLC
Present Use:	Multi-unit apartments
Year Built:	Circa 1851
Historic Status:	MACRIS-listed, formerly known as the Joseph P. Hale House
Petition Purpose:	Remove/replace third floor egress and provide a first floor egress

Michael Armini and Michael Arqujo appeared on behalf of the application.

Chair Provencher stated that he has reviewed the application and looks like the work is almost complete. Mr. Arqujo stated that it is approximately 95% complete. When the property owner purchased the property it was known as 31 Channing Street and everything was appropriately permitted with Inspectional Services. Then it came to an inspector's attention that the property is also known as 14 Windsor Street and that address is listed as historical and told applicant he needed to apply for Historical approval but could continue with the inside portion of the work.

Mr. Arqujo reviewed the work that had been performed. Mr. Arqujo stated that the one change on the structure was an egress required by Inspectional Services.

Chair Provencher stated that the applicant provided a valid building permit and Commission needs to discuss the egress improvement and any other exterior improvements.

Secretary McCann asked what work still needs to be completed. Mr. Arqujo stated that additional work on the stairs for egress which is required in case of emergency.

Secretary McCann asked if property was bought out of receivership. Mr. Armini stated that it was purchased from a City of Worcester tax auction.

Mr. Rolle stated that he did speak with Inspectional Services and they stated a mistake had been made and it occurred because at one time this property was two separate houses and two separate lots and then became one lot and MACRIS only lists one address and the one part of the egress not constructed is the first floor egress. Mr. Arqujo stated that was correct and explained why the egress was needed and showed on the plan where egress was planned for.

Mr. Rolle stated that the egress on the North side would require some additional relief from zoning if on north side but not required if built on the west side.

Chair Provencher asked what additional work needs to be done to complete the egress. Mr. Arqujo showed on the plans how the work would be done.

Mr. Armini stated that they are just looking to make the building safe and up to code.

Mr. Rolle stated that the other thing that Inspectional Services has communicated is that this building had serious compliance issues so options to address the egress are limited.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked whether the fluted door columns were still in the casing. Mr. Arqujo stated that they didn't open to see. They just reinstalled the metal.

Chair Provencher stated that it looks like some other additions have been added to this property over the years and a lot of the original windows openings have been removed and it looks like the building has been significantly modified over the years.

Chair Provencher stated that portion of the house that faces the public way is the original portion of the historic Hale House and the work that is being proposed is the existing window on the ground floor, unit #4 is being enlarged and a new landing will be constructed with a stair and guardrail and will be made of pressure treated wood.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 6-0 that the work that that has already been done and the proposed work on the egress stairs is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received November 3, 2014 and dated November 6, 2014.

Other Business

1. 5 Chestnut Street – Gargoyles update

Mr. Rolle stated that the person in possession of all eight gargoyles has been identified and he had a couple of conversations with the individual but the outcome of those talks was not encouraging.

Mr. Rolle stated that the individual indicated he was not aware that anyone else had a claim to the gargoyles when he purchased them.

Mr. Rolle stated that the individual believes he legitimately purchased the gargoyles and he is not interested in returning them and staff will continue to follow up on the item.

2. Communication

a. **Letter from Beals & Thomas, re: 121 Russell Street; dated November 6, 2014; received November 7, 2014.**

The Commission reviewed letter and the historic background and the work proposed on the south mere at Elm Park and the proposed work is supported by Preservation Worcester and it is consistent with the work that was done on the north mere.

b. **Request for Letter of Support from Epsilon Associates, Inc.; re: Central Building, 322-332 Main Street; dated and received November 18, 2014.**

Taya Dixon from Epsilon Associates., Inc. appeared on behalf of the item. She stated that this request was for a letter of support for the Central Building, which had previously come before the Historical Commission to request a complete demolition. The property owner is now proposing to rehabilitate the building and the project will convert the existing building into a mixed used property of commercial and residential units utilizing state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits.

The Commission stated that they were very happy to see this turn of events as the building demolition delay allowed time for the property owner to explore other options besides demolition of the building and they fully support submitting a letter of support on behalf of the project.

Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 6-0 to issue a letter of support.

c. **Request for Letter of Support from Epsilon Associates. Inc.; re: Worcester Junction Shops, 49-57 Hermon Street, 51-59 Jackson Street, 62-74 Beacon Street; dated and received November 18, 2014.**

Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 6-0 to issue a letter of support.

d. **Request for Letter of Support from MacRostie Historic Advisor, re: Osgood Bradley Building, 18 Grafton Street, dated and received November 18, 2014.**

Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 6-0 to issue a letter of support.

e. **Request for Letter of Support (email) from Tremont Preservation Services, LLC, re: Worcester Corset Company Factory, 30 Wyman Street; dated and received November 19, 2014.**

Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 6-0 to issue a letter of support.

- f. Letter from Massachusetts Historical; re: Signage Program, Union Station Intermodal Transportation Center, Washington Square; dated November 12, 2014; received November 17, 2014.**

No comment.

Executive Session

Upon a roll call vote the Commission vote 6-0 to go into executive session at 8:20 p.m. and to immediately adjourn after the session.

Adjournment

Upon a motion, the Commission voted to adjourn at 9:00 p.m.