

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

August 3, 2017

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

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

Commission Members Absent: Robyn Conroy
Mark Wamback

Staff Members Present: Stephen Rolle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
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

Review of the July 24, 2017 minutes was postponed to the next meeting.

Old Business

None

New Business

1. 10-16 Millbury Street – HC-2017-043

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Y. Tran & Tung Tran
Present Use: Mixed use
Year Built: c1888, c1910, and c1908
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed
Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace three storefronts, including all finishes and facades at ground level only

John Le, architect, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Le explained the proposed design and the use of stacked stone along the lower part of the walls with the intent to create a unified appearance. Chair Shveda stated that as these buildings have always housed businesses, they've likely seen quite a bit of change over the years. Mr. Le agreed, saying that

each owner has made small changes, and that he was hired to tie everything together. He hopes that the trend continues down the street.

Chair Shveda reminded him that the Commission's concern is the removal of historic material, and that as things appear, there is a mix of replacement material, none of which seems to be historic.

Commissioner Kurtz asked the applicant to confirm that all awnings will be removed as part of the project. Mr. Le answered affirmatively. Chair Shveda commented that this area has declined over the years so it's nice to see improvements. Commissioner Bloom agreed, saying that the cohesive design is a plus.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 4-0 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 June 8, 2017 and received June 9, 2017.

Exhibit B: Request to Postpone form, dated June 19, 2017.

2. 12 Page Street – HC-2017-049

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Redemption Christian Center International
Present Use: Church owned residence
Year Built: c1886
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka the George S. Bond – J. A. McKinstry House
Petition Purpose:

- Install vinyl siding (partially retroactive)

Reverend Alex Mfum, owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

Chair Shveda stated that this item was before the Commission because work had begun without a building permit. He also confirmed with the applicant that his contractor was not present, and noted that had the contractor applied for the permit, some of this headache could have been avoided. Chair Shveda went on to note the importance of the property, being a rare double cottage and in very intact condition. At the time of the hearing, siding had been applied to part of the rear elevation, with portions of the other elevations having been prepped through the removal of trim and brackets.

Rev. Mfum stated that he wanted to side it because it was costly to continue to repaint, and that squirrels are getting into the eaves, and the only way to save it is to side it. He stated that the cost of siding is \$36,000. He stated that it's been painted twice in the last 14 years, at a cost of approximately \$10,000 each time, and that all the other buildings in the area have been sided.

Commissioner Bloom expressed frustration that the contractor did not file for a permit, so that they could have had this conversation before it came to this point. He reiterated the rarity of the cottage, and his disappointment that it was being sided.

Chair Shveda explained the Commission's role to determine whether the work is detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city, and that cases like this are particularly difficult as significant elements have already been removed. He asked the applicant whether his contractor intended to replace the brackets that had been removed. Rev. Mfum said all he knows is that some were already falling apart and can't be fixed.

The option of allowing siding on just the rear and sides, as long as great care is taken to repair door and window trim, was discussed. Chair Shveda noted that this has worked well in other cases, as it greatly reduces the amount of painting needed, and preserves character defining elements. With the lack of a defined front façade, the Commission suggested that the three elevations comprising the most visible portions be retained as clapboard. Rev. Mfum stated that he'd be agreeable to this option of painting all the decorative elements and window casings, but that he'd still like to side all the flat surfaces as the painting maintenance is a headache.

When asked if the applicant would be amenable to siding the back and sides and restoring the details that have been removed, he stated that it would pose an additional cost that may not be within their budget and the church would have to sell the property. Mr. Rolle suggested that a site walk be scheduled to allow Commissioners a better view of the condition of the building, then continue the item to the August 17, 2017 meeting. Rev. Mfum agreed to this, as did the Commission.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 4-0 to continue the item to the August 17, 2017 meeting.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated July 6, 2017 and received July 6, 2017.

3. 29 Dewey Street – HC-2017-049

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Thi Tran
Present Use: Three-family
Year Built: c1910
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka the B. E. Ridyard Three-Decker
Petition Purpose:

- Remove and rebuild front decks/porches

Thi Tran, owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Tran stated that the whole porch structure would be removed and replaced, there would be no siding and instead the porch would have railings. Chair Shveda noted a comment submitted by abutter, Paul Collier, who stated that he supports new decks and hopes they'll be of period design as his are.

There was some discussion about whether the original railings and posts might still be intact under the vinyl siding and whether that would be worth salvaging. Mr. Tran said he could not speak to that possibility as he hasn't opened up any of the siding. He said that they noticed at the beginning of the year that the decks are pulling away from the house and they've been working to find a contractor and get estimates.

Chair Shveda encouraged the applicant to consider a turned post and balustrade that is more in keeping with the Queen Anne style, to which Mr. Tran was receptive. Regarding the existence of original

material under the vinyl, it's likely that it would be in a very deteriorated condition having been encased for decades.

No additional public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 4-0 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 and Certificate of Appropriateness Application dated July 5, 2017 and received July 7, 2017.

4. 3 Ives Street – HC-2017-050

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Allen Bombard
Present Use: Three-family
Year Built: c1914
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed
Petition Purpose:

- Repair front decks/porches
- Replace rotted/damaged siding in-kind
- Remove and replace roof

Adam Paquette, contractor, and Allen Bombard, owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Paquette stated that the decks were pulling away at the railing, and that the owner had received notice from the city because he had begun work himself without a permit. Now that he's hired a licensed contractor, they'd like to finish the repairs to bring it back to how it was as much as possible, and make it structurally sound. Chair Shveda clarified that the proposed work on the decks and siding consists of repairs and installing missing wood shake to match. The roof is currently asphalt, to be replaced in-kind.

Chair Shveda commented that it appears the siding and other wood elements have met the end of their useful life and that the Commission appreciates seeing maintenance and retention of historic material.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 4-0 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 July 10, 2017 and received July 10, 2017.

5. 37 Somerset Street – HC-2017-052

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Terry S. Field
Present Use: Condominium

Year Built: c1932
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed
Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace first floor windows, including sills and trim

Terry Field, owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

Ms. Field stated that the trim and sills are deteriorated, and in preparing to have the exterior repainted, it was determined that it was an appropriate time to address these elements. In speaking with contractors, Ms. Field decided that the windows should be replaced as well. She is proposing Pella windows to match the existing grid patterns and color, with the sills and trim to be reproduced in Azek.

Chair Shveda and Commissioner Bloom noted that these are custom sized window units, and confirmed that the new trim will match the existing in profile.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 4-0 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 July 11, 2017 and received July 12, 2017.

6. 22-30 Front Street – HC-2017-053

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Dean & Judith Marcus
Present Use: Indoor mall
Year Built: c1941
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka the F. W. Woolworth and Company Store
Petition Purpose:

- Remove and rebuild the brick parapet on the Mechanic Street façade

Attorney Gary Brackett along with Judith and Dean Marcus, owners; and Jamie Fontane, mason, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Brackett explained the scope of work, stating that the brick will be replaced to match in color and will be reconstructed in the same manner with the goal of no change in appearance when viewed from the street.

Chair Shveda asked for clarification about how much of the parapet will be taken down. Mr. Fontane replied that it will be the top two feet, as the wall is currently bowing inward. The caps will be removed and reset. He stated that the cause was likely water, and that masonry just needs repair over time.

There was some discussion about the variation in color of the brick over the face of the building, whether it was intentional. Mr. Fontane stated that the new brick will be “a blend” to match the existing, and will be laid to create a random pattern.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 4-0 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 July 11, 2017 and received July 12, 2017.

Communications

- a. Communication from MHC re: Notice that Worcester State Hospital Farmhouse has been accepted for listing on the National Register, dated July 21, 2017, and received July 20, 2017.

No comment.

- b. *Communication from Epsilon Associates Inc. re: Request for **updated letters** of support for tax credit applications for: Abby's House, 52 High Street; and Wellington Community, Ethan Allen and Wellington Streets, and Jaques Avenue, received electronically July 21, 2017.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Commission voted 4-0 to issue updated Letters of Support for both projects.

- c. Communication from CBRE re: Public Outreach for Section 106 filing for 18 Grafton Street, dated July 21, 2017 and received July 24, 2017.

No comment.

- d. Communication from FCC re: Notice of Section 106 filing for 19 Church Road, Shrewsbury, dated July 25, 2017 and received electronically July 31, 2017.

No comment.

Other Business

- I. Discussion of Local Historic District Rules & Regulations and Certificate application

Held to next meeting.

- II. Chair Shveda announced that Cheryll Holley has resigned from the Commission. He thanked her profusely for her service and wished her all the best.

Adjournment

Upon a motion the Commission adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.