

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

MAY 28, 2020

LEVI LINCOLN ROOM, ROOM 309 – CITY HALL*

Commission Members Participating: Mark Wamback, Chair
Diane Long
Randolph Bloom
Tomi Stefani
Janet Theerman
Erika Helnarski, Alternate
Cathryn E. Jerome-Mezynski, Alternate

Commission Members Absent: Devon Kurtz, Vice-Chair

Staff Members Participating: Stephen Rolle, Division of Planning and Regulatory Services
Michelle Johnstone, Division of Planning and Regulatory Services

*Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 23, 2020 Order, as amended, imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting was conducted through remote participation. The meeting was livestreamed from the City of Worcester website and via the local cable access channel and is available for streaming online. Public participation was facilitated through a call-in number, 415-655-0001 (Access Code: 730323290#), which was publicized on the posted meeting agenda and during the video broadcast.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 14, 2020 – Approval of the April 14, 2020 meeting minutes was held until the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Certificate of Appropriateness & Building Demolition Delay Waiver

1. 9 Oxford Street – HC-2019-071 (MBL 03-025-00004)

Petitioner: Helen & Dom Pham

Year Built: 1891

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; National Register Determination of Eligibility (DOE); National Register District (NRDIS); Local Historic District (LHD); State Register (SR), FKA Salem Griggs House

Petition Purpose:

- Replace windows (retroactive)

The petitioner requested that the item be postponed to the next meeting.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to postpone the item to the June 11, 2020 meeting. Commissioner Bloom recused himself, and both alternate members voted.

NEW BUSINESS

Certificate of Appropriateness & Building Demolition Delay Waiver

2. 4 Congress Street – HC-2020-025 (MBL 03-026-00032)

Petitioner: Emilio Mendez
Year Built: 1850
Historic Status: MACRIS listed; Crown Hill Local Historic District (LHD); State Register of Historic Places (SR); National Register of Historic Places District (NRDIS); National Register Multiple Resources Area (MRA), FKA James and Persis H. Andrews/Freeman Brown – Louis Lewisson House

Petition Purpose:

- Paint house
- Pave driveway
- Replace windows
- Rebuild 30 feet of concrete walkway
- Erect fallen column next to driveway
- Replace wood fence

Emilio Mendez, building owner, spoke on behalf of the application. He stated the intent of his application, including painting the house to match the existing color; paving the driveway; rebuilding 30 feet of the existing concrete walkway; replacing the wood fencing with a very similar product; and replacing the windows. He stated that he spoke with Ms. Johnstone, who made a suggestion that instead of replacing the existing windows with six-over-six wood sash, that six-over-one wood sash to match the existing windows. He said that he and his wife agree with that suggestion, saying that it would maintain the look of the house.

Chair Wamback asked if the windows would be wood-clad or vinyl sash. The applicant stated that he was proposing that the three windows in the front of the house to be replaced with wood windows, and the others would be a composite material.

There was some confusion about which windows were proposed to be replaced, and what materials would be used in the replacements. After a discussion between the applicant, commissioners, and staff, it was determined that the windows to be replaced include the three windows in the second story of the façade; three additional windows in the second-story side (east) elevation and cross-gable, proceeding counterclockwise from the façade elevation, all visible from the street; and one window in the second story of the rear of the cross-gable, not visible from the street. The applicant proposed that the three windows on the façade be replaced with wood windows, and those on the side of the house be replaced with composite materials. After further discussion between commissioners and the applicant, an amended proposal was agreed upon. In the amended proposal, all visible windows will be repaired and fitted with new glass wherever feasible. In the case of two windows, repair is feasible. Where not feasible, which is the case with the other four windows, windows will be replaced with six-over-one wood-clad replacement windows. The window not visible from the street, on the rear of the cross gable, will be removed and replaced with a six-over-one vinyl sash window.

The next items discussed were the repaving of the driveway and rebuilding of the concrete walkway. Commissioner Stefani asked for clarification on the location of the walkway. Ms. Johnstone stated that the walkway is located on the east (driveway) side of the house. Mr. Mendez stated that it was a simple walkway that connects the driveway to a rear entrance. The commissioners did not have any concerns about this item.

The next item discussed was the proposal to erect a granite step at the base of the driveway, which was erroneously called a column in the application materials. The applicant stated that he wanted to stand the element up. Commissioner Stefani noted that it was meant to be horizontal. Commissioner Long asked the applicant why he wanted to stand it up. The applicant stated that wants to stand up the element because he has experienced two punctured tires as a result of the granite step; and also for looks. Commissioner Wamback asked the Commission if anyone had an issue with removing the step altogether. Mr. Mendez stated that he could remove it, and place it in the rear of the house to be used as a step. He stated that he definitely wouldn't get rid of it. Commissioners Long,

Theerman, and Jerome-Mezynski stated that they thought that it would be better served as a step somewhere else on the property than to be stood up.

The next item discussed was the replacement of the fence. Chair Wambach asked for some clarification on what would be used to replace the fence. The applicant stated that the fence would be replaced with in-kind materials. He stated that in the back of the building, the fence would be replaced with a six-foot wood fence, and the fencing on the side of the house would be replaced with a four-foot wood picket fence. The commissioners did not express any concerns about the proposed replacement of the fence.

The next item discussed was the proposal to repaint the house to match the existing color scheme. Chair Wambach asked Ms. Johnstone if this color scheme is appropriate for the historic district. Ms. Johnstone stated that the existing color scheme utilizes earth tones, which are appropriate for a house of its period. Commissioner Stefani asked if a three-tone paint scheme would be used. Mr. Mendez confirmed that a three-tone scheme would be used. He also noted that the floor boards on the deck are painted burgundy, which will be repainted to match the existing color.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Stefani, the Commission voted 6-0, with Commissioner Bloom recusing himself from the vote and both alternate members voting, to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0, with Commissioner Bloom recused and both alternates voting, that the proposed changes, including repainting the house in similar earth tones to what is existing; paving the driveway in asphalt and re-pouring the concrete walkway in-kind; removing the step at the base of the driveway for placement elsewhere on the property; replacement of the fence with four-foot picketed fence in the front of the property and a higher in-kind fence in the rear; the replacement with six-over-one wood-clad windows or repair of existing wood windows concerning six windows visible from the street, at 4 Congress Street are appropriate for the local historic district and voted to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by X, the Commission voted 6-0, with Commissioner Bloom recused and both alternates voting, that the proposed demolition at 4 Congress Street, including the removal of seven windows, including four windows visible from the street to be replaced with wood-clad windows, and one window on the rear of the cross gable to be replaced with a vinyl window, would not be detrimental to the historic or architectural resources of the City and voted to approve a Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

3. 19 Circuit Avenue East – HC-2020-034 (MBL 03-026-00032)

Petitioner: Michael Rutman
Year Built: ca. 1895
Historic Status: MACRIS listed

Petition Purpose:

- Enlarge and replace two existing skylights

Michael Rutman, building owner, spoke on behalf of the application. He stated his intent of his application was to create proper egress through two existing skylights, which do not currently meet egress requirements. He stated that he wants to remove the skylights, enlarge the openings, and install new skylights.

Commissioner Long stated that you can barely see the skylights.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Stefani, the Commission voted 6-0, with all regular members and Commissioner Helnarski, alternate, voting, to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0, with all regular members and Commissioner Helnarski, alternate, voting, that the proposed demolition at 19 Circuit Avenue East of removing, enlarging, and replacing the existing skylights for egress is not detrimental to the historic or architectural resources of the City and voted to approve a Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Letter to owner of 220 Salisbury Street and response regarding non-compliance with Historical Commission regulations.

Ms. Johnstone stated that a letter was sent to the owner of 220 Salisbury Street because they had begun the work on their front stairs. The owner sent a response stating that they would begin the process of retroactively applying for a Building Demolition Delay Waiver and Certificate of Appropriateness. Commissioner Theerman stated that the work at the property has been completed.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Chair Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM.