

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

**FEBRUARY 8, 2007
CHASE BUILDING, 44 FRONT STREET, WORCESTER
ROOM 300 – CONFERENCE ROOM**

Commission Members Present: Peter Schneider, Chair
Thomas Conroy, Clerk
Michael Theerman
Thomas Constantine
James Crowley

Staff Present: Joel Fontane, Division of Planning and Regulatory Services
Edgar Luna, Division of Planning and Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schneider called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the January 11, 2006 minutes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Luna informed the Commission that there were no updates on the Historic Commission procedures, or the local option property tax assessment.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. 5 Congress Street (HC-06-37)** – Stephen Jankowski, representative for Kenneth Lundquist, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Jankowski stated that the petitioner was seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver for the following purposes: (1) Removing and replacing the existing asphalt roof shingles with new asphalt roof shingles on the main house, (2) Removing and replacing the rolled roofing on the main house dormer, and (3) installing new EPDM roofing on the flat-roof structures on site. In addition, Mr. Jankowski stated that on December 11, 2006 the Code Department approved a Building Permit for this project, but failed to inform the petitioner that the historic nature of the structures required filing for a Building Demolition Delay Waiver from the Historical Commission. He further indicated that it wasn't until the work was almost completed that a staff member from the Code Department notified him that such approval was required. Upon reviewing the petition submitted, and the evidence provided, the Worcester

Historical Commission found that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester. Therefore, on motion by Tom Conroy and seconded by Tom Constantine, it was voted 5-0 by Commission members Peter Schneider, Thomas Conroy, Michael Theerman, James Constantine, and James Crowley to grant the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

2. **25 Tobias Boland Way (HC-07-38):** Mark Donahue, representative for Madison Worcester Holdings, LLC, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Donahue stated that the petitioner was seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver for the purpose of demolishing all building structures located on site. He also indicated that while the petitioner recognized the historical significance of the industrial buildings and uses that took place at this location when the site was owned and operated by the American Steel and Wire Company, their deteriorated condition, location and peculiar shape, prevented them from being re-used and/or incorporated into the proposed commercial uses. In addition, he stated that in an effort to inform the general public and address appropriately the demolition of these historical buildings, he made a presentation to the Board of Directors of Preservation Worcester on February 4, 2007, and sent a letter to the Worcester Historical Museum inviting them to visit the site and select any industrial articles or items still located on site that the Museum may wish to keep for their collection. In addition, he informed the Commission that the petitioner had volunteered to donate \$20,000.00 towards building a memorial to document for posterity the significance of the buildings located on site, which at one time housed the largest wire manufacturing industry in Worcester. Chair Schneider acknowledged the presentation made by Mr. Donahue, and expressed appreciation for the developer's efforts. Deborah Packard read a letter on behalf of Preservation Worcester Board of Directors indicating that the Board had voted not to oppose the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petitioned by Madison Worcester Holdings, LLC. In addition, the letter read by Ms. Packard stated that while Preservation Worcester Board had voted not to oppose the demolition petitioned, the vote should not be interpreted as "an endorsement of the demolition of the historic buildings or of the proposed plan. Rather it is recognition that Preservation Worcester is involved in the process too late and cannot offer a suitable reuse for the building at this point". In addition, Ms. Packard stated that the proposed project showed lack of sensitivity for the character of Quinsigamond Village and disrespect to the efforts to create an attractive bike path along the Blackstone River. She further indicated that in the future, Preservation Worcester wished to become involved during the early planning processes of potential projects. Mr. Fontane stated that Preservation Worcester was informed of the proposed project immediately after the application was received. He also stated that Preservation Worcester along with many others receives bi-weekly notifications of upcoming meetings and agendas for Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Historical Commission from the Planning Division. In addition, he indicated that the proposed project received extensive coverage from the local media. Furthermore, he stated that the rezoning of this area, went through several hearings and neighborhood meetings in the late 2004 and early 2005, and was the largest rezoning undertaking during the last 20 years in Worcester. Susan Ceccacci gave an extensive review of the historical significance of the buildings located on site, and urged the Board to reconsider waiving the Building Demolition Delay, indicating that the buildings on site could be restored and retro-fitted for other uses. Mr. Donahue stated that the petitioner had

considered restoring and integrating some of the buildings for the proposed project but determined that each building was in an advanced state of disrepair, and that their unique shape rendered them obsolete for any current business or commercial uses. Mr. Conroy stated that the majority of Quinsigamond Village residents were looking forward to the proposed project as it would offer job opportunities for area residents, and shopping alternatives within the neighborhood. In addition, he stated that the historical uses associated with the proposed site were irrelevant to neighborhood residents because those uses ceased to exist decades ago. Furthermore, he indicated that the proposed project would promote economic development for the neighborhood and enhance it, as it would remove blight from the area. Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, the Worcester Historical Commission found that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester. Therefore, on motion by Tom Conroy and seconded by Tom Constantine, it was voted 5-0 by Commission members Peter Schneider, Thomas Conroy, Michael Theerman, James Constantine, and James Crowley to grant the Building Demolition Delay Waiver with the following conditions:

- Submit a set of color-photographs documenting the exterior appearance of every building on site that will be demolished.
 - Submit a copy of the letter sent by the petitioner's representative to the Worcester Historical Museum inviting them to visit the proposed site to take photographs the buildings to be demolished, and retrieve any items which the Museum may deem of historical significance for the Museum's collection.
 - Include the Worcester Historical Commission in the review of the content, material and location of any historic marker at the proposed site.
3. **28 Crown Street (HC-06-36).** Heather Renihan, petitioner, and Ronald Johnson presented the petition. Ms. Renihan stated that she was seeking to do the following: (a) Remove and replace the exterior stairway and landing to the second floor, (b) Remove, replace, and relocate the door to the second floor apartment to the adjacent window space, (c) Remove and replace the front porch roof structure, crown moldings and columns. (d) Remove and replace the front porch floor boards with like materials, (e) Remove and replace the front entrance door, (f) Remove and replace the windows located in the second floor front half of the house, (g) Remove and replace the garage roof. Following a lengthy discussion regarding the type of replacements proposed, the petitioner requested a continuation of the hearing until February 22, 2007 to allow her time to submit additional information and samples of the materials proposed for the replacements. On motion by Tom Constantine and seconded by Tom Conroy, it was voted 5-0 by Commission members Peter Schneider, Thomas Conroy, Michael Theerman, James Constantine, and James Crowley to allow continuance of the hearing until February 22, 2007.
4. **18 Grafton Street (HC-07-01).** Zachary Wyatt, representative for NED Corporation petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Wyatt stated that the petitioner was seeking to demolish the 8-story brick and mortar smokestack located on site, but indicated that the demolition would end at the adjoining building's roofline. In addition, Mr. Wyatt stated that the demolition of the smokestack was necessary due to its advanced state of disrepair

and obsolescence. Upon reviewing the petition submitted, and the evidence provided, the Worcester Historical Commission found that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester. Therefore, on motion by Tom Conroy and seconded by Tom Constantine, it was voted 5-0 by Commission members Peter Schneider, Thomas Conroy, Michael Theerman, James Constantine, and James Crowley to grant the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

OTHER BUSINESS: Mr. Luna informed the Board that on February 7, 2007, Commissioner Jablonski sent him a message stating that she had decided to resign from the Historical Commission. Mr. Luna also stated that he asked her to submit her resignation to the City Manager and send copies of her resignation to Chair Schneider and Mr. Fontane, which she agreed to do.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Schneider adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.