

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER
October 24, 2013**

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Timothy McCann, Chair
Meagen Donoghue
Andrew Shveda
Karl Bjork

Commission Members Absent: Kevin Provencher, Vice-Chair
Erika Dunn

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

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

Chair McCann called the meeting to order at 5:31pm.

Approval of the Minutes from 10/10/2013. Upon a motion the Commission voted 4-to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2013 Historical Commission meeting.

New Business:

1. 34 Monadnock Road (HC-2013-058): Building Demolition Delay Waiver and Certificate of Appropriateness

Anna Trogonoski appeared on behalf of her petition to replace four existing second floor windows with new wood and fibrex windows to match existing design. Three windows are on the back of the house and one window is on the side and visible from the street. Ms. Trogonoski stated that windows are old and are in poor shape.

Ms. Trogonoski's contractor from Home Depot, John Day, stated the proposed replacement windows are Anderson brand insert windows that would match as best as possible the existing windows and the cost estimate for the work is \$4,928. He stated the windows needed to be replaced as soon as possible with winter coming.

Chair McCann said the price seemed high and that the Commission would prefer to see windows repaired rather than replaced. He stated the original windows have lasted over 100 years and that replacement windows would likely last only around 30 years. He said historic windows can be repaired and retrofitted to also be energy efficient.

Commissioner Shveda stated the windows can likely be repaired for less than the cost of replacement and that there are a number of local craftsmen who specialize in repair of historic windows.

Ms. Trogonoski stated that the window on the side of the house was falling out and posed a danger and needs immediate replacement. Additionally, the counterweight on one of the windows is broken. She explained that three windows face the backyard and the fourth is on the side of the house.

Commissioner Shveda stated that counterweights take around 10 minutes to fix and asked if the applicant had tried repairing this. Ms. Trogonoski responded no.

Ms. Trogonoski's mother-in-law, Alice Trogonoski, stated she the quote for window repair was estimated to be \$8,000 and that the contractor could not guarantee how long the windows would last.

Mr. Day said only the side window is viewable from the street.

Chair McCann stated that the rear windows which are not viewable from the street can generally be replaced with modern windows to match the historic character of the existing windows.

He said the home is historic, in a historic district and that windows are a very important feature. He recalled in that in the past five years, the Commission has not allowed replacement of front/side windows and again requested that the applicant consider repairing the front/side window as opposed to replacing it.

Mr. Day stated that in his past experience with historic districts in the Boston area, side windows on the second floor can usually be replaced and that the applicant is proposing similar looking windows and would like to get her project done quickly.

Chair McCann stated the Commission's duty is to help preserve the historic integrity of the property and that it was possible to use salvaged material for window repair.

Commissioner Donoghue stated the applicant contact Preservation Worcester for advice and information on how to repair windows or find scrap parts that would allow replacement while still matching the exact historic character of the existing windows.

Chair McCann asked Ms. Trogonoski if she was amenable to repairing the side window.

Ms. Trogonoski stated that her husband was in Montreal on a business trip and that she needed to speak to him but that she prefers to replace the windows because winter is approaching and the house is cold and she was worried about her daughter.

Chair McCann said she could amend the application to request that the Commission vote on the three rear windows and request a continuance for the side window or request a continuance for all windows and obtain quotes for repair of the windows.

Upon reviewing the specification sheets from Mr. Day, Commissioner Shveda found some discrepancies with the proposed size of the replacement windows compared to existing windows. He stated that since the house is in a historic district, the Commission must ensure that replacement windows match the configurations of the existing windows. He said the proposed windows do not match, specifically, the sashes and dimensional measurements.

Mr. Day stated he would ensure that any replacement windows would be installed to match the existing configurations.

Commissioner Shveda asked Ms. Trogonoski if she had contacted a craftsman to provide a quote for repairs.

Ms. Trogonoski stated she was willing to consider this for the side window, however, she did not expect to face issues with the project.

Chair McCann stated she could have the Commission vote on the application as presented for all four windows or amend it to request a vote on the three rear windows and request a continuance for the side window, or request a continuance for all windows and obtain quotes for repair of the windows and then come back before the Commission.

Ms. Trogonoski expressed concern at how long a continuance might take and that she was concerned for her daughter's health.

Ms. Trogonoski asked if her neighbors had provided any comments on the matter.

Chair McCann asked for any public comments. There were no public comments.

Commissioner Bjork stated he was familiar with the neighborhood and that the homes are lovely and historic and it is very important to maintain the historic integrity.

Ms. Trogonoski stated that under the pressure of the Commission she is requesting a vote to approve the replacement of the 3 rear windows.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Donoghue, that the replacement of the three rear windows is not detrimental to the historic resources of the City, the Commission voted 4-0 to approve an amended the Demolition Delay Waiver for replacement of the three windows in the rear of the house.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Donoghue, that the replacement of the three windows at the rear of the property is appropriate for the district, the Commission voted on the Certificate of Appropriateness petition, Commissioners McCann and Bjork voted to approve while Commissioners Donoghue and Shveda voted to deny. The motion was split at a 2-2 vote, therefore the Certificate of Appropriateness petition was denied.

Chair McCann informed Ms. Trogonoski that she could re-file her petition to be reheard by the Commission.

Ms. Trogonoski requested an explanation from the Commission for denying her application.

Mr. Day stated the Board deemed the three rear windows were not visible and could be replaced. He asked for clarification for the Commission's decision specifically related to the three windows.

Commissioner Donoghue stated that the historic integrity of the home would be damaged for future homeowners.

Chair McCann stated that this decision was in keeping with many similar decisions made by the Commission to protect the historic integrity of properties in Worcester. He stated that the applicant could re-file her petition.

Ms. Trogonoski expressed her displeasure with the decision.

Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated September 23, 2013 and submitted September 24, 2013.

Exhibit B: Memorandum from the City of Worcester Division of Planning & Regulatory Services to the Historical Commission; re: 1.34 Monadnock Road re: Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver; dated October 24, 2013.

2. 21-23 Crown Street (HC-2013-059): Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness

Doug Clough, maintenance manager for the property, appeared on behalf of the petition to replace vinyl windows with like materials to match existing design, replace four exterior doors on sides and rear of building and replace storm doors on the front of the building.

Mr. Clough stated that 40 windows are being proposed for replacement and that none of them are original windows, they are all vinyl replacement windows. He stated that the windows no longer lock correctly and that security was necessary as the building is a women's shelter.

Chair McCann asked if the original window openings would be kept, to which Mr. Clough responded yes.

Mr. Clough also stated the doors to the inside are original mahogany wood and are not being proposed for replacement; however, the exterior doors two on the side and two in the rear, which are not original need to be replaced. Mr. Clough stated that three doors are wood with glass windows and one is steel. The wooden doors had steel grates installed on the inside of them for security.

Commissioner Shveda asked if the doors still function properly.

Mr. Clough stated they do function but need work. He stated that this is a women's shelter and that there were concerns about security,

Chair McCann stated that he had no objection to replacement of the vinyl windows; however he had some concerns with replacement of the three original doors.

The applicant stated that he was amenable to keeping the existing wooden doors.

Commissioner Shveda asked if the property was located in the Crown Hill Historic District.

Chair McCann stated that the Commission had not previously asked applicants in historic districts to replace windows that had replacement windows in them with original windows because the cost would be astronomical.

The applicant requested that he be allowed to replace the exterior aluminum storm doors that are in front of the original mahogany doors with glass to improve visibility and to replace the one aluminum door (non-storm door) that is not original to the building while keeping all three original mahogany doors intact.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bjork, and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, the Commission voted 4-0 that the window repairs and replacement of one exterior door are not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Donoghue, and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, the Commission voted 4-0 to approve Certificate of Appropriateness.

Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated September 23, 2013 and submitted September 24, 2013.

Exhibit B: Memorandum from the City of Worcester Division of Planning & Regulatory Services to the Historical Commission; re: 21-23 Crown Street re: Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver; dated October 24, 2013.

3. 26 Institute Road (HC-2013-060): Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Nick Pelletier appeared on behalf of the Aquinas Association, Inc.'s petition to replace vinyl siding with like materials and masonry stone veneer, replace header beams, posts, decking and railings with fiberglass to match existing design, repair second floor balcony and replace knee wall with fiberglass railing, remove and replace trim, rakes, soffits and fascia, and to restore decorative trim on 2nd floor main hallway window.

Mr. Pelletier stated he was working to restore some historic elements of the building including two porches which were not structurally sound. The porches would be replaced as-is so as not to impact the historical character. Other features would be replaced with vinyl which was already installed but that the look would be matched. Mr. Pelletier said the roof trim would be maintained as it is one of the only remaining original historic features of the building. He added that the vinyl porch siding will be replaced with wood. He stated that the turret in the corner was vinyl and proposed to be replaced with stone to enhance the building.

Commissioner Shveda asked if there was any other original architectural work that was exposed that the applicant was proposing to cover in vinyl, to which Mr. Pelletier responded no.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition was not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated September 23, 2013 and submitted September 24, 2013.

Other Business:**4. Myra Hiatt Kraft Footbridge – Elm Park – WPI Presentation (taken out of order)**

Mayor Joe Petty gave an opening statement attesting to the dedication and resources that have been put towards restoring Elm Park and highlighted the importance of restoring Elm Park including the foot bridge. He introduced the Worcester Polytechnic Institute students: Alexandra Jaeger, Matthew Steeves, Matthew Valcourt and Courtney Verdel-Ogden. The students gave a PowerPoint presentation on the history of Red Wood Bridge and Elm Park and their proposal to restore Red Wood Bridge.

Commissioner Shveda asked the students if they would look at accessibility of the bridge.

Mr. Steeves stated that they would examine accessibility issues in one of the design options.

5. Letter from EPI Consulting re: 23 Brigham Road; dated October 2, 2013 and received October 4, 2013.

Chair McCann stated that any time a project could have an impact on or near historic sites, the Commission is asked to comment. Chair McCann said that a project like this should not have adverse effects.

Commissioner Shveda stated that the project appeared to be a 120' tall tower and that it may not impact historic features but that it was no small thing.

The Commission had no questions. Chair McCann stated that the Commission would provide no comments on the project at this time.

6. Letter received from Jeanice Sherman dated October 10, 2013.

The Commission received a letter from Ms. Sherman, a former Historical Commission member, regarding a house in the Montvale Historic District. Ms. Sherman expressed her concern that the property, 220 Salisbury Street, recently had a vinyl privacy fence installed.

Chair McCann stated the house also installed a picture window in the front and that that Commission should also investigate this.

Staff had written a letter to the homeowner on this matter and will follow up with the property owner of 220 Salisbury Street.

Chair McCann asked if any Commissioners had new business.

Commissioner Shveda stated that he and Commissioner Bjork had attended an informative Massachusetts Historic Preservation conference. Commissioner Shveda stated that since two commissioners were missing he would wait until the next meeting to provide an update from the conference and ideas for what could be done in Worcester.

Adjournment:

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bjork and seconded by Chair McCann the Commission voted 4-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:35pm.