

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

**November 20, 2014**

**LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL**

**Commission Members Present:** Kevin Provencher, Chair  
Andrew Shveda, Vice Chair  
Timothy McCann, Clerk  
Randolph Bloom  
Robyn Conroy

**Commission Members Absent:** Erika Dunn  
Karl Bjork

**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-Not available

**Unfinished Business**

**1. 510 Cambridge Street (HC-2014-066)**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: College Square Realty  
Present Use: Multi Unit Apartment  
Year Built: Circa 1869  
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed, NRIND, NRMRA, fka Cambridge Street School  
Petition Purpose: Remove/replace the slate roof with architectural shingles

Francisco Argueta from Francisco's Roofing Inc. along with the applicant, Angelo Gianakis, appeared on behalf of the item.

Chair Provencher stated that this item was continued from the last meeting in order for the applicant to provide more cost data on request.

Mr. Argueta stated that Mr. Giankis had obtained another quote from another contractor and provided a copy to the Commission.

Chair Provencher stated that the quote from Francisco's Roofing was \$160,000 and the second quote from Highbell Construction for the same scope of work would be \$144,000.

Chair Provencher stated that the cost to strip and replace with slate would be twice the cost and that is typically what the Commission has been seeing.

Chair Provencher asked Mr. Argueta to show on the photos where the proposed work would be done.

Chair Provencher asked how many units are in building. Mr. Giankis stated that 510 Cambridge had 18 units.

Secretary McCann asked what the assessed value of the building was. Mr. Giankis stated that he believed it was \$1.6 million for the entire building.

Chair Provencher stated that this building is not in historic district and Commission is looking at whether what was being removed has historic value and if Commission determines it does have historic value the Commission will look at economic hardship.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if it would be a typical three tab architectural shingle replacement. Mr. Argueta stated that it would be up to the architect but they are trying to match the same dimension and color. Vice-Chair Shveda stated that the Commission does not have purview over what is put back but they would like the applicant to try and match what was taken away as it is unique slate roof.

Commissioner Bloom stated that this is a unique school building and the mansard roof on it is very unusual and he believes it has tremendous architectural value and making any changes to it would be a detriment to the community.

Chair Provencher stated that the color does have value and would like to see the green color remain. Mr. Giankis stated that he agrees and the brick and green go well together and he plans to keep that look.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 0-5 that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion failed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was denied and the Commission looked at Economic Hardship.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda the Commission voted 4-1 (Commissioner Bloom voting no) that the petitioner had demonstrated undue economic hardship and approved the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project based on the economic hardship.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received on October 7, 2014 and dated September 28, 2014.

Exhibit B: Quote from Franciso's Roofing, Inc. received at the November 20, 2014 Historical Commission meeting.

Exhibit C: Quote from Highbell Construction received at the November 20, 2014 Historical Commission meeting.

## **New Business**

### **2. 13 Winslow Street (HC-2014-070)**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Petition:         | Building Demolition Delay Waiver   |
| Petitioners:      | Pavlina & Illazaraq Tollkuci   |
| Present Use:      | Three-family residence   |
| Year Built:       | Circa 1880   |
| Historic Status:  | MACRIS-listed, fka the E. Lincoln House  |
| Petition Purpose: | Retroactive approval for the following work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remove/replace siding with associated work to windows, trim and soffits;</li><li>• Remove/replace roof, windows, doors and 1<sup>st</sup> floor porch system; and</li><li>• Remove gable spools/spindles and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor porch railings.</li></ul> |

Pavlina Tollkucki appeared on behalf of the petition.

Chair Provencher stated that this is a retroactive petition for work already done.

Ms. Tollkucki stated that she bought the home in 2012 and was not aware it was a historical home. She stated that for the past two years she has been doing interior renovations inside of the house and pulled the required permits from the city. She stated that she needed to have work done to the exterior and hired a guy from DS Construction and she asked him to pull the permit before he started the siding. She stated that when he asked for his final payment she asked him for the permit and he said that she had to go and sign for it and when she went to Inspectional Services they said no permit could be issued as it is a historical building and they needed permission to do the work first.

Ms. Tollkucki stated that she also just found out that the contractor did not have a valid license.

Secretary McCann asked where she found the contractor. Ms. Tollkucki stated that she put a sign up and he looked professional when he showed up and she signed a contract with him.

Chair Provencher stated that obviously the contractor didn't follow procedures because if he went for a building permit it would have been held until Historical Commission had

reviewed and now Commission is in a predicament as it looks like a fair amount of material was removed from the property. If the project had gone before the Board there would have been extensive conversation in regards to mitigation.

Chair Provencher stated that it looked like some windows had been replaced. Ms. Tollkucki stated that was done by the previous owner.

Mr. Rolle stated that the applicant did apply for the building permits for the interior and the contractor did not apply for permit to do the outside work and he has reported that to Inspectional Services but he was unaware that the contractor was not licensed and will follow up with Inspectional Services on that.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked what would be the penalty. Mr. Rolle stated that he was unsure but he would follow up but this is different as contractor does not have a license.

Secretary McCann stated that it looked like the contractor was from Rhode Island.

Commissioner Conroy asked if anything was saved from house. Ms. Tollkucki stated that he put it all in the dumpster.

Commissioner Bloom stated that the problem even before the contractor was involved was that the real estate agent did not disclose it was historical. Ms. Tollkucki stated that she had listing with her when she bought home and it does not list that.

Commissioner Bloom stated that the real estate agent has obligation to tell potential buyer that.

Secretary McCann stated that to Commissioner's Bloom point that the real estate has obligation that if the list agent doesn't know it is historically registered they do not have to disclose that.

Mr. Rolle stated that he believes Secretary McCann is correct that if agent does not know it is historical they do not have to disclose and a lot of people do not know that homes are listed on MACRIS.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he still believed it was the agent's responsibility to research that.

Secretary McCann was not sure if Commissioner Bloom was referring to an ethical or legal obligation but he sells real estate and there is not a legal obligation at this point for either a list agent or a buyer's agent above what they are told to find out if a property is historically registered.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he is unsure how to proceed.

Chair Provencher stated that unfortunately this has happened before and it would be unfair to penalize the homeowner as the contractor did not follow procedures but they still need to conclude this process somehow.

Secretary McCann asked whether they could vote on what they would have done on a building demolition delay waiver if it had come before them originally and then look at economic hardship based on fact that it would be undue economic hardship to make the home owner remove everything the contractor did.

Chair Provencher stated that he did not see point of voting on what they would have done as the Commission did not have opportunity to see whether material could be salvaged but that material is gone and they don't have chance to discuss what could have been done and at this point it is a procedural matter.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he is fine with that but doesn't want to close the door with any punitive action against the contractor.

Chair Provencher stated that he did not think it would and Commission has no enforcement power but would assume Inspectional Services would follow up.

Mr. Rolle stated that he would follow up with Inspectional Services.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that what the contractor did was reprehensible and he has done a great disservice to the City of Worcester and a clear message needs to be sent that City of Worcester does not want contractors like that working in the community.

Mr. Rolle stated that he would just like Commission to put in their vote that it is a retroactive approval.

Jo Hart, city resident, stated that this should not continue and Mass Historic should put something on the house and some type of legislation should be crafted.

Chair Provencher stated that Commission has talked about that and asked Mr. Rolle for an update.

Mr. Rolle stated that they have done a real estate briefing at Crown Hill and sent post cards to owners in Crown Hill and they have also applied for a grant to hire a consultant to review the current regulations.

Chair Provencher asked if one of ideas also was listing on Assessing cards. Mr. Rolle stated that they have been reviewing that but there have been roadblocks but will continue to pursue.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Conroy the Commission voted 0-5 that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion failed and

the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was denied and the Commission looked at Economic Hardship.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda the Commission voted 5-0 that to deny the applicant a retroactive approval would cause undue economic hardship and approved the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project based on the economic hardship.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received on October 15, 2014 and dated September 29, 2014.

### **3. 8 Massachusetts Avenue (HC-2014-071)**

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|-------------------|--|
| Petition:         | Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness  |
| Petitioners:      | Vince & Debbie Asbridge  |
| Present Use:      | Single-family residence  |
| Year Built:       | Circa 1899   |
| Historic Status:  | MACRIS-listed, a NRDIS property, part of the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District and formerly known as the Rufus B Dodge, Jr. House |
| Petition Purpose: | Remove/replace garage doors  |

Vince Asbridge appeared on behalf of the petition.

Mr. Asbridge stated that he would like to replace the garage doors as they are beyond repair and he would like to replace them with architectural doors that are very similar in style and showed a photo of what he was proposing. The only difference is they have divided lights on top and he has found company in Connecticut who will do the doors and he is waiting Historical Commission approval so he can tell company to order the doors.

Chair Provencher asked if doors are paintable. Mr. Asbridge stated that they are and they are sectional.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he seriously doubted these doors are original.

Secretary McCann stated that the garage is not original and this is not an original structure to the building.

Vice-Chair Shveda and Secretary McCann stated that it was a wonderful design and in keeping with the district.

Commissioner Bloom & Conroy stated that they agreed with the other members.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 5-0 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.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Conroy the Commission voted 5-0 that the petition was appropriate for the district. The motion passed and the Certificate of Appropriateness was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness received on October 20, 2014 and dated September 14, 2014.

#### **4. 32 Burncoat Street (HC-2014-072)**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioners: Edward & Renee Bradley  
Present Use: Three-family residence  
Year Built: Circa 1866  
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed and formerly known as the David Rolston House  
Petition Purpose: Remove/replace existing side porches and construct enclosed stairwell on 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> floors with associated work to exterior steps

David Clark along with Renne Mikitarian Bradley appeared on behalf of the petition.

Mr. Clark stated that the proposal would be to remove existing first and second floor exterior porches that will be rebuilt in similar appearance following the construction of the proposed stairwell. The first floor porch will be extended an additional 5' to create an open porch area with steps to grade. The railings will be constructed to be similar to the existing railings on the front porch. They will also construct an exterior enclosed stairwell. The structure will be built outside of the existing building without impacting its structural integrity. Exterior details will be built similar to the details of the existing structure (i.e. high pitch roof, barge board & brackets, frieze boards and horizontal trim). They will also remove existing stairs between the basement and first floor and between the first and second floors. Also adding railings to the existing porch stairs with basket weave pattern paint and paint the exterior.

Mr. Clark stated that all the parking is to the rear of the building.

Secretary McCann asked where the gable would be. Mr. Clark stated that it would be the left gable and they would also modify the porches.

Chair Provencher asked if the new gable would project out as far as the existing gable. Mr. Clark stated that it goes beyond the existing gable about four feet.

Chair Provencher asked this was required for a code upgrade. Mr. Clark stated that it just will make it safer for the tenants in the building.

Chair Provencher asked if the baluster pattern for the proposed first floor porch will match the existing front porch. Mr. Clark stated that was correct.

Secretary McCann asked if they looked at doing that for the second floor porch. Ms. Bradley stated that it doesn't matter if they did or not.

Commissioner Bloom asked if there was any original material as it looks like the third floor gable looks new.

Ms. Bradley stated that they weren't planning to do a lot to the third floor dormer but there may be some modifications.

Chair Provencher stated that if the applicant is approved then the Commission would expect that is what is built is what is reflected in the drawings presented.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked applicant if they felt that that the site drawings were drawn accurately. Mr. Clark stated that the site drawings were drawn accurately with the exception of the third floor porch as they didn't have good access to.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he liked the design and appreciates that applicant is keeping the basket weave design.

Chair Provencher stated that he likes the design and the real value on this property is the front façade and the two gables on the left and the things in the back they are not sure they were there originally.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 5-0 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 on October 23, 2014 and dated October 21, 2014.

**5. 205 Shrewsbury Street (HC-2014-073)**

|                  |   |
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| Petition:        | Building Demolition Delay Waiver                                  |
| Petitioners:     | Marc Williams   |
| Present Use:     | Commercial building   |
| Year Built:      | Circa 1925  |
| Historic Status: | MACRIS-listed and formerly known as the Boulevard Filling Station |

Petition Purpose: Demolish the entire building

Marc Williams appeared on behalf of the item.

Mr. Williams stated that he is requesting to demolish the buildings so he can put up a new structure

Chair Provencher stated that they have seen a few properties like this in recent years. There were a number of these gas stations dating from the 1920's in the City and they did a review of a project very similar on Grove Street recently for demolition of that building.

Mr. Williams stated that there is no original material from the original gas station.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked what was in the building now. Mr. Williams stated that it is vacant and there hasn't been a gas station there for a very long time.

Chair Provencher stated that he did view the property and it in rough shape.

Secretary McCann stated looking at photos and any architectural significance is long gone but they will still look at whether there is any historical significance but looking at the building it has been neglected and he appreciates what the applicant is trying to do.

Chair Provencher stated that on the Grove Street proposal they did find that property did have historical significance and asked the applicant to provide information relative to economic hardship and that project was approved under economic hardship.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked when Mr. Williams purchased the building did he know it was a historic structure. Mr. Williams stated that he did not.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if he looked at design alternatives that would incorporate the building. Mr. Williams stated that he had but on Shrewsbury Street, the city is looking for the building to be close to the sidewalk.

Mr. Rolle stated that there is a proposed overlay district that will be voted by Council shortly which will include Shrewsbury Street and one of the provisions is that building front the street to improve the walkability of the neighborhood but there are some conditions for existing buildings but on the design proposed by applicant it does fit what is proposed with the overlay district.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he agrees the building has deteriorated but it not just the building. It is the siting of the building and it speaks to the history of Shrewsbury Street and shows it used to be a major automotive area for the city.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked applicant had looked at the possibility of reroofing or taking some architectural element that would pay homage to the automotive history of the

street in design of new building. Mr. William stated that he did not and he was looking at improving Shrewsbury Street as a whole.

Commissioner Conroy stated that she was more comfortable voting after seeing the original photos and how much the property has really changed.

Commissioner Bloom stated that it was difficult to realize that City is going to lose another part of City's cultural history but the Commission may not have a choice and it a difficult decision and the Grove Street building was more intact than this one.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that it also had a stronger narrative as was part of a pair.

Secretary McCann stated that the Grove Street had greater potential for reuse and that had to be taken into consideration.

Chair Provencher stated that what makes this different from Grove Street is that Grove Street was right on the corner and this proposal where the new structure is pushed up to the property line is consistent with what was appropriate with Shrewsbury Street.

Secretary McCann asked when Mr. Williams purchased the building and how much he bought it for. Mr. Williams stated that he purchased it in May for \$400,000.

Secretary McCann stated that it should be noted that this applicant has already purchased the building while Grove Street was awaiting decision prior to purchasing and Mr. Williams has made a serious financial commitment

Chair Provencher stated that was a good point.

Commissioner Bloom stated that it does show that there needs to be something along the way that alerts someone they are purchasing a MACRIS building.

Secretary McCann stated that the proposed building is very nice.

Deborah Packard, Preservation Worcester, stated that they had their Board meeting last night and it was similar discussion that it sad to lose a filling station but they recognize that the building is in bad shape and probably would go along with the sentiments tonight and the architect for the building did come to see them about the new design which they appreciated.

Chair Provencher stated that they had received a letter from the Chamber of Commerce in support of the proposal.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 5-0 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 on October 23, 2014 and dated October 22, 2014.

Exhibit B: Letter from Chamber of Commerce received on November 20, 2014 and dated November 24, 2014.

## **6. 1 Webster Street (HC-2014-074)**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioners: T&M Webster, LLC  
Present Use: Vacant restaurant  
Year Built: Circa 1851  
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed and formerly known as the Levi Knowlton House  
Petition Purpose: Demolish the entire building

Brian Barrows appeared on behalf of the petition.

Mr. Barrows stated that they just finished the purchase and sale and the property is now owned by 1-15 LLC which he is a member.

Mr. Barrows stated that he would like to demolish the building in order to expand his current hardware business in order to compete with much larger retailers.

Chair Provencher asked Mr. Barrows to give a history of his business.

Mr. Barrows stated that they are 100 year old company and he is the third generation to be in hardware business and they are a smaller business and they would like to add a yard and garden type of concept as retail is very hard for the small businesses.

Secretary McCann asked if parking would be added. Mr. Barrows stated that it would be.

Chair Provencher stated that it is a difficult building as many renovations had been done over the years.

Chair Provencher stated that he, Vice Chair Shveda and members of staff toured the building and it appears that there is little or no historic material left from the Knowlton House. There was a fire there in 1979 and the fire destroyed the entire front portion of the Knowlton House and the second floor is gone and surrounding the house is a number of additions that have been put on for the restaurant functions. It not a big building but it is a complex building and discussion should be whether there is anything historically significant left.

Chair Provencher stated looking at the MACRIS listing and based on the view he doesn't believe anything is left to the Knowlton House. Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he would

agree with that and inside there still evidence of fire damage inside and the most historic significant portion of the building probably was gone after the fire of 1979. Chair Provencher noted that MACRIS listing was from 1978.

Deborah Packard, Preservation Worcester, stated she concurs that anything that was there is no longer there.

Commissioner Bloom & Commissioner Conroy stated that they were glad that the Chair & Vice Chair went to view the premises as they were doubtful there was much historical material left but after they viewed they know very little left.

Deborah Packard stated that Mr. Barrows invited them to see the property and they appreciated that he worked with them and the City of Worcester and they support his family business.

Jo Hart, city resident, stated that she had a different viewpoint and is opposed to anyone buying something to tear down and there may be some another way to do this.

Chair Provencher stated that he had a letter from the Chamber of Commerce in support of the applicant's petition.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 5-0 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 on October 23, 2014 and dated October 22, 2014.

Exhibit B: Letter from Chamber of Commerce received on November 20, 2014 and dated November 24, 2014.

## **Other Business**

### **Communication**

- a. Letter from Massachusetts Historical, re: 92 Grand Street; dated October 23, 2014; received October 29, 2014.

No comment.

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

Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Secretary McCann the Commission voted 5-0 to continue discussion to the next meeting.

- c. Letter from Massachusetts Historical, re: MLK Center, 237 Chandler Street; dated October 24, 2014; received November 3, 2014

Staff will follow up and remind applicant that they need to come before Commission if they plan any work.

- d. 5 Chestnut Street – Gargoyles update

Mr. Rolle stated he did not have update at this time.

### **Adjournment**

Upon a motion the Commission voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m.