

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER  
January 8, 2015**

**LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL**

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

**Commission Members Absent:** Karl Bjork

**Staff Members Present:** Stephen S. Rolle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services  
Deborah Steele, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

12/4/2014-Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes of December 4, 2014 with one edit.

12/18/2014 – Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 5-0 to approved the minutes of December 18, 2014 with one edit.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 5-0 to appoint Kevin Provencher as Chair for year 2015.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve Andrew Shveda as Vice Chair for year 2015.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bloom and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve Timothy McCann as Clerk for year 2015.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. 7 Massachusetts Avenue (HC-2014-086)**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness  
Petitioner: Allen & Yda Filiberti  
Present Use: Single Family residence  
Year Built: Circa 1900, formerly known as the Fred H. Blackmer House

Historic Status:           MACRIS-listed, NRDIS (National Register District),  
                                  Massachusetts Avenue Historic District  
Petition Purpose:        Remove/replace seventeen double hung windows with associated  
                                  work

Yda Filiberti appeared on behalf of the item. She presented some photos to the Commission of the windows of the home.

She presented some photos of the house and she included one window on the garage which never had a storm or screen on it so Commission could see what the frame and the casing of the windows of the whole house look like without the storm and screen on it and she stated her intention was not to replace the entire window but just the sash so the storm and screen come off and the new window goes in. Ms. Filiberti stated all the windows are all without muntins or mullions and are double hung windows. Ms. Filiberti stated that the only windows that have a fancy muntin are the one above the portico which are not going to be touched. Only the storm and screen will be taken off so the home will have a uniform appearance and two of them will be deadlights that won't open anymore and a plain piece of glass will be placed on the inside which will give the desired insulation.

Ms. Filiberti stated she was unaware how many were original windows and how many were replacements and the porch shown on the photo that is set back and is off the living room and was at one time an open porch and she believed it was enclosed in the 1920's and the windows were put in the 1960's or 70's and are not in keeping with the historical architecture of the house and she would like to replace at some point but they are still sound.

Ms. Filiberti stated that the amount of windows she plans to replace now is 25 and when she had done research a lot of the windows had been altered. The previous owner had routed out more of the sash and then put an aluminum side piece which is a track which will allow the window to go up and down on so now the sash is small and those windows no longer function and they need to be replaced.

Chair Provencher asked where the windows were located. Ms. Filiberti stated they are all on the second floor and the window they are proposing to use is a Pella wood window is the architect 850 which is the top of the line.

Secretary McCann asked whether the aluminum jam liners were only in certain windows. Ms. Filiberti stated that was correct. Ms. Filiberti stated most of the windows do have pulleys but very few work and the draft that comes through the windows is awful and by changing all the sashes and taking off the aluminum storm and screen she hopes to bring the house more in line with how it used to look and she will be using solid wood window with an exterior aluminum clad and will be painted to match the trim.

Chair Provencher asked what color the home was. Ms. Filiberti stated it was pale gray and the trim is a cream white.

Chair Provencher asked what she planned to do for the finish. Ms. Filiberti stated that one of the colors that is available is identical to her current trim which she plans to use.

Commissioner Bloom stated that his concern is that all the windows will be 1/1 without replacing the muntins. Ms. Filiberti stated that there were no muntins. Commissioner Bloom asked whether in the past there were. Ms. Filiberti stated there have been several additions to the house but did not believe so.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he was under impression from what Ms. Filiberti was stating that she wanted to return the house to what it looked like in 1901. Ms. Filiberti stated that was correct.

Chair Provencher asked Ms. Filiberti whether the garage she had shown in the photos presented was included in her proposal. Ms. Filiberti stated that it was not. She just provided that as a reference of a window that did not have a storm and screen so the Commission could see the casing.

Chair Provencher stated that it looks like the majority of windows are wood but some look like vinyl replacements. Ms. Filiberti stated that the former owners did put in some vinyl replacement windows and they will come out to be replaced.

Chair Provencher stated that she stated that she was replacing 17 windows but Ms. Filiberti stated she is now looking to replace 25 but that is not a substantial change so he does not see a need to re-advertise and asked Ms. Filiberti how many units were no original. Ms. Filiberti stated that she thought the living room windows are original but doesn't think any of the others are and the vinyl replacements are on the back of the home.

Chair Provencher stated that all of the windows visible from the street are wood and appear to be original. Ms. Filiberti stated that with exception with the bedroom window to the right of the portico.

Chair Provencher stated that the product selected is very nice and believes Ms. Filiberti is doing all the right things but is wondering if there were muntins originally and when the glass was replaced it was decided not to replace them. Ms. Filiberti stated that did not believe so as the architect who had done the house was known for a very plain style.

Chair Provencher stated that with the Pella replacement product there will still be a screen on them which does change the appearance and originally there probably was no screen. Ms. Filiberti stated that the windows that are not used much she would leave it off but on some windows she will have them.

Chair Provencher asked whether the four units in the dormer will be replaced. Ms. Filiberti stated that they will remain.

Commissioner Conroy asked if Ms. Filiberti had spoken with Preservation Worcester. Ms. Filiberti stated she had and stated the consensus was they did not have muntins.

Commission Bloom stated Ms. Filiberti had spent considerable time and effort to make sure what should and should go into the house.

Secretary McCann stated that he understood the other Board members' comments but this home is in a historical district and what has not been discussed is what is off of the house and whether they are setting a precedent on replacing sashes in existing windows in a home in a historic district. Other applicants have come before the Commission but did not provide as much information as Ms. Filiberti but as a Commission they need to be specific on what the argument is for replacement (energy efficiency, economic hardship, uniformity and consistency, etc). The most compelling thing to him is the argument that these windows have been modified by a previous owner and by virtue of the modification they are not able to be successfully repaired or maintained in their current condition and as a result this is the best course of action, replacing some of the units which have been modified in order to keep the consistency of design she is going to continue to replace the windows in kind as she goes with the Pella product and that is a compelling argument and one that also suggests that the Commission has a great appreciation for original windows. Specifically in a historic district and repair of windows is not something they would not suggest but in this case it seems unlikely the homeowner would not be capable of doing in this situation.

Chair Provencher stated that he understands Secretary McCann's point but would disagree as in the last several years the Commission has sent applicants away and asked them to come back with cost data on restoration. In the past, some members have taken the viewpoint that original material takes precedent over everything and the Commission should do everything in its power to save the windows and that argument has been made in the past on various application and the Commission needs to look at whether that is the direction the Commission wants to go in or if the argument for uniformity and energy more compelling and in his opinion it is.

Secretary McCann stated that he understands the Chair's opinion but he is worried that the Commission is setting a precedent that the Commission will be held to in the future.

Chair Provencher stated that the Commission looks at applications on a case by case basis and then considers them on context of similar applications and what he finds favorable about this application is the replacement product that has been chosen in his opinion is a good as it gets as that is why he is in favor of the application.

Ms. Filiberti stated that she had done a lot of research and a lot of companies could not do these windows correctly and that is why she went with the Pella window.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that there are some companies in New England that can do custom windows and it is difficult to find the smaller companies.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked who would install the windows. Ms. Filiberti stated it would be sub-contractor from Lowe's and she has talked to him in great length about the work that needs to be done.

Chair Provencher asked if there was wood sub-still at the wood frame. Ms. Filiberti stated yes there is a small lip that the sash closes behind and showed it on the photo.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if she was going to get the slope aluminum sill. Ms. Filiberti stated that it would be wood.

Commissioner Bloom stated that understanding what the modifications are to the windows will help him make a decision and asked Ms. Filiberti if the sashes were trim down to accommodate those aluminum tracks that have been put in. Ms. Filiberti stated that they were routed out to accommodate.

Commissioner Conroy stated that this was an important conversation but this is probably the best solution.

Secretary McCann asked since the frames have been routed out to make way for a friction jam what would be the way to repair that short of replacing the frame. Vice-Chair Shveda stated it is possible to do but would cost a lot of money as you would take the sashes out and rip it down and apply a new piece.

Secretary McCann stated then it would not be original. Vice-Chair Shveda stated that was correct but the majority would be original.

Secretary McCann stated that if Ms. Filiberti was asked to repair the windows she would have to add new material.

Chair Provencher stated it already compromised so what value does it have.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that is why Commission takes applications on a case by case basis and as long as what is being replaced is a high quality and installed by a professional he would have no problem.

Ms. Filiberti stated that she believes once the work is done the home will look so much better.

Chair Provencher asked what the sill condition was. Ms. Filiberti stated that they will not be removed.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that the removal of the storm windows will give the elevation of the home much more depth. Vice-Chair Shveda stated that it should be pointed out that the removal of these windows is reversible.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated he would agree and that he knows saving original material is important to the Commission but there are cost implications in this situation.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 4-1 (Secretary McCann voting against) that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City with the amendment that it is for twenty-five windows. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda the Commission voted 5-0 that the petition as amended for 25 windows 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 December 12, 2014 and dated November 19, 2014.

## **2. 144 Pleasant Street (HC-2014-087)**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness  
Petitioner: Justin Duffy & Patricia Kirkpatrick  
Present Use: Commercial Building  
Year Built: Circa 1844, formerly known as Asa Walker House  
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed, NRDIS (National Register District), NRMRA (National Register Multiple Resource Area), Crown Hill Local Historic District  
Petition Purpose: Remove/replace column on front porch

The applicant did not appear on behalf of the petition.

Upon a motion the Commission voted 5-0 to postpone the Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application until January 22, 2015 and extend the constructive grant deadline until February 1, 2015.

Upon a motion the Commission voted 5-0 to postpone the Certificate of Appropriateness application until January 22, 2015 and extend the constructive grant deadline until February 13, 2015.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness received on December 11, 2014 and dated December 11, 2014.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Historical Commission Brochure**

The Board members requested more time to review the brochure and requested the item be postponed until the January 22, 2015 meeting.

Mr. Rolle requested any specific comments regarding the brochure be sent to him so he can compile them for the brochure.

## **COMMUNICATION**

1. **Letter from URS, re: Blackstone Visitor Center; dated December 23, 2014; received December 26, 2014.**

Chair Provencher stated that he will be attending a conference regarding this and requested item be placed on next agenda and he will update the Commission as to what was discussed.

2. **Letter from Massachusetts Historical Commission, re: MHC Grant application, dated December 15, 2014, received December 19, 2014.**

Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 5-0 to provide a letter of support for the grant application.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Commission adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.