

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

**March 29, 2018**

**LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL**

**Commission Members Present:** Andrew Shveda  
Robyn Conroy  
Janet Theerman  
Diane Long  
Courtney Ross Escobar, Alternate

**Commission Members Absent:** Randolph Bloom  
Devon Kurtz  
Mark Wamback  
Tomi Stefani, Alternate

**Staff Members Present:** Susan Arena, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

**Call Commission to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Shveda at 5:30 pm.

**Approval of Minutes**

None

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

**1. 1 Drury Lane – HC-2018-016 (MBL 20-016-01-04)**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness  
Petitioner: Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
Present Use: Multi-family residence  
Year Built: c1914  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, and located within the Massachusetts Avenue Local Historic District, fka Frank O. Woodland - John Jeppson House.  
Petition Purpose:

- Replace select windows and doors
- Repair remaining windows and doors

Michelle Tuck, Tuck and Tuck Architects; and James Bedard, WPI, appeared on behalf of the application.

Ms. Tuck reviewed the project proposal to replace eight windows and two sets of French doors. She noted that there are 87 windows total. The eight windows to be replaced are on the second floor on the Park

Ave. elevation. She stated that these are all bedroom windows and they have received complaint from the residents of draftiness and road noise. The remaining windows are to be restored. The proposed replacement unit is a Marvin Ultimate double-hung, aluminum clad wood window that has a similar profile as the existing. Ms. Tuck also noted that the replaced would have upgraded glass that would greatly reduce road noise.

Regarding the French doors, Ms. Tuck stated that they have seen a lot of heavy use and no longer function properly. School events are often hosted at this property and require access from the first floor to the patio, through the French doors. The last part of the proposal is to restore in place the remaining windows and doors.

Commissioner Theerman asked for confirmation that the existing windows and doors are currently wood, and followed up by reminding the applicant that the property is within a Local Historic District and believes it is inappropriate to replace the units with anything other than wood. She also noted that a lot of the noise is generated by the college itself.

Commissioner Conroy thanked the applicant for a thorough presentation, then asked whether they had considered using a wood replacement. Ms. Tuck replied, yes, they have considered wood and would be willing to make that change for both the windows and doors.

Chair Shveda stated that he agrees with Commissioner Theerman that the replacements should be wood, and that the maintenance argument is somewhat negated by the plan to retain the other 79 windows. He went on to comment on the potential visual differences between original and replacement windows, noting variation in sheen and finish on the materials.

Commissioner Long confirmed that the transom over the French doors will be retained and asked why the sidelights aren't also being kept. Ms. Tuck stated that the transom has fared better over the years, but the sidelights have received more contact from traffic and are showing more signs of wear. Also, they are being replaced for consistency of appearance so the doors and sidelights will match.

Public comment: Susan Ceccacci, architectural historian, asked about the condition of the windows to be replaced, whether they are damaged and cannot be repaired. Ms. Tuck stated that they discussed that option, but they won't get the thermal and acoustical characteristics that they are hoping for, even with new storm windows. Ms. Ceccacci questioned the longevity of the new wood windows. She noted that older windows are known for being better quality and more repairable. Regarding current condition of the eight windows, Ms. Tuck confirmed that they are drafty but are not rotted.

Discussion continued regarding the feasibility of retaining the existing windows, and ways to achieve the characteristic goals of the applicant. Commissioner Theerman voiced concern that allowing the replacement of a few windows will set a precedent for further replacements down the road.

Chair Shveda stated that he's more sympathetic to the door replacements as they see a lot more use. He inquired whether the applicant would be willing to explore restoring all of the windows. He asked what specifically the concerns are, whether residents are being woken up by noise. Ms. Tuck replied that they had started receiving complaints as soon as the residents moved in, that it's noisy and the windows are drafty. She also stated that they had tried other measures such as hanging heavy curtains.

Chair Shveda suggested that they approve the replacement of the French doors, and that the applicant does some additional research on alternative options for the windows that work with the existing units. He noted that as the windows are not in irreparable shape and the concerns seem to be more of a comfort issue, they'd prefer to see the original windows retained if possible.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to continue the discussion of the replacement of eight second floor windows on the Park Ave side of the building, to the April 12 Historical Commission meeting.*

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition, consisting of the removal and replacement of two sets of French doors, is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.*

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed changes, consisting of the replacement of two sets of French doors with sidelights, and the repair of all windows (except for the eight on the second floor Park Ave side) and remaining doors, are appropriate to the Massachusetts Avenue Local Historic District and approved the Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness Application dated March 5, 2018 and received March 6, 2018.

Exhibit B: Request for Continuance form, dated March 29, 2018.

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## **2. 70 James Street – HC-2018-017 (MBL 28-011-1-2+3)**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: Robert Mura  
Present Use: Commercial building  
Year Built: c1928  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka Worcester Wire Works  
Petition Purpose:

- Remove all existing signage, awnings and banners
- Install new lighting and signage

Robert Mura, owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Mura stated that he just closed on the property on March 1 and is looking to improve the exterior appearance, and preserve the 1928 character. He noted that it is a steel structure with a brick façade, but that it currently looks very cluttered with awnings and signs, and ill-fitting windows.

Commissioners did not express any concern about the proposed work.

No public comment.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated March 5, 2018 and received March 6, 2018.

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## **3. 190 Salisbury Street – HC-2018-018 (MBL 20-007-00013)**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness  
Petitioner: American Antiquarian Society

Present Use: Library / museum  
Year Built: 1905  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, National Register listed and located within the Montvale Local Historic District, fka the Harry Goddard House

Petition Purpose:

- Repair / replace damaged shutters, siding, columns, window trim, and other decorative features
- Repair / install gutters
- Repair masonry
- Paint
- Remove / repair / replace Juliette balcony
- Replace lead flashing

Ellen Dunlap, Susan Forgit, and Andy Cariglia, American Antiquarian Society, appeared on behalf of the application.

Ms. Dunlap stated that this is the work that was presented to the Commission in January during a preliminary discussion. The scope addressed a range of maintenance issues with the property, many related to water infiltration or damage. They presented samples of the Boral siding that will have the same profile as the wood clapboards. The composite will be used in select areas close to the ground where rot has been an issue. They also shared a sample fiberglass capital that represents the replacement columns. Commissioner Theerman asked whether the material would take paint like wood does, and Ms. Dunlap confirmed that it will. Lastly was a sample fiberglass shutter, which is a solid unit with the color integrated throughout. Since most are damaged or missing, they'd like to replace all shutters with the fiberglass option.

Regarding the three small Juliette balconies on the south side, Ms. Dunlap stated that they aren't sure how structurally stable they are. They are currently not in use. Their goal is to repair them in place, and if they are found to be structurally compromised the access windows will be fixed shut for safety purposes.

Chair Shveda noted that it appeared that the majority of the work consists of in-kind repairs, with the exception of the siding, columns and shutters, and that the scope appears to match what was previously discussed.

No public comment.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.*

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed changes are appropriate to the Montvale Local Historic District and approved the Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness Application dated March 7, 2018 and received March 8, 2018.

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**4. 46 Queen Street – HC-2018-019 (MBL 06-015-00031)**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: Lieu Tu and Tung Ngo

Present Use: Two-family residence  
Year Built: 1892  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka the Dr. J. Everett Toombs House  
Petition Purpose:

- Replace porch decking and railing
- Replace windows
- Remove chimney
- Construct staircase
- Block in 1 or 2 windows

Larry Ngo, general contractor, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Ngo stated that his sister and brother recently purchased this property, that he lives next door and will be helping them to complete the work. Regarding the porch, he stated that some of the railings are missing and some sections have been replaced. He said the decking had been replaced previously but is in very poor shape now and needs to be replaced again, with wood. He believes the columns can be saved, though the bottom few inches may need to be cut off and joined with new wood due to rot.

Regarding replacing the windows, Mr. Ngo stated that some are already vinyl but all second floor windows are original and in poor condition. In total about 12 windows will be replaced. The stained glass window on the side will be retained. Mr. Ngo stated that the house was occupied by an elderly woman for a long time and there was a lack of maintenance. He agreed to match the muntin pattern on the replacements with the existing, which are 2-over-1 in most areas.

The chimney they'd like to remove is at the back of the house. There used to be one fireplace, but there is no flue and it isn't operational. Chair Shveda noted a lack of architectural detailing, and Commissioner Theerman asked whether it is in bad condition, to which Mr. Ngo replied that it was.

A window on the rear elevation will be block in for the construction of the egress staircase, which will not be visible from the street. An additional window on the left side, second floor will need to be blocked in to allow for the construction of an interior wall. This window is minimally visible, but it was determined that its loss is not significant.

Returning to the porch, Chair Shveda asked what the design of the new railing will be. Mr. Ngo stated that the railing all the way around will be replaced with turned posts at a height that meets code. It will not match the existing exactly but it will be similar. Chair Shveda inquired about how the new railing will intersect with the existing columns since they will be higher and meet at a curved instead of a flat section. Mr. Ngo responded that he will cope the top railing to curve around the column.

No public comment.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated March 6, 2018 and received March 8, 2018.

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## 5. 48 Queen Street – HC-2018-020 (MBL 06-015-00015)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: Larry Ngo  
Present Use: Two-family residence and garage  
Year Built: 1872  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka the Clinton M. Dyer – George I. Alden House  
Petition Purpose:

- Replace garage doors

Larry Ngo, owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

Chair Shveda noted that these are unusual doors since they are top hung. Mr. Ngo stated that the existing doors are extremely heavy and his wife and kids aren't able to open them. They are also in very bad condition, making the garage space unusable. He would like to replace them with overhead, composite doors.

The glass along the top is all broken, and the openings patched over with plywood. Chair Shveda asked whether they'd considered replacing the hardware. Mr. Ngo replied that the issue is still the weight of the doors, and the deteriorated condition of the wood. In addition, the doors have been repaired by adding a layer of plywood on the interior, making them heavier. He also noted that when there is snow against them, they can't be opened at all.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated March 7, 2018 and received March 8, 2018.

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## 6. 23 Cheever Street – HC-2018-021 (MBL 07-034-00008)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: I. Chang  
Present Use: Three-family residence  
Year Built: c1890  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka the T. Dugard House  
Petition Purpose:

- Replace footings on front porch
- Replace decking and remove porch railing (retroactive approval)

Charles Vuong and Mike, contractors, appeared on behalf of the application.

Chair Shveda noted that work was begun without a permit, then when one was applied for, they were directed to Historical Commission. Mr. Vuong stated that they removed the decking as it was rotted. They intend to replace the decking with composite material. In addition, the railing had been removed at an unknown time, prior to the current work. The contractors would like to recreate the railing design, based on older street views, in pressure treated wood to be painted, at a height that meets code.

No public comment.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application, and the replacement of the porch decking and railing is retroactively approved.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated March 6, 2018 and received March 9, 2018.

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**7. 3 (aka 5) Maxwell Street – HC-2018-022 (MBL 10-003-00019)**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: Daniel Yarnie  
Present Use: Two-family residence (vacant)  
Year Built: c1885  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka the Michael Connors House  
Petition Purpose:

- Demolish the entire building

Daniel Yarnie, owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

Chair Shveda asked for clarification on the building's history. Mr. Yarnie stated that he purchased it early last year. At that time a condemnation order issued by the City was in place. Mr. Yarnie stated that it has been vacant for years and that no improvements have been done.

Chair Shveda compared the current house to the photo from the Form B and noted that the majority of architectural detail has been removed, compromising the integrity of the building. In addition, it appeared to be in very poor condition.

No public comment.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated March 9, 2018 and received March 9, 2018.

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**Communications**

- a. Communication from EBI Consulting re: Invitation to Comment, 16 Greenwood Street, dated March 6, 2018 and received March 9, 2018.

*Staff noted that Inspectional Services confirmed that this scope of work requires a building permit, which will trigger review under the Demolition Delay Ordinance.*

- b. \*Request for CLG Opinion from Epsilon Associates re: The Kensington and the Buckingham, 87 and 91 Murray Ave, received electronically March 16, 2018.

*Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to find the Kensington and the Buckingham District to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and concur with the opinion of staff.*

- c. \*Request for Letter of Support from Epsilon Associates re: Tax credit application for Matheson Apartments (T. J. Barrett Apartment, 37 Wellington Ave.; W. E. Hall Apartment, 45 Wellington Ave.; The Florence, 49 Wellington Ave.; The Windsor, 720 Main Street; The Kensington, 87 Murray Ave.; and the Buckingham, 91 Murray Ave) received electronically March 16, 2018.

*Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 5-0 to provide a new letter of support for the Matheson Apartments.*

- d. \*Request for updated Letter of Support from Epsilon Associates re: Tax credit application for Abby's House, 52 High Street received electronically March 16, 2018.

*Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to provide an updated letter of support for 52 High Street.*

- e. \*Request for updated Letter of Support from Epsilon Associates re: Tax credit application for 332 Main Street, Central Building received electronically March 16, 2018.

*Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to provide an updated letter of support for 332 Main Street.*

- f. Communication from vhb re: Draft National Register Nomination for Worcester County Courthouse, 2 Main Street, dated March 16, 2018 and received March 20, 2018.

*No comment.*

- g. \*Request for CLG Opinion from Epsilon Associates re: Pleasant Street District, 78-93 Pleasant Street, received electronically March 22, 2018.

*Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to find the Pleasant Street District to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and concur with the opinion of staff.*

- h. \*Request for Letter of Support from Epsilon Associates re: Tax credit application for 80 Pleasant Street, received electronically March 22, 2018.

*Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to provide a letter of support for 80 Pleasant Street.*

## **Adjournment**

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.