

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

June 21, 2018

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Andrew Shveda
Robyn Conroy
Devon Kurtz
Diane Long
Janet Theerman
Mark Wamback
Tomi Stefani, Alternate

Commission Members Absent: Randolph Bloom
Courtney Ross Escobar, Alternate

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

Call Commission to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Shveda at 5:34 pm.

Approval of Minutes

Review of the May 24, 2018 minutes.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Theerman the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of May 24, 2018.

Old Business

1. 62 Harlem Street – HC-2018-030 (MBL 10-032-00028)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Steven Hiou
Present Use: Three-family residence
Year Built: c1916
Historic Status: MACRIS listed, fka the Andrew Sullivan House
Petition Purpose:

- Remove wood shake siding and install vinyl siding

William Kelly, owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Kelly stated that he wants to install vinyl siding because the existing cedar shake is in poor condition and the sheathing underneath is drafty. He claimed that all the shingles on the left side of the house need to be replaced and that it will be too expensive to do so. Chair Shveda asked about the replacement windows along the first floor on that side, and confirmed with Mr. Kelly that no building permit was obtained. Chair Shveda also noted that due to the way the windows were installed, with

missing shingles exposing the sheathing the resulting air infiltration wasn't surprising. Mr. Kelly stated that he attempted to repair some areas but the shingles fell apart. Aesthetically, Mr. Kelly stated that, as the only house on the block that isn't sided, he feels like his house is a sore thumb and looks awful. This opinion was not shared by the Commission nor seen as a valid reason for permitting the request.

Commissioner Conroy recalled that the contractor who was present at the first meeting mentioned the possibility of using a shake looking vinyl or repairing the siding. Mr. Kelly stated that repair was not discussed, and that the prices given by his contractor were \$25,000 to \$26,000 for vinyl siding and over \$60,000 for all new cedar.

Chair Shveda noted that this is a typical example of a triple decker in that the porches have been enclosed, but noted that it still includes several interesting features such as the decorative shingle pattern on the front curved portion, the flare at the bottom of the walls and the trim work. He suggested working with the applicant to find a compromise that would involve only installing siding on the side and rear elevations and retaining the soffit. Mr. Kelly insisted that the soffit needed to be wrapped, and went on to state that it costs too much to repaint it every few years and that he wants to be able to add insulation to the walls.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Wambach and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 0-5 that the proposed demolition of the historic building located at 62 Harlem Street is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to deny the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

Mr. Kelly stated that he was not interested in providing financial documentation so that the Commission could vote on a determination of economic hardship, and he wasn't interested in returning to the Commission with a modified proposal. He opted to wait out the 12-month delay period.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated May 2, 2018 and received May 3, 2018.

Exhibit B: Request to Continue form dated June 7, 2018.

Exhibit C: Email from William Kelly confirming continuance to June 21, 2018, dated June 13, 2018.

New Business

2. 244 Park Ave – HC-2018-034 (MBL 11-031-00020)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Paul Howley
Present Use: Commercial building
Year Built: c1923
Historic Status: MACRIS listed, fka the Marmon – Jordan Showroom
Petition Purpose:

- Replace front window

Jim Army, Cole Contracting, appeared on behalf of the application.

There are three storefront windows, two of which have already been replaced via Commission approval in 2013 and 2014. The third window, which is the front right unit, will be replaced to match the other two with a dark bronze aluminum unit.

The Commission had no concerns about the proposed work.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 7-0 that the proposed demolition of the historic building located at 244 Park Ave is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated May 21, 2018 and received May 30, 2018.

3. 41 Burncoat Ave – HC-2018-035 (MBL 22-031-00002)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Paul Donnellan
Present Use: Single-family residence
Year Built: 1911
Historic Status: MACRIS listed, fka the George N. Jeppson House
Petition Purpose:

- Replace slate roof with asphalt and install solar panels

Paul Donnellan, owner; and Alex Lappin, Greater Boston Roofing, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Donnellan stated that he has had issues with the roof for a while, resulting in falling slate that have damaged lower roofs and vehicles parked below, in addition to water leaks. He had been looking for a way to remedy the situation that would be affordable and maintain the character of the house.

Mr. Lappin provided estimates for replacement of the roof with asphalt and installation of solar panels, \$20,792; and strip and reroof in slate, \$48,345. He noted that many of the tiles are broken or chipped and would need to be replaced, versus being able to reuse all the slate and just replace the hangers. Mr. Donnellan stated that he had difficulty finding contractors that would work on slate.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 0-7 that the proposed demolition of the historic building located at 41 Burncoat Street is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to deny the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 7-0 that the repair of the slate roof at 41 Burncoat Street would pose an undue economic hardship and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated May 29, 2018 and received May 31, 2018.

Exhibit B: Construction estimates provided by Greater Boston Roofing.

4. 305 Belmont Street – HC-2018-036 (MBL 57-004-0000B)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Worcester Business Development Corporation (WBDC)
Present Use: Commercial building (vacant)
Year Built: 1955
Historic Status: MACRIS listed, within Worcester Asylum – State Hospital National Register District, fka Worcester State Hospital – Bryan Building

Petition Purpose:

- Demolish the building

Mr. Rolle noted that there was quite a bit of debate internally about whether this building is subject to the Demolition Delay Ordinance, but determined that it is. Ms. Arena added that even though the building was listed as noncontributing on the National Register nomination, likely due to its age at the time, it is still located within the bounds of a National Register district, which makes the ordinance applicable.

Julie Holstrom, WBDC, appeared on behalf of the application.

Ms. Holstrom stated that the WBDC purchased 44 acres of the former Worcester State Hospital campus from the Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) over two phases. The second transfer, which included the Bryan Building, was finalized at the beginning of June. She noted that they have come before the Commission for previous requests, including the demolition of four cottages, and are working on a plan for utilizing the Hale Building. The Bryan Building is the largest building on the campus, 350,000 square feet, and it has been vacant since 2012. DCAMM had completed some abatement work in the last few years, and removed the connector that previously attached it to the neighboring BNRI Building.

The WBDC would like to raze the building in order to make a pad-ready site for future development as part of a bio-manufacturing campus. Chair Shveda asked whether any thought had been given to reusing the building. Ms. Holstrom responded that the state had explored that possibility and completed a structural report that found there to be issues that would prevent reuse. In addition, in targeting bio-manufacturing companies, retrofitting to meet the needs to specific uses did not seem feasible.

Chair Shveda stated that in his opinion this isn't a particularly notable structure, even as an example of a mid-century institutional building. Commission Conroy followed up, observing that it seems that many buildings from this era are being demolished. Similar to the way triple-deckers have gone, seemingly a dime a dozen, they have been clad in vinyl, had their porches enclosed or removed, until the intact triple-decker becomes an anomaly. Their abundance has possibly resulted in them being overlooked and underappreciated. She went to say that, though the Bryan Building isn't an example of one, it is important to be proactive in getting buildings from this era listed on the National Register.

Public comment: Chair Shveda noted the letter of support provided by Preservation Worcester.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 7-0 that the proposed demolition of the historic building located at 305 Belmont Street is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated May 31, 2018 and received May 31, 2018.

Exhibit B: Letter of support from Preservation Worcester dated June 21, 2018 and received June 21, 2018

Communications

- a. Communication from vhb re: Revised National Register nomination for Main and Franklin Streets District – received electronically June 11, 2018.

No comment

- b. Communication from vhb re: Draft National Register nomination for Indian Hill School – received electronically June 12, 2018.

No comment

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Wamback, the Commission voted 7-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m.