

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

MARCH 19, 2020

LEVI LINCOLN ROOM, ROOM 309 – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Mark Wamback, Chair
Devon Kurtz, Vice-Chair
Randolph Bloom
Diane Long
Janet Theerman

Commission Members Absent: Tomi Stefani
Erika Helnarski, Alternate
Cathryn E. Jerome-Mezynski, Alternate

*Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Worcester Historical Commission was conducted via **remote participation**. No in-person attendance of members of the public was permitted, but every effort was made to ensure that the public could adequately access the proceedings.

The meeting was be livestreamed from the City Website (<http://www.worcesterma.gov/video-on-demand>), and may be viewed on the city's official [Facebook page](#), or on the local government cable channel (Spectrum Channel 192).

For more information concerning this meeting or to submit written comments in advance of any hearing, contact the Planning Division by email (preferred) at planning@worcesterma.gov or phone at (508) 799-1400 x 31440. Submission of comments in advance of hearings is encouraged. For specific information regarding options for participating during hearings, please check www.worcesterma.gov or contact the Planning Division prior to the scheduled meeting.

Stephen Rolle of the City of Worcester Planning Division called roll for the members of the Worcester Historical Commission. Also present from the Planning Division was Michelle Johnstone. Mr. Rolle went on to describe Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place as it related to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

FEBRUARY 6, 2020 –

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the January 30, 2020 Meeting Minutes, with Commissioner Kurtz not voting due to his absence at the February 6, 2020 meeting.

FEBRUARY 20, 2020 –

Approval of minutes was held until the next meeting.

POSTPONEMENTS

1. 9 Oxford Street – HC-2019-071 (MBL 03-025-00004)

Petitioner: Helen & Don Pham

Year Built: 1891

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; National Register Determination of Eligibility (DOE); National Register District (NRDIS); Local Historic District (LHD); State Register (SR), FKA Salem Griggs House

Petition Purpose:

- Replace windows (retroactive)

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 20, 2020

2. 126 Water Street – HC-2020-016 (MBL 04-022-00006)

Petitioner: Jean-Luc Wittner

Year Built: ca. 1910

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; National Register District (NRDIS), FKA Lewis Goldstein Apartment House

Petition Purpose:

- Remove the neon sign

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 20, 2020

4. 154 Main Street – HC-2020-022 (MBL 02-028-16+21)

Petitioner: Hugh Meehan

Year Built: 1831

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register (SR); National Register Individual (NRIND); National Register Multiple Resource Area (MRA), FKA Elwood Adams Hardware Store

Petition Purpose:

- Restore brick, granite, and mortar, restore exterior signage
- Replace existing windows
- Restore cornice detailing and install copper flashing at coping
- Remove and replace existing gutters and downspouts
- Replace doors with replicas
- Add new precast caps at parapet wall

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 29, 2020

6. 1 Montvale Road – HC-2020-024 (MBL 20-007-00025)

Petitioner: Aditya Tibrewal

Year Built: ca. 1918

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; Local Historic District (LHD); State Register (SR)

Petition Purpose:

- Repair roof
- Reside gable peak

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: April 19, 2020

7. 4 Congress Street – HC-2020-025 (MBL 03-026-00032)

Petitioner: Emilio Mendez

Year Built: 1859

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; Local Historic District (LHD); State Register (SR); National Register District (NRDIS); National Register Multiple Resource Area (MRA), FKA Freeman Brown – Louis Lewisson House

Petition Purpose:

- Paint house
- Pave driveway
- Replace windows
- Rebuild 30 feet of concrete walkway
- Erect fallen column next to driveway
- Replace wooden fence

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: April 25, 2020

On a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 5-0 to postpone items 4 and 6 to April 2, 2020, and extend the constructive grant deadline to April 20, 2020; and to postpone items 1, 2, and 7 to April 16, 2020, and extend the constructive grant deadline to May 1, 2020.

NEW BUSINESS

BUILDING DEMOLITION DELAY WAIVER

3. 218 Shrewsbury Street – HC-2020-021 (MBL 16-016-00038)

Petitioner: James Cunningham

Year Built: 1925

Historic Status: MACRIS listed, FKA M.H. Laipson & Company Dairy

Petition Purpose:

- Replace or add 6 architecturally similar windows to the façade
- Replace two overhead doors with glass entrances and fieldstone on east elevation of rear addition
- Insert one 4'x' window on the second floor of the north (rear) elevation of rear addition

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 20, 2020

James Cunningham spoke on behalf of the petition. He stated his company has been involved with historic buildings in the past. He stated that with the subject building, both he and the City missed the fact that it was a historic building, and permits for exterior work were issued. When they went for additional permits, the City notified the applicant at that point that it is a historic building. No additional permits were issued. Mr. Cunningham got in touch with Michelle Johnstone in the City's Planning Division. Ms. Johnstone went to the building to tour it with the applicants and reviewed the MACRIS inventory form with them. Mr. Cunningham stated that no additional improvements have been made since finding out the subject

property is historic. Mr. Cunningham stated he wants to add architecturally similar windows to the building and make general improvements to it.

Mr. Rolle did a roll call for comments from the commissioners.

Commissioner Bloom asked for clarification on what had already been done. He specifically was confused about which windows were going to be replaced. Mr. Cunningham said that the only windows that have been touched thus far were those on the first floor. He stated that the second-story windows have not been touched as they are architecturally sound and there are no plans to remove them. Mr. Cunningham clarified further that two windows previously bricked-in have been replaced with glass windows to match the two existing first-story windows.

Mr. Rolle suggested the Commission go through the items on the petition one by one.

Four new windows on the one-story addition will be inserted and two formerly bricked-in windows would have windows added. The bricked-in openings have already been filled with glass, and the four new windows on the addition have not been added.

Commissioner Long stated that the explanation for why the application is retroactive is solid. Commissioner Wamback agreed. Commissioner Long also stated that she thinks that adding windows to the previously bricked-in openings is an improvement. Commissioners Wamback, Theerman, and Bloom agreed.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he understands that modifications such as those proposed to make the building more functional are sometimes needed and are acceptable. Commissioner Long agreed.

No Public Comment.

Mr. Rolle stated that there is also work proposed in the back of the building, including the replacement of all bay doors on east elevation of rear addition with glass entrances and fieldstone or windows and fieldstone, the replacement of two second-story entrances on the east elevation of rear addition with windows, cutting three additional windows into the second story of the east elevation of rear addition, and inserting four (4) 4'x8' windows on the second floor of the north (rear) elevation of the rear addition. The rear portion of building has already been significantly altered and is not of the same vintage as the main block of the building.

Commissioner Wamback asked if the work would be easily visible from the street. Ms. Johnstone stated that it is visible from Oleum Court but not Shrewsbury Street. The Commission members stated that they were comfortable with the work as proposed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated January 27, 2020, received February 4, 2020.

Exhibit B: Postponement form dated February 27, 2020, received March 2, 2020.

A short recess was called to get ahold of the applicant.

The applicant identified herself, and the recess was terminated.

5. 179 Shrewsbury Street – HC-2020-023 (MBL 16-033-001+7)

Petitioner: Teresa Travaglio

Year Built: 1925

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; FKA Reliable Auto Radiator Company

Petition Purpose:

- Replace front door
- Open windows on side of building to create opening for patio space
- Remove awning on side of building
- **Work is retroactive**

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 29, 2020

Teresa Travaglio spoke on behalf of the petition. She stated that the front door has been taken out and a new door has been installed. She did not know that the building was historic. She stated that some walls on the side of the building were opened to allow for a patio space for her restaurant.

Commissioner Wamback asked if the applicant pulled a permit for the work. She stated that she did. After the permit was pulled and the front door had already been removed, she was notified that she would need her work to be reviewed by the Historical Commission. After she found out, she met with Ms. Johnstone to get an application put together. She also stated that the original door was unsafe and couldn't be locked. She stated that she would be willing to do anything the Commission wanted in order to preserve the building.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he wanted to be sure he knew what he was voting on, noting that the photograph in the MACRIS form showed that the windows on the façade were significantly smaller than the existing windows. He also stated that he doesn't object to the existing windows, stating that they appear more appropriate than the smaller windows seen in the MACRIS form.

Ms. Johnstone stated that the applicant has not yet done any work to the windows on the façade, and that she is asking for permission to replace them. Mr. Rolle agreed, and stated that the applicant has not done anything to the front windows.

Ms. Travaglio agreed that no changes to the front windows have been made. Work that has been completed thus far is limited to the removal of the front door and opening up the windows on the side of the building. Mr. Rolle noted that the side elevation of the building has been highly altered. Commissioner Bloom agreed that the front façade of the building is the most important piece.

Ms. Travaglio asked what the Commission would like her to do about the columns on the front of the building, and whether she needed to keep them. She asked if she could revamp them or paint them. Ms. Johnstone stated that since she did not include that proposed work on the application, she would need to reapply if she wished to do anything to the columns. Mr. Rolle stated that painting or routine maintenance, however, could be done without review of the Historical Commission.

Ms. Travaglio also stated that the awning on the side of the building has been partially removed because it was in poor condition. She wants to install an awning in its place. Mr. Rolle asked if she was referring to the drive-through section. She answered that that was what she was referring to.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition, including the addition of the removal of the drive-through awning, is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City.

List of Exhibits:

8. 114 Austin Street – HC-2020-026 (MBL 03-024-00002)

Petitioner: Prince Mageza

Year Built: 1863

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; Local Historic District (LHD); State Register of Historic Places (SR); National Register of Historic Places District (NRDIS); National Register of Historic Places Multiple Resource Area (MRS, FKA Warren Alexander House

Petition Purpose:

- Demolish carriage house
- Move the existing east front door to the center of the façade (retroactive)
- Add one door to the east elevation (retroactive)
- Remove one door from the east elevation and convert it into a window (retroactive)

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: April 25, 2020

Mr. Rolle stated that 114 Austin Street is currently in receivership and he applicant no longer has standing for the property. He stated that it is the understanding of staff that the final receiver of the building will file an application once a scope of work is determined. He asked for a motion for a leave to withdraw for the application.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to issue a Leave to Withdraw.

COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Letter from the MHC regarding the issuance of comments from the MHC for the pending Worcester Boy's Club National Register Nomination
- b. Letter from the MHC to the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board regarding their support for a variance for the YWCA of Worcester property at One Salem Square
- c. Letter from the MHC regarding the issuance of comments from the MHC for the pending Worcester County YWCA Building National Register Nomination
- d. MHC comments on Worcester Historical Commission CLG opinions
- e. Section 106 Notification of Applicant/Consultant Recording at 44 Hammond Street – No Adverse Effect.
- f. Request from Epsilon Associates for updated Letter of Support for Walker Shoe Factory, 28 Water Street

Ms. Johnstone stated that several letters of support have been issued by the Commission regarding this project.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to issue an updated letter of support to Epsilon Associates for the Walker Shoe Factory.

- g. Communication from Bedford Historical Society re: Worcester historical postcards
- h. Request from Epsilon Associates for new Letter of Support for Commerce Building, 340 Main Street

Ms. Johnstone stated that this project will include the addition of market-rate apartment units on the upper stories of the building, and commercial space on the first floor.

Commissioner Long stated that she works in the building and she didn't realize that apartments would be added to the building. She wasn't sure if she should vote. Mr. Rolle stated that typically the first time the City hears about these types of projects is during the period when tax credits are applied for. Commissioner Long asked for clarification whether the vote was solely to support the application for tax credits. Mr. Rolle affirmed that that was the case. He also stated that Commissioner Long was welcome to recuse herself if she chose to.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to issue a new letter of support to Epsilon Associated for the Commerce Building.

- i. Request from Trinity Financial for a Letter of Support for funding from the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund for preservation work at the Worcester County Courthouse (added during the meeting).

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to issue a letter of support for Trinity Financial for funding from the Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund for the Worcester County Courthouse.

OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Discussion of Building Demolition Delay Procedures

This item was held.

- b. Information for Worcester Preservation Awards

Ms. Johnstone stated that Preservation Awards were to be held at the end of March, but given the present circumstances, they have been postponed indefinitely, with a new date to be announced at a later date, probably several months out.

- c. Information for Green Worcester Open House

Mr. Rolle stated that this item is an informational flyer for an event that has already occurred.

- d. Approval of filing deadlines and meeting dates for 2021

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the Historical Commission filing deadline and meeting date schedule for 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman the Commission voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 p.m.