

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

March 27, 2008

**CHASE BUILDING, 44 FRONT STREET, WORCESTER
SUITE 300 – CONFERENCE ROOM**

Commission Members Present: Peter Schneider, Chair
Thomas Constantine, Vice-Chair
Michael Theerman
Janet Merrill

Staff Present: Ruth Gentile, Planning and Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schneider called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes from the March 13, 2008 meeting were accepted.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. 10 Sycamore Street (HC-08-16) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Timothy Bourget, owner of the property, stated he is seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver to install vinyl siding because he has been ordered by the Division of Code Enforcement to delead the property. The current clapboard siding has lead in the paint. He stated that the slate roof will remain. He said that the barn needs to be stripped and he wants to install vinyl siding on it as well. He indicated that he has looked into the city's Lead Paint Abatement Program and is pursuing private financing. He said that his first choice is to strip and repaint the building but it may be too costly, therefore, he is considering the vinyl siding option. He informed the Commission that he is a contractor and can do the work himself. Upon reviewing the petition submitted to install vinyl siding on the house and barn and wrapping the windows with metal trim for the purpose of deleading and all evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Merrill, the Commission voted 1-3 (Commissioner Constantine voted yes, Commissioners Merrill, Theerman and Schneider voted no) that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. The motion failed. Therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was denied. Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Merrill, the Commission voted 1-3 (Commissioner Constantine voted yes, Commissioners Merrill, Theerman and Schneider voted no) that the applicant had demonstrated

undue economic hardship. The motion failed and it was denied. Chair Schneider advised Mr. Bourget that he could reapply at any time to install the vinyl siding or show undue economic hardship. He advised him that he could wait one year and install the vinyl siding without any further input from the Commission. He indicated that the Commission would send a letter of support to NeighborWorks on his behalf if he so requested.

- 2. 6 Hitchcock Road (HC-08-17) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Jose Vasquez, owner of the property, is seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver due to undue economic hardship to install vinyl siding and rather than repairing the existing shingles was considered. Mr. Vasquez was not present for the hearing. Chair Schneider indicated that the feature that makes this house historic is the shingles but acknowledged that the rest of the homes in the neighborhood had vinyl siding. Upon reviewing the petition submitted to install insulation and vinyl siding and all evidence provided related to the undue economic hardship, and upon a motion by Commissioner Constantine and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 1-3 (Commissioner Constantine voted yes; Chair Schneider Commissioner Merrill and Commissioner Theerman voted no) that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. The motion failed. Therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was denied. Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 2-2 (Commissioners Constantine and Schneider voted yes, Commissioners Merrill and Theerman voted no) that the applicant had demonstrated undue economic hardship. The motion failed and it was denied.
- 3. 11 Ives Street (HC-2008-018) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Zoila Gonzalez, owner of the property, stated he is seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver to (1) remove and replace siding on left side of building; and (2) remove and replace 12 windows with windows of similar type and style. Mr. Gonzalez stated that the house was fire damaged and that he was only replacing the fire damaged items. Chair Schneider requested that he amend his application to say right side of building instead of the left side. Upon reviewing the amended petition submitted to: (1) remove and replace siding on right side of building; and (2) remove and replace 12 windows with windows of similar type and style and all evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Constantine and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.
- 4. 81 Providence Street (HC-08-19) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** William Toomey, representative for Worcester Academy, owner of the property, stated they are seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver to (1) clean exterior of the brick and masonry timber building; (2) replace windows with windows in keeping with the historic nature of the building; and (3) replace roof with new or salvaged slate. Mr.

Toomey stated that the existing windows are vinyl and the new windows will be of a more historic nature. The brick will be repointed and the slate in the roof will be reused. Upon reviewing the petition submitted to: (1) clean exterior of the brick masonry and timber building; (2) replace windows with windows in keeping with the historic nature of the building; and (3) replace roof with new or salvaged slate and all evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

5. **15 Circuit Avenue East (HC-08-20) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** James Mason, owner of the property, stated he is seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver to remove rotted porch stairs and rebuild and repair porches on both stories to make them structurally safe. Chair Schneider stated that the porches could be barely seen from the street and that they are not original materials. Elizabeth McGinnis and Roger Hopkins, abutters, both stated that they are in favor of the project. Upon reviewing the petition submitted to remove rotted porch stairs and rebuild and repair porches on both stories to make them structurally safe and all evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Merrill and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.
6. **131 Providence Street (HC-08-21) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Richard Prunier, representative for Mary Toney, owner of the property, stated he is seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver to remove and replace all roof shingles with asphalt shingles. He stated that the shingles on the house are asphalt and he wants to replace them with architectural shingles. Upon reviewing the petition submitted to: remove and replace all roof shingles with asphalt shingles and all evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

Local Historic District Study Committee – Proposed Expansion Montvale Local Historic District: Chair Schneider announced that there is a walking tour of the Montvale Local Historic District on Monday, March 31, 2008 from 12:00 to 1:00 PM.

OTHER BUSINESS

Local Historic District – Proposed Expansion Massachusetts Avenue Local Historic District: The City Council order that referred the proposed expansion request to the Historical Commission was presented to the Commission. Chair Schneider stated that the referral was before the Commission for consideration of the proposal that the Massachusetts Avenue Local Historic District be expanded and what the method would be for the expansion. He indicated that the following steps needed

to be taken: (1) a study; (2) an inventory of properties involved; (3) funding source; and (4) hiring a consultant. Commissioner Theerman stated that the petitioners live in the neighborhood and are part of the Greater Hammond Heights Neighborhood Association. Commissioner Constantine said he believes that more members are needed on the Commission before an expansion should be considered. Commissioner Merrill was concerned that the Crown Hill residents were told that there was no money for a study when they wanted to establish the Crown Hill neighborhood as a Local Historic District and now Massachusetts Avenue is going to be considered. Chair Schneider said that it was the Commission's job to decide what they were going to do. He also stated that the petitioners should be invited to the next meeting to get information regarding her petition and how many residents are in favor of the expansion. Commissioner Theerman stated that if a great percentage of the neighborhood is in favor of the expansion, then the Commission should look at it closely. Commissioner Schneider was concerned that the houses are from varied time periods than the current Massachusetts Avenue Local Historic District. He recapped that the first thing that needs to be done is to have the petitioner come to the next meeting and then see if there is money available for a study.

Chair Schneider adjourned the meeting at 6:45 P.M.