

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

JANUARY 7, 2016

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Andrew Shveda, Vice-chair
Timothy McCann, Clerk
Robyn Conroy
Devon Kurtz
Karl Bjork, Alternate
Cheryll Holley, Alternate

Commission Members Absent: Randolph Bloom

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

Approval of the Minutes:

None available.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Election of Officers -

Item held until the January 28, 2016 Historical Commission meeting.

2. 113-115 Elm Street (HC-2015-093)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Petitioner: Hampton Properties

Present Use: Multi Unit Apartments

Year Built: 1922

Historic Status: MACRIS-listed

Petition Purpose:

- Modify existing front entrance overhangs by adding pitched roof with front gable
- Replace hollow aluminum decorative supports with solid column

Russ Haims appeared on behalf of the petition. He stated that there are existing overhangs to both buildings and after doing other improvements to the building he wants to additionally create a real roof structure.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that this entrance was not part of the original structure.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if the stucco would be disturbed in any way. Mr. Haims stated that it will not and stated that it will be a low pitch roof to keep accumulation and ice off.

Commissioner Conroy stated that this is a definite improvement.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he does not see any historical material that is going to be demolished and agrees with Commissioner Conroy that this an improvement.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received December 14, 2015 and dated December 11, 2015.

3. 38 Fruit Street (HC-2015-092)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Hampton Properties
Present Use: Multi Unit Apartments
Year Built: 1885
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed. NRD (National Register District), NRMRA (National Register Multiple Resource Area) fka the Frances M. Lincoln House.

Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace roof
- Remove and replace windows

Russ Haims from Hampton Properties LLC appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Haims stated that the windows need to be replaced due to the lack of structural integrity and the lack of ability to close them and present photos of the current window conditions.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked how many windows in total were being replaced. Mr. Haims stated that he thinks about 40 windows and he wants to update to a color window which is about \$125 more than a typical replacement window.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if it would be vinyl. Mr. Haims stated that it would be vinyl.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked what was plan for the building. Mr. Haims stated that the plan is for apartments but he will be maintaining the look of the property.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked about the entry doors. Mr. Haims stated they are in great shape and have good integrity.

Secretary McCann asked about the small turret windows. Mr. Haims stated that they will remain as they don't need to open.

Vice-Chair Sveda stated that its obvious the roof is not original and from the photos presented it is in bad shape but there should be more discussion about the loss of the windows.

Secretary McCann stated that any time you are losing original material it important to discuss but recognizes that Mr. Haims is taking great pains to maintain the rest of the property and to find a suitable replacement in the form of a vinyl window. He stated that in this case the Commission does understand that the property will be a rental property so he does not have not an issue with the replacement windows and is happy the turret windows will remain.

Commissioner Conroy stated that she is worried about being consistent as in the past they have asked for cost estimates for wood replacement versus vinyl.

Mr. Haims stated that reworking the windows is not financial hardship which he knows the Commission looks at but he is looking at the fact it would be a long term hardship on the maintenance and upkeep for the property and this is his biggest concern.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he does not have issue with the window replacement as acceptable in this case as applicant is maintaining other key areas of the home.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 5-1 (Commissioner Conroy voting against) that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received December 10, 2015 and dated December 8, 2015.

4. 4 Montrose Street (HC-2015-091)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Paul Cox
Present Use: Three family residence
Year Built: 1916
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed. NRD (National Register District), NRMRA
(National Register Multiple Resource Area) fka the Sullivan Three
Decker
Petition Purpose: Remove slate roof and replace with architectural shingles

James Cox appeared on behalf of his brother for the application.

Mr. Cox stated that he is replacing the roof with 30 year architectural shingles.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if the slate was original. Mr. Cox stated that he did not know.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that the roof is over 100 years old.

Mr. Cox stated that the roof is in rough shape and he had contractors look at it and was told it cannot be repaired.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if this was an income property and was there a problem with water infiltration.

Mr. Cox stated that it was and water damage is occurring inside.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that from the public road you can barely see the roof.

Commissioner Conroy stated that you can't see much of the roof from the street.

Secretary McCann stated that due to the fact that roof is not visible from the street he does not have problem with this petition.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received December 10, 2015 and dated December 4, 2015.

5. 1 Kelley Square (aka 156 Green Street & 240 Harding Street) (HC – 2015-090)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Baystate Investment Fund, LLC
Present Use: Mixed use building
Year Built: 1916
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed (fka) The Vernon Theatre Block
Petition Purpose: Remove arch windows and create new openings for larger windows

Ed Murphy and Greg O'Connor appeared on behalf of the petition.

Mr. Murphy stated that he would like to construct ten residential units in the former theater space and to be able to do that the thirteen two-story arched windows need to be modified. He stated that he cannot see out of any of the windows in the second floor windows without standing on a ladder and therefore the sills for those windows need to be lowered by up to three feet to make them more viable for apartment use and that means they have to remove some of the building's exterior brick masonry.

Mr. O'Connor stated that to make this project viable for apartments they have to get the sills lowered for the windows. He stated that in addition there are three arched window bays on the Water Street side of the building where the movie screen was located that were filled with bricks and they would like to remove all the those bricks so they can be reopened. The other ten windows were also partially filled with bricks over the years and those bricks will be removed as well. He stated that the arched windows bays are a key historical feature of the building and would remain intact and the only difference is that the sills would be lowered and the existing brick would be removed.

Mr. O'Connor stated that an alternative to lowering the window sills would be to raise the height of the building's second floor but that could conceivably create height issues and make it unfeasible to have two floors for apartments and therefore they would need to reduce the number of apartments from ten to five. But that would make the project financially unfeasible as the income that would be generated from five apartments would not justify the project.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that while the exterior masonry would have to be removed to lower the window sills he did not feel it would be damaging to the architectural character of the building and also no new openings would be created to the building exterior.

Secretary McCann stated that he had no objection to the removal of brick infill from the arched window bays because it not original material to the building and that it only a limited amount of demolition of original materials and not a real radical change to the building and believes the architect has made an elegant attempt to find a very simple way

to creating multiple floor that can be used for apartments while also maintaining the existing façade.

Commissioner Kurtz stated that this will be positive reuse of the building.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked about the windows on the west side and stated that the double hung windows look like they are original.

Mr. O'Connor stated those potentially have two remaining original windows but they don't quite work with their proposal so they would need to modify the dimensions of those openings.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that the Commission should look at the removing of the masonry and the lowering of the sills.

Mr. O'Connor stated that if they can reuse the material from the sills they will.

Susan Ceccacci from Preservation Worcester expressed concern about the demolition occurring inside the building as this is a historic theater.

Vice-Chair Shveda explained that the Commission only has purview over the outside of the building.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition of the existing masonry within thirteen window bays, including the removal of three feet of existing masonry, but not including existing sills as well as the infill of masonry within two existing openings on the east facade of the property at 1 Kelley Square would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received December 9, 2015 and dated December 9, 2015.

7:25 – 7:30 p.m. – five minute recess

6. 230 Pleasant Street (HC-2015-094)

Petition:	Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness
Petitioner:	United Cornerstone LLC
Present Use:	Multi family residence
Year Built:	1865

Historic Status: MACRIS-listed (fka) the James S. Southgate - Orlando Mixter House and part of the Crown Hill Local Historic District.

Petition Purpose:

- Retroactive approval to remove front porch balusters and front rails (BDDW)
- Retroactive approval to install new front porch balusters and front rails (COA)
- Retroactive approval for appropriateness of roof replacement (COA)

Tai Chen and Klei Chen appeared on behalf of the item.

Mr. Chen stated that he had removed the material and replaced due to safety issues.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that does not see issue with the removal of the materials as it was not original but the Commission needs to discuss what was used for replacement.

Mr. Chen stated that it was PVC and wood.

Commissioner Conroy asked if the applicant had thought about painting the railing white. Mr. Chen stated yes.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated this is a bit problematic for the Commission. The roof is not a problem but the other work is.

Secretary McCann stated that he appreciates the fact that applicant is trying to improve the property but when the Commission looks at a retroactive petition they look at whether the Commission would have thought that this work was appropriate for the district and he would not have approved it.

The Commission asked Mr. Chen if he be willing to research and come back with a different proposal that may be more appropriate for the district.

Mr. Chen stated that he would be and requested a continuance on the portion of the petition for the retroactive approval to install new front porch balusters and front rail.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission voted 6-0 to continue the portion of the petition relative to the retroactive approval to install new front porch balusters and front rail to the January 28, 2016 Historical Commission meeting and to extend the constructive grant deadline until March 1, 2016.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission voted 6-0 that the removal and replacement of the roof is appropriate for the district and approved the petition.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 6-0 that the retroactive approval to change front porch balusters and front rail and installation of new rails next to the porch are not detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver and Certificate of Appropriateness received December 15, 2015 and dated December 12, 2015.

7. 190 Salisbury Street (HC-2015-089)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness

Petitioner: American Antiquarian Society

Present Use: Museum

Year Built: 1905

Historic Status: MACRIS-listed, NRI (National Register Individual Property), NRMRA (National Register Multiple Resource Area) and part of the Montvale Historic District.

Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace shingles on main roof
- Repair low circular entry overhang
- Remove existing trim as needed sagging framing membranes and fabricate new or re-install existing trim details to preserve existing appearance
- Frame new low pitch roof

Andrew Carglia, Walter Barnard, David Lewis, Susan Forgit.

Mr. Carglia stated that the overhang has poor drainage and it is pitched improperly so water drips down to marble stairs below causing a hazard and they propose to pull the overhang apart and rebuild it and add a second drain.

Secretary McCann asked what material would be used.

Mr. Carglia stated copper.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if any other work on main roof needs to be done. Mr. Carglia stated no.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he saw no problem with the petition.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Conroy the Commission voted 6-0 that the

- Remove and replace shingles on main roof
- Repair low circular entry overhang

- Remove existing trim as needed sagging framing membranes and fabricate new or re-install existing trim details to preserve existing appearance
- Frame new low pitch roof

is appropriate for the district and approved the petition.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver and Certificate of Appropriateness received December 9, 2015 and dated December 3, 2015.

OTHER BUSINESS

8. Presentation from American Antiquation Society re: proposed addition

Ellen Dunlap, Matthew Shakespeare, Andrew Carglia, Susan Forgit and Babette Gehrlich appeared on behalf of the item. Ms. Dunlap stated that is just an informal discussion on some work they are planning to do. She stated that they are running out of space and will need to expand and will need to add another stack building and they know its not anytime soon that they work will be done but they anticipate the building would go where the staff parking lot is now. She stated that they also need a Conservation Lab and in order to accomplish this work they have engaged a consultant to review their location and have been working on a master plan.

Ms. Dunlap stated that this is a very dynamic time of continued growth at the society, leading it to take a big view of what its needs are going forward. She stated that there is a footprint for its mechanical room and they need more space to run the programs it offers.

Ms. Dunlap stated that at this time they do not have any plans to present to the Commission but they are looking at using the copper from the dome as being the major building material for the infill.

Commissioner Kurtz stated that you can do something extraordinary with the building by combining the old and the new especially with the dome on top and the potential use of copper and stated that he would not like to see the brick.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that its a balancing act not to use too much copper and its hard to say what the Commission would like to see without seeing an actual plan.

Commissioner Conroy stated that she likes the old school look but would be open to entertaining other possibilities.

9. Communications

- a. Electronic communication from MacRostie Historic Advisors re: Request for Letter of Support for 18 Chestnut Street received December 15, 2015.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission voted 6-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- b. Communication from Massachusetts Historical Commission re: 104 Harding Street, received December 18, 2015.

No comment.

- c. Communication from Preservation Worcester re: 21 Catherine Street, dated December 8, 2015 and received December 8, 2015.

Mr. Rolle informed the Commission that staff had sent a letter of property owner telling them that they needed to apply to the Historical Commission.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he had viewed the property and the columns are still located on the site.

- d. Communication from EBI Consulting re: 620 West Boylston Street, dated December 9, 2015 and received December 10, 2015.

No comment.

- e. Communication from vhb Group re: Request for Letter of Support for 82 Franklin Street received electronically December 10, 2015.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Bjork the Commission voted 6-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- f. Communication from MacRostie Historic Advisors re: Request for Letter of Support for 18 Grafton Street received electronically December 10, 2015.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Secretary McCann the Commission voted 6-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- g. Communication from MacRostie Historic Advisors re: Request for Letter of Support Lincoln Square Worcester Boys Club received electronically December 10, 2015.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz the Commission voted 6-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- h. Communication from the Massachusetts Historical Commission re: Aurora Apartments, 660 Main Street, dated December 21, 2015 and received December 28, 2015.

Filed.

- i. Communication from vhb re: Main and Franklin Street area, dated December 23, 2015 and received December 28, 2015.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz the Commission voted 6-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

Mr. Rolle stated that the City will be reviewing an initial opinion of eligibility for this request.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion the Commission adjourned the meeting at 8:47 p.m.