

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER
October 6, 2011**

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Thomas Constantine, Chair
Timothy McCann, Vice-Chair
Janet Merrill
Kevin Provencher

Staff Present: Edgar Luna, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER:

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

MINUTES:

The Commission accepted the meeting minutes from February 24, 2011, March 10, 2011, April 14, 2011, April 28, 2011, May 12, 2011, and September 22, 2011.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- 1. 4 Crown Street (HC-2011-059) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Jacqueline Vachon-Jackson, Chief of Staff, Executive Office of Economic Development, representative for Nettie Dejarnette, petitioner, presented the petition. Ms. Vachon-Jackson stated that Ms. Dejarnette was seeking Building Demolition Delay approval to make the following changes: (a) Remove and replace 4 windows on the façade with 4 double-hung 6 by 6 grid pattern to match, (b) remove and replace 15 windows on sides and rear of the building with vinyl double-hung windows, (c) remove and replace roof with synthetic shingles, and (d), repair and re-point 2 existing chimneys. She indicated that the hearing for this petition was continued from the September 22, 2011 meeting to allow staff from the Office of Economic Development sufficient time to provide the Commission with additional information regarding the proposed removal and replacement of the slate roof. Ms. Vachon-Jackson further stated that after a careful review of the proposed project and comments received from Commission members, the scope of work was reduced to include the following: (a) remove the damaged slate shingles located on the north side of the building (Congress Alley/Pleasant St.), and replace them with slate tiles, (b) remove the damaged fascia board and soffit on the north side (Congress Alley/Pleasant St.) and replace them with same materials, (c) remove the existing metal roofing from the north side dormer roof and replace it with rubber, (d)

Chair Constantine stated that the revised project was a good compromise, and expressed support for the decision to repair and retain the slate roof, and install solid wood windows on the front façade. Commissioner Provencher asked Ms. Vachon-Jackson to identify which windows would be replaced with solid-wood windows and indicated that she was referring to the four (4) windows located in the front façade. She also stated that the proposed windows would be double-hung, six over six. Upon a motion by Commissioner Provencher and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 3-1 (Commissioner Merrill voted no) that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester, therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

Exhibit A: Application submitted by Nettie Dejarnette, dated September 2, 2011 and received September 2, 2011.

Exhibit B: Letter from Deborah Packard, Executive Director, Preservation Worcester, dated October 6, 2011 and received October 6, 2011.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 2. 50 Franklin Street (HC-2011-067) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Nicholas Lewis and Daniel Gavoni, representatives for Worcester Commons LLC, owner and petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Lewis indicated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver to make the following change: remove the center mullion between the basement level windows and replace them with 3-pane windows, similar to the original unit found on the first floor of the east façade of the building. Mr. Lewis stated that the objective of the petition was to allow natural light into the basement, which the petitioner plans to utilize for a restaurant and entertainment establishment. Commissioner Provencher requested clarification regarding whether or not there were operable windows located on either side or the mullions. Mr. Lewis confirmed that there were windows located on either side of mullions; however, he indicated the windows had been sealed off. Commissioner Provencher expressed concern that the removal of the mullions would create a larger opening which, in turn, could affect the supports of the first floor; therefore, he asked Mr. Lewis if the proposed plan included adding structural supports to the areas affected. Mr. Lewis stated that the mullions were decorative elements which did not add structural support to the first floor. Nevertheless, he stated

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Worcester Commons LLC dated September 7, 2011 and received September 9, 2011.

Exhibit B: “Reactivating Portland Street” booklet received October 6, 2011.

3. **120 Elm Street (HC-2011-068) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Elizabeth Stefos, owner and petitioner, presented the petition. Ms. Stefos stated that she was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove the siding and windows wrapping located on the porches, (b) replace railings, columns and decking on the porches, and (c) install new footings and posts for the first floor porch. She also indicated that the proposed changes were necessary to address leakage problems created by decay and disrepair. In addition, she informed the Commission that the current porch was not original to the structure, and indicated that the proposed design was more appropriate to the period of the house, and would blend more harmoniously with the surrounding residential buildings. Chair Constantine stated that, in his opinion, the enclosed porch was not original to the structure, and indicated that the proposed open porch was more architecturally and historically appropriate to the building. Upon a motion by Commissioner McCann and seconded by Commissioner Provencher, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Elizabeth Stefos dated September 12, 2011 and received September 14, 2011.

4. **54 Hitchcock Road (HC-2011-069) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** John McGrath, representative for Louis and Joyce Latino, petitioners, presented the petition. Mr. McGrath stated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove the existing roof shingles and replace them with 30-year architectural shingles, (b) wrap the fascia and soffit with metal, and (c) install metal gutters. Commissioner Provencher requested clarification as to whether or not the proposed project included removing the original fascia and soffit, and Mr. McGrath stated that the original fascia and soffit would be preserved and retained, except in areas where the wood was rotten due to safety reasons. Commissioner Provencher stated that it was best to retain original materials whenever possible. Upon a motion by Commissioner Provencher and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester, therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Louis and Joyce Latino dated September 16, 2011, and received September 16, 2011.

5. **24 Tirrell Street (HC-2011-069) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Nathan Hill, representative for the petitioner and Beth Mae Lafrenier, owner and petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Hill stated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove the rear half of the existing roof shingles and replace them with 3-tab, 25-year roof shingles and new plywood, and (b), remove forty-six (46) original wooden windows and replace them with vinyl windows to match the original design and profile. Mr. Hill indicated that while inspecting the roof, he discovered that the current roof has three (3) layers of old and decaying roofing material which is causing internal leakage and damaging the walls. In addition, he indicated that the windows were defective due to age and inclement weather. Chair Constantine stated that the removal and replacement of the roof seemed to be warranted; however, he indicated that the proposed removal of windows did not appear to be necessary. Commissioner Merrill asked Mr. Hill if the applicant had considered restoring the windows prior to making the decision to replace them. Ms. Lafrenier indicated that replacing the windows was less costly than restoring them. Mr. Hill stated that he had only researched the cost of new vinyl and wooden windows, and indicated that the cost for vinyl windows replacements was \$375.00 per window, and the cost for wooden replacement windows was \$860.00. Commissioner Provencher stated that the estimates provided did not appear to be consistent with current market costs. Commissioner McCann asked Ms. Lafrenier if she had considered restoring the windows and she responded that window restoration would be more expensive than window replacement. Commissioner Merrill stated that window restoration was less costly and more effective

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Beth Mae Lafrenier dated September 16, 2011 and received September 16, 2011.

Exhibit B: Constructive Grant Approval Form dated October 6, 2011 and received October 6, 2011.

Exhibit C: Two (2) color photographs of the house sent via E-mail on October 14, 2011 and received on October 14, 2011.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- 6. Certified Local Government Report:** Mr. Luna informed the Commission that staff was currently completing the report and indicated that it will be sent to them once it has been completed.

- 7. Commission Member Status:** Chair Constantine informed the Commission that Commissioner Lamont Slater has never attended any of the Worcester Historical Commission meetings since his appointment to the Historical Commission by the City Manager on June 24, 2011. He also indicated that Planning Division staff has made several attempts to reach him to address his lack of participation; unfortunately, staff has not received any responses. Therefore, he indicated that, at his request, a letter had been written requesting the City Manager to remove him from the Commission. Upon a motion By Commissioner McCann and seconded by Commissioner Merrill, the Commission vote 4-0 to send a letter to the City Manager and request that Commissioner Lamont Slater be removed from the Worcester Historical Commission.

**Exhibit A: Letter from the Worcester Historical Commission to Michael O'Brien,
Worcester City Manager dated October 6, 2011.**

MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.