

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER
February 21, 2013**

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Timothy McCann, Chair
Kevin Provencher, Vice-Chair
Tom Constantine
James Crowley
Andrew Shveda

Commission Members Absent: Erika Dunn
Meagen Mulherin

Staff Members Present: Marlyn Feliciano, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Deborah Steele, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes for February 7, 2013 were held.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 1200 Main Street (HC-2013-004):

Bob Brackett along with the petitioner, Tam Nugyen, appeared on behalf of the application for a Building Demolition Delay Waiver (BDDW).

Mr. Brackett stated that they were before the Commission for an addition to the property and wanted to know if the Commission had any concerns.

Chair McCann stated that if the petitioner was not removing anything historically significant that the Commission does not have much authority and what is being presented is an addition to the property.

Mr. Brackett presented plans of the work proposed and pictures of the existing building were distributed to commission members.

Chair McCann asked if this was a one story addition and Mr. Brackett stated it will be two stories.

Commissioner Crowley asked how the addition would tie into the roof line and Mr. Brackett responded that it will be a tapered system.

Mr. Nguyen stated that the addition would be a circular bumpout below the windows with a vinyl siding finish. Commissioner Crowley asked if the roofline would line up with the first floor edges and Mr. Nguyen stated that was correct.

Commissioner Schveda asked whether the roof on the semi circle bay was going to be encased or if the applicant was planning to frame over it and Mr. Brackett stated they would frame over it. Commissioner Shveda stated that they may have problems with snow as proposed.

Commissioner Provencher asked about the two small L's that have two low slopes and asked if they were part of the original construction as they looked like additions. Mr. Nguyen stated they were there when he purchased the property.

Commissioner Provencher stated he assumed it could have been an enclosed porch but it is hard to say and asked if the MACRIS Form B had the details for the property. Mr. Brackett stated that there looks like there have been a lot of alterations.

Commissioner Provencher stated he didn't see anything on the side of the building being presented that had significant historical value such as original materials or original windows so he did not see any major issues.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Constantine and seconded by Commissioner Provencher, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition was not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved

LIST OF EXHIBITS:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application; received June 27, 2012; prepared by 332 Main Street Associates.

Exhibit B: Photographs 1200 Main Street; dated November 14, 2012; received at February 21, 2013 Historical Commission meeting.

2. 39 Stoneland Road (HC-2013-005):

Mei Emery Le appeared on behalf of the applicant Viet Le. Ms. Le stated that the application is to replace an old roof.

Chairman McCann stated that the Building Demolition Delay Waiver request is to remove existing shingles and install new shingles on the roof and he asked if Ms. Lee had any pictures.

Ms. Le presented photographs of current condition of the roof.

Commissioner Provencer asked if the fascia portion of the roof would change. Ms. Lee stated there may be some deterioration that would be repaired, but otherwise she did not plan to replace the fascia and that the roof replacement is all the work proposed at this time.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Provencher and seconded by Commissioner Schveda the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition was not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the petition was approved.

LIST OF EXHIBITS:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application; received January 28, 2013; prepared by Viet Le.

Exhibit B: Photographs, received at February 21, 2013 Historical Commission meeting; prepared by Mei Emery Le.

3. 81 Providence Street (HC-2013-003):

Joseph Lee Smith, attorney with Bowditch & Dewey along with Peter Kleinder and Robert Silver from Schwartz/Silver Architects, Inc. appeared on behalf of the applicant, Worcester Academy.

Mr. Smith stated that they had met with the Historical Commission informally last month to discuss the project to received feedback and comments before submitting an application.

Mr. Smith stated that Worcester Academy is seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver from the Commission. Additionally, they are seeking two letters of support from the Commission.

Robert Silver provided a presentation of what Worcester Academy was trying to accomplish with this application request. They are proposing to make the building handicapped accessible, make life safety improvements, to improve the sustainability of the building, and to meet programmatic needs for Worcester Academy.

Mr. Silver stated that the project impacts the adjoining buildings, the Megaron and Adams Hall.

Mr. Silver stated that one of the first issues with regard to accessibility at Megaron is the entrance that faces the street. There is a change of grade and a ramp at this location would be more than 90 feet long so they are not proposing to locate an accessible ramp at this location and the historical façade will remain in its current state.

Mr. Silver showed a historic photo of the location and stated that most of the windows have been replaced. The windows are also in poor condition so they would like to replace the windows using aluminum window that replicates the historic profile. The architectural structure of the windows will be restored to the way they were originally were.

Commissioner Constantine asked how many of the windows are original. Mr. Silver stated that about half the windows are original. Further, it is not clear if the wood windows were original.

Commissioner Crowley asked if they were going to be aluminum clad and Mr. Silver responded that they would be aluminum clad wood windows.

Commissioner Crowley asked what would be the construction of the muntins. Mr. Silver responded that they would propose a simulated divided light.

Commissioner Provencher asked about the basement windows behind the ramp. Mr. Silver stated the ramp will cover the windows but they will not be removed. Mr. Silver stated that since Megaron and Walker are on the same floor elevation they are proposing to use single ramp for the two buildings. Mr. Kleinder stated that they are also proposing to demolish the dormer and replace with skylights and partially demolish some of the roof for the construction of an elevator.

Commissioner Provencher asked if the original stairs would be demolished and Mr. Silver stated they will be moved forward.

Mr. Silver stated one of the biggest issues is they need to install an elevator and showed on the photograph where it will be located. The elevator will service Walker Hall and the Megaron building. Mr. Silver stated that the elevator has an override and will be visible on the building. The plan is to locate the top of the elevator in a new dormer which would be barely visible from the street and located to the right of the one to be removed. The dormer would be made of slate and would contain the elevator override. Mr. Silver stated the elevator must be set back from the exterior wall of the building so the face of the dormer is set back from the facade.

Commissioner Crowley asked if any consideration had been made to installing false windows and Mr. Silver stated they could consider that.

Commissioner Provencher stated he had some concerns about the removal of the stairs from the Megaron and Adams building but seems like they are replacing them in kind.

Commissioner Crowley stated he had no problem with most of the proposal but he was concerned about the removal of the dormer for the elevator and preferred that fake windows should be considered.

Commission Provencher stated that he believed the most significant part of the application is the elevator dormer and the change in the roofline and asked if there was an alternative location where the elevator could be located. Mr. Silver stated it was not possible to relocate the elevator because it also needs to serve the basement level of the Megaron.

Chair McCann stated that the Commission could vote on a portion of the application and they could continue the elevator dormer portion at the next meeting.

Mr. Silver asked that the Commission vote on the rest of the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application except for the dormer portion.

Susan Ceccaci from Preservation Worcester, suggested panels or blind windows be installed on the dormer and asked if the original windows could be maintained on the front section of the building. Mr. Kleinder responded that there is no way to consolidate the existing windows.

Jo Hart, Worcester resident, suggested an exterior glass elevator, at least one accessible entrance, and underground walking tunnels to keep the building original.

Steve Quist, Worcester resident, asked how the Commission met informally with the Commission. Commissioner Constantine clarified that the applicant met with the Commission in January which was posted on the meeting agenda, per the Opening Meeting Law requirements, but no public hearing was advertised because no application had been submitted. Mr. Quist also asked about the fire escape and the applicant responded that the fire escapes were not original to the building and will be removed from the building's exterior.

Mr. Smith stated there is a timing issue as they have filed with the state as there is state funding involved with regard to this renovation project and Worcester Academy needs to get moving with this project as construction is based on when students are not on campus and it looks like the Commission is looking to continue based on the dormer issue. Futhermore, Mr. Smith stated that this project is scheduled to go before the Planning Board next month and they would prefer the Commission vote on the other aspects of the application and continue the dormer portion.

Chair McCann stated the Commission could do that or they could vote the whole application.

Commissioner Constantine stated another option is they could agree to make changes to that dormer.

Commissioner Crowley stated that the applicant has also requested two letters of support, one letter of support to MAAB for Variance for Accessibility at the West Entrance and the second letter of support to MHC for the proposed interior and exterior changes to the Megaron building under the Preservation Restriction.

Commissioner Crowley asked whether they could come back in two weeks with definite renderings.

Mr. Lee asked from input from the Commission as to what they would be looking for relative to the elevator dormer.

The Commission further discussed the applicant's options. The Commission could vote on the application as presented or the Commission could vote on all items except for the request to demolish the dormer and continue that item to the next meeting.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or

architectural resources of the City except for the portion regarding the elevator dormer and that part of the petition be continued until the March 21, 2013 Historical Commission meeting. The constructive grant deadline was also extended March 28, 2013. The motion passed and the petition was approved.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Constantine and seconded by Commissioner Provencher the Commission voted 5-0 to accept the letters of support: 1. Letter of Support to MAAB for Variance for Accessibility at the West Entrance. 2. Request for Letter of Support to MHC for the proposed interior and exterior changes to the Megaron building under the Preservation Restriction and that the Chairman be allowed to sign the letters without returning to the full Commission.

LIST OF EXHIBITS:

- Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application; received January 24, 2013; prepared by Robert E. Longden, Esq, Bowditch & Dewey, LLP.
- Exhibit B: Form B – Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System; re: Worcester Academy, 81 Providence Street; accessed on February 1, 2013.
- Exhibit C: Specifications for windows; received at the February 21, 2013 Historical Commission meeting.
- Exhibit D: Appendix A from Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth; received January 24, 2013; prepared by Robert E. Longden, Esq. Bowditch & Dewey, LLP.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

Upon a motion by Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.