

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

**March 23, 2017**

**LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL**

**Commission Members Present:** Andrew Shveda  
Randolph Bloom  
Robyn Conroy  
Mark Wamback  
Cheryll Holley, Alternate  
Courtney Escobar, Alternate

**Commission Members Absent:** Devon Kurtz

**Staff Members Present:** Stephen R. Rolle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services  
Susan Arena, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

**Approval of Minutes**

February 16, 2017

*Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes of February 16, 2017.*

February 23, 2017

*Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Conroy the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of February 23, 2017.*

**Old Business**

**1. 21 Catherine Street – HC-2016-075**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: Advocates, Inc.  
Present Use: Rooming House  
Year Built: 1848  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, National Register Individual (NRIP), National Register (MRA), fka The Draper Ruggles House

Petition Purpose:

- Remove existing deteriorated front porch columns, including new concrete pier foundations.  
New columns to match existing

The petitioner was not present and the item was held until the end of the meeting.

The item was revisited following New Business, and no representative was present. The Commission noted that this item had been continued several times, either due to the petitioner requesting a postponement or failing to appear. Wanting to keep the lines of communication open regarding the work to the columns, the Commission agreed to continue the item once more to May 11. (Not enough original Commission members would be present at the April 13 meeting for a quorum). They agreed to submit final notice in writing.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 4-0 (Chair Shveda, Commissioners Bloom, Conroy and Holley voted) to postpone the item to the May 11, 2017 meeting and to extend the BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline to May 14, 2017.*

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## **2. 272 Highland Street - HC-2016-080**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: Melinda Pham  
Present Use: Single family residence  
Year Built: 1890  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, National Register Individual (NRIP), National Register (MRA), fka E.S. Pierce House

### **Petition Purpose:**

- Remove and replace windows
- Repair to siding
- Close first floor window on left north side home
- Eliminate the chimney right south side of home

Melinda Pham, owner, and John Le, contactor, appeared on behalf of the application.

At the January 5, 2017 meeting the applicant had agreed to retain the chimneys, and repairs to the siding were not under Commission purview. The remaining items were the window replacement, and closure of one window on the north side.

The applicant had received a quote by a window restoration company, Old House Works, for \$49,000 for window repair and \$18,000 for new storm windows. Anderson windows provided a quote for vinyl clad wood windows (60% wood / 30% vinyl) for a price of approximately \$40,000 installed. Work quoted is for about 65 double-hung windows; decorative stained-glass windows would be retained.

A discussion ensued regarding the merits of restoration versus replacement. Chair Shveda noted the high quote for storms was due to them being custom, and he suggested that standard triple-tracks could be purchased for a much lower price. Commissioner Bloom raised concerns about the lifespan of replacements, stating that he'd seen several cases of relatively new windows needing to be replaced. The petitioner stated their desire to improve energy efficiency, and that cost is a factor in how they proceed with work. Opting to restore the windows would result in deferring other items, such as landscaping.

The petitioner eventually agreed to restore the existing windows. Due to this change in proposal, a demolition delay waiver vote was not needed. Chair Shveda reminded the applicant that they are not

committed to this decision and if she changes her mind down the road, she can come back to the Commission. Mr. Rolle suggested that they have the applicant submit a Leave to Withdraw, to be voted on at the next meeting, and that the applicant does not need to be present.

The applicant requested a continuance to the next meeting.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Holley, the Commission voted 4-0 (Chair Shveda, Commissioners Bloom, Conroy, and Holley voted) to continue the item to the April 13, 2017 meeting and to extend the BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline to April 16, 2017.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated November 28, 2016, and received November 29, 2016.

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**3. 49 Temple Street (aka 90 Harding Street) - HC-2017-019**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: C&S Harding Street LLC  
Present Use: Warehouse  
Year Built: 1925  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka Saint John's Roman Catholic High School  
Petition Purpose:

- Full demolition

The applicant was not available and requested that the item be postponed to April 13.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Holley, the Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioner Holley voted) to postpone the item to the April 13, 2017 meeting and to extend the BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline to April 16, 2017.*

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**4. 570 Pleasant Street - HC-2017-001**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: Josue Rosa  
Present Use: Three Family Residence  
Year Built: 1912  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, National Register Individual (NRIP), National Register (MRA), fka Helen Three Decker  
Petition Purpose:

- Full demolition

The petition for a demolition delay waiver had been denied at the February 16, 2017 meeting. The Commission voted to continue the item to allow the applicant the opportunity to explore the avenue of economic hardship. The applicant decided to instead wait the delay period, and not pursue an economic hardship finding, and notified staff of this in writing. Chair Shveda stated his hope that during the delay period, Mr. Rosa recognizes the value of this building, and recommends that staff follow up with him to find a better, feasible solution.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Wamback, the Commission voted 0-5 (Commissioner Holley voted) that the restoration of 570 Pleasant Street would pose an undue economic hardship on the owner.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated December 12, 2016 and received December 16, 2016.

Exhibit B: Email from Mr. Rosa, dated February 24, 2017, stating he will not be pursuing a hardship determination.

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## **New Business**

### **5. 105 Woodland Street - HC-2017-018**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: Mark and Jody Tozer  
Present Use: Two Family Residence  
Year Built: c1870  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, National Register District (NRD), National Register MRA, fka Charles Kirby House

Petition Purpose:

- Install roof-mounted solar panels

Mark Tozer, owner, and Joe Pullen, contractor, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Pullen explained the location of the proposed 31 solar panels. In response to questions by Chair Shveda, he stated that no historic material would be removed during the installation process and that it is 100% reversible.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioner Holley voted) that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated January 18, 2017 and received February 7, 2017.

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### **6. 102-104 Merrick Street - HC-2017-020**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver  
Petitioner: Multi Family Realty LLC  
Present Use: Multi-Family Residence  
Year Built: 1895  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, fka William H. Burns House

Petition Purpose:

- Replace rear stairs and porches
- Replace dormer windows with door for egress

Jonathan Mailloux, owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Mailloux stated that when he purchased the property he was informed that the previous owner had been approved for the proposed work, which included removal and replacement of the rear porches and stairs. However, the approval is only valid for one year from the date of the vote and that period had expired. Mr. Mailloux stated that the stairs and porches had already been removed when he purchased the house, and he had begun rebuilding, but work was halted until Commission approval was received. He anticipated installing a rear deck that was not roofed, and to leave the existing two dormers, but upon further inspection he decided that the original application was more appropriate. This involves replacing the two dormers with a single shed dormer to accommodate a door, and to integrate a new porch roof into the rear elevation. The only change from the original application is that the second and third floor porches will remain open instead of being enclosed. He also wants to re-shingle the rear portion of roof to match the rest, which was previously done.

Chair Shveda noted that most of this work had previously been approved unanimously, and stated that no part of the current proposal would change his opinion. He also referenced comments from the previous minutes supporting the proposed work.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioner Escobar voted) that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated February 15, 2017 and received February 16, 2017.

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## **7. 2 Regent Street – HC-2017-022**

Petition:	Building Demolition Delay Waiver/ Certificate of Appropriateness
Petitioner:	Anne Higgins / Kimberly Merrick
Present Use:	Single Family Residence
Year Built:	1909
Historic Status:	MACRIS Listed, Massachusetts Ave LHD, fka Josephine Jones – Harry W. Goddard House

### Petition Purpose:

- Repave asphalt driveway with concrete
- Install two low, decorative retaining walls

Anne Higgins and Kimberly Merrick, owners, appeared on behalf of the application.

Ms. Higgins stated that the driveway needs replacing and that the options are asphalt or concrete. They would like concrete, and it would be in the same footprint. She went on to describe the placement and material of two proposed retaining walls. One would be in the rear of the house, around the basketball hoop, and the other would be on the front corner of the lawn and would extend approximately three feet in each direction. The lawn slopes to the sidewalk and the corner is open to foot traffic and difficult to maintain. Both walls would be fieldstone and would be approximately 2-3 feet high.

Discussion among Commissioners found no issues of concern. Ms. Higgins noted that the rear wall will not come into contact with the garage. Chair Shveda felt that the concrete is a nicer material, and that the fieldstone is a handsome choice.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Wamback, the Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioner Holley voted) that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.*

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Wamback, the Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioner Holley voted) that the changes proposed to 2 Regent Street are appropriate for the Massachusetts Avenue Local District and approved the Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated March 3, 2017 and received March 6, 2017.

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#### **8. 242 Salisbury Street – HC-2017-023**

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver/ Certificate of Appropriateness  
Petitioner: Xaverian Missionary Society of Mary, Inc.  
Present Use: Single Family Residence  
Year Built: c1900  
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, Montvale LHD  
Petition Purpose:

- Install a handicap ramp at side entrance

Sister Rebekah, resident, and Fran Messier, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Messier reviewed the dimensions of the existing ramp, which is currently at another location, and how select sections would be reassembled and installed at Salisbury Street. In response to questions from Chair Shveda, he stated that the ramp is aluminum and black in color.

Chair Shveda noted that handicap accessibility is a necessity and that concern takes priority over other design concerns. However, the position on the side of the house, next to a hedge, greatly minimizes visibility. He also stated that it will rest on a wood porch and be lag bolted in. Chair Shveda observed that it appears to be reversible. Mr. Messier stated that in his discussion with the building inspector, this would be considered a temporary installation.

A letter of support (*Communication i.*) from neighbors, Joe and Gail Toomey, was submitted and acknowledged by the Commission.

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioner Escobar voted) that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application.*

*Upon a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioner Escobar voted) that the changes proposed to 242 Salisbury Street are appropriate for the Montvale Avenue Local District and approved the Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application dated March 3, 2017 and received March 6, 2017.

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### **Communications**

- a. Communication from Massachusetts Historical Commission re: Rebuild Together Worcester, Multiple Locations, dated February 14, 2017 and received February 18, 2017.

*No action required.*

- b. Communication from Massachusetts Historical Commission re: National Register Nomination for Worcester State Hospital Farmhouse, dated February 16, 2017 and received February 23, 2017. (See Item k)

*No action required.*

- c. \*Communication from Mark Donahue re: 49 Temple Street BDDW application, dated February 21, 2017 and received February 22, 2017. (See Item e)

*Voted on as part of Item 3, Old Business.*

- d. Communication from Massachusetts Historical Commission re: Project Notification Form for Gerald Creamer Center (High School), 120 Granite Street, dated February 22, 2017 and received February 27, 2017.

*No action required.*

- e. Communication from Fletcher Tilton Attorneys at Law re: 49 Temple Street BDDW application, dated March 6, 2017 and received March 8, 2017.

*No action required.*

- f. Communication from Massachusetts Historical Commission re: Worcester State Conveyance to Worcester Business Development Corporation, dated March 2, 2017 and received March 8, 2017.

*No action required.*

- g. Communication from Mass DOT re: Worcester, Central Business District Streetscape Improvements, dated March 3, 2017 and received March 8, 2017.

*No action required.*

- h. \*Communication from Brian Lever at Epsilon Associates re: request for updated Letters of Support for Abby's House and Central Building tax credits, dated March 8, 2016 and received March 9, 2017.

*Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Conroy the Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioner Holley voted) to issue updated Letters of Support for both projects.*

- i. Communication from Joe and Gayle Toomey re: support for 242 Salisbury Street application, dated March 10, 2017 and received March 10, 2017.

*No action required.*

- j. \*Request from Tremont Preservation Services re: determination of eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for the YWCA of Central Massachusetts at One Salem Square, received via phone March 6, 2017.

*Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Wamback the Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioner Escobar voted) to concur with Tremont Preservation Services for the application for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C for the YWCA of Worcester.*

- k. Communication from Massachusetts Historical Commission re: Worcester State Hospital Farmhouse voted National Register eligible, dated March 10, 2017 and received March 15, 2017.

*No action required.*

### **Adjournment**

Upon a motion the Commission adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.