

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

February 6, 2020

LEVI LINCOLN ROOM, ROOM 309 – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Mark Wamback, Chair
Randolph Bloom, Vice-Chair
Robyn Conroy, Clerk
Diane Long
Tomi Stefani
Janet Theerman
Cathryn E. Jerome-Mezynski, Alternate

Commission Members Absent: Devon Kurtz

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 30, 2020

Approval of minutes was held until the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS AND BUILDING DEMOLITION DELAY WAIVER

1. 9 Oxford Street – HC-2019-071 (MBL 03-025-00004)

Petitioner: Helen & Don Pham

Year Built: 1891

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; National Register Determination of Eligibility (DOE); National Register District (NRDIS); Local Historic District (LHD); State Register (SR), FKA Salem Griggs House

Petition Purpose:

- Replace windows (retroactive)

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: February 21, 2020

Commissioner Bloom recused himself.

Rick Kubert, contractor, and Don Pham appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Kubert restated the purpose of the petition. He also stated that since the owner did not know that he needed a permit to replace windows, he went ahead and replaced the windows. One of the neighbors brought the issue of the replacement of windows to Mr. Pham's attention.

Commissioner Wamback asked Mr. Pham if he resides in the property or if it is an investment property. Mr. Pham stated that the property is an investment property. He also has three other investment properties in the city. Commissioner Wamback asked Mr. Pham if he pulled a permit for the new windows. Mr. Pham said he did.

Commissioner Conroy expressed frustration at the situation, saying that the only two options are putting the original windows back or implementing a fine.

Mr. Kubert said that the originals were blown glass and would probably cause a financial burden.

Mr. Pham said he doesn't see how people can live in a house with the original windows and pay for heating. He doesn't think that the originals could have been fixed. He expressed frustration that he has put \$80,000 into the house, and says that it looks better now than when he bought it. He doesn't understand what the complaining is about.

There was discussion between the board and the applicants regarding the appearance of the windows that were removed. Steve Rolle stated to the Commission that the windows that were removed appeared to be two-over-two wood windows, which have since been replaced with six-over-six vinyl windows.

Commissioner Wamback asked the applicant what the total cost of the replacement windows were. Mr. Pham stated that he purchased 14 windows at in the \$300 dollar range per window, costing over \$4,000 plus labor.

Commissioner Stefani asked Mr. Kubert if, as a contractor, he knows whether or not a permit is required to replace windows in the City of Worcester. Mr. Kubert said that as a contractor, any house built before 1978 is considered to have lead. He said he was at the meeting to help the owner.

Commissioner Wamback stated that the applicant would have had to pull a permit. Mr. Kubert agreed, and said that the EPA might have gotten involved. He reiterated that replacing the windows is going to be a financial burden on his friend (Mr. Pham).

Mr. Kubert asked the Commission how the situation could be rectified.

Commissioner Wamback stated that he was frustrated because work being reviewed after the fact is becoming increasingly frustrating.

Commissioner Stefani asked what type of windows the houses that surround the property have. Michelle Johnstone stated that the houses that surround the property have wood or aluminum clad wood windows.

Public Comment

Someone from the public (they did not identify themselves) stated that he looked on his phone, and a house nearby to the property had six-over-six windows.

Michelle Johnstone stated that six-over-six or six-over-one windows would be historically appropriate, and that the windows that were removed by the applicant were historic replacements.

Randy Bloom of 2 Congress Street spoke in disfavor of the application. He expressed his frustration that someone would buy income property and not realize a permit is necessary to make changes to the building. He stated that the house could have been a carriage house for the house at 7 Oxford Street, and that by the 1890s when it was built, the two-over-two windows would have been appropriate. He does not believe that six-over-six windows would have ever been in the house. He stated his frustration as a member of the Commission and the community, stating that it is extremely frustrating seeing people coming to ask for forgiveness for mistakes that never should have been made.

Mark Wamback stated that he agreed with Mr. Bloom.

Mr. Rolle stated that he checked to see whether the applicant pulled a building permit prior to replacing the windows, and that he did not. The applicant was issued a fine in August of 2019 for working without a permit.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

The Commission restated their desire to have the original windows back and their frustration with the fact that the work has already been done.

Mr. Rolle stated that the Commission should communicate to the applicant which windows should be replaced and the type of replacement window they would expect to see in the local historic district.

Mr. Kubert stated that the rear house (the subject property) cannot be seen from the street.

Mr. Rolle stated to the Commission that the photographs on display at the meeting, in which the subject property is clearly visible, were taken from the street.

Mr. Kubert stated that he thinks the existing windows look better than the windows that were removed, and that they match the front house (7 Oxford Street).

Commissioner Conroy stated that she was leaning towards requesting that the applicant take out the vinyl windows and replace them with wood or wood clad windows. Mr. Kubert expressed concern that a wood window would not be energy efficient. Mr. Rolle stated that there are several brands of double-pane wood windows that would be appropriate, although they are expensive. Mr. Kubert said that would place a financial burden on the applicant.

Mr. Kubert said that they would install whichever windows would make the Commission happy. Commissioner Wamback stated that the Commission wants the windows to be appropriate for the district.

Mr. Rolle stated that although the Commission can't recommend a brand of windows as a public entity, they should provide the applicant with the type of window they would like to see, as well as which windows should be replaced.

Commissioner Wamback stated that his recommendation to the applicant is the replacement of all visible windows to include the front (east) and the north face. Mr. Kubert asked about "the financial hardship." Commissioner Wamback stated that the applicant would need to come back with evidence of a financial hardship. He went on to say that granting them a financial hardship would set a precedent for other applications that will come before the Commission.

Mr. Kubert said he wanted to be told exactly what to do. He asked whether there was some type of appeal process for the Historical Commission. Mr. Rolle stated that the Board has not voted yet so there is nothing to appeal. Once a decision has been made the applicant can explore an appeal process through the court system. He told the applicants to follow up with Ms. Johnstone with a window that meets the requests of the Commission so she can ensure that the window is consistent with what the Board has described; get prices for the windows; and come back to the Board for a discussion about the financial aspect.

Mr. Pham stated he remembered being told that only the windows on the front of the house would need to be replaced. The Commission stated that any windows visible from the street would need to be replaced. Commissioner Theerman also brought up the point that the Commission wanted uniformity among the windows, and did not want to see some six-over-six and some two-over-two.

Mr. Pham requested that the meeting be continued to March 5.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to continue the Building Demolition Delay Waiver application to the March 5, 2020 meeting and set the Constructive Grant Deadline to March 20, 2020.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated September 11, 2019, received September 12, 2019.

Exhibit B: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received October 17, 2019.

Exhibit C: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received November 4, 2019.

Exhibit D: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received November 21, 2019.

Exhibit E: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received January 9, 2019.

Exhibit F: Request for Postponement/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received January 23, 2019.

2. 13 Montvale Road – HC-2019-094 (MBL 20-007-0026A)

Petitioner: Jamie Morin

Year Built: ca. 1929

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register (SR); Local Historic District (LHD)

Petition Purpose:

- Replace seventeen windows

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: February 21, 2020

Gary Haglund of Renewal by Andersen Windows appeared to represent the applicants. He stated that the applicants wish to replace their windows with Andersen Series 1, custom-made windows with full divided-light grilles. The grille patterns will match the existing windows. The replacement windows will match the color of the existing windows. The color to be used is an off-white color called Canvas. The trim around the windows. The window will be a true replacement that will fit inside the pocket with the weights and pulleys. Seventeen windows will be replaced.

Commissioner Bloom asked about whether the existing storms, some of which are wood and some of which are metal, would be retained. Mr. Haglund stated that they would not be.

Mr. Haglund stated that last time the homeowners appeared before the Commission that the Commission requested they find someone to glaze the windows and perform weight and pulley repair. They had a hard time finding someone, and when they did, it was not cost effective and kept the windows as single-pane glass, and wanted a more energy-efficient product.

Mr. Haglund showed the Commission and staff a sample of a similar type of window as what will be installed. He also had images. The window is 60% wood and 40% polymer and has full divided lights with panes that are slightly tinted for energy efficiency.

Commissioner Theerman asked if all windows were being replaced. Mr. Haglund said they would not all be replaced at once. Commissioner Theerman asked if the new windows would look different next to the original windows given the tint. Mr. Haglund stated that you wouldn't be able to notice a difference from the exterior.

Mr. Haglund stated that the windows will have screens.

Mr. Haglund stated that all the windows on the second floor will be replaced, and none of the first-floor windows will be.

No Public Comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for 13 Montvale Road as proposed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed work is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the City and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 13 Montvale Road.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated October 23, 2019, received December 16, 2019.

Exhibit B: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received January 9, 2019.

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

3. 5 Richards Street – HC-2019-073 (MBL 07-009-00005)

Petitioner: Tony Nguyen

Year Built: ca. 1820

Historic Status: MACRIS listed, FKA Deacon David Richards House

Petition Purpose:

- Demolish house

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: February 21, 2020

Mr. Rolle briefly went over the Building Demolition Delay Ordinance. He stated that staff should have a brief discussion on the status of the property relative to their eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and highlighted some issues with relying on MACRIS in applying the ordinance. He stated that there was some question about whether or not the subject property is still eligible for listing due to alterations and subsequent damage from a fire. He went on to describe the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Don O’Neil and John Fresolo appeared on behalf of the application.

Commissioner Long stated that in photographs seen by the Commission, it didn’t seem like there was much original siding underneath the aluminum siding. She asked how much of the house is original. Mr. O’Neil said that they don’t have any specific numbers, but the siding underneath the aluminum siding seemed to be in pretty rough shape. He also mentioned all visible windows had been replaced at some time with vinyl replacement windows. He stated that the house had been foreclosed on in 2011 and was owned by banks or bank-related entities until it was purchased by his client. He is of the opinion that the building is deteriorated to the extent that repair of the structure is unrealistic.

Commissioner Wamback stated that given all the evidence and having gone on a site visit, while he believes the building is historically significant, he also believes that the building has been neglected to the point that it would be very hard to maintain it in its condition. He believes demolition is probably the only recourse. Commissioner Conroy agreed with Commissioner Wamback.

The applicant’s representatives and Commission spoke briefly about a report that was prepared by a local builder that performed a site visit to the subject property. Mr. Fresolo asked if the builder had mentioned anything in his report about the foundation bulging, which their contractor said was the case. Ms. Johnstone stated that the builder that performed a site visit said that the foundation was in pretty good condition. There was some discussion about the report’s description of the state of the foundation.

Commissioner Bloom talked briefly about the site visit conducted by himself, Commissioner Wamback, Ms. Johnstone, and the representatives of the applicant. He also stated his uneasiness with not instituting demolition delay when the building likely is no longer eligible for listing to the National Register. Mr. O’Neil stated that whether or not the building is on the Register is academic, and that their position is that the building is too far gone. He thinks that they are two separate issues, and would be interested in hearing a discussion on eligibility if the majority of the Commission believed that a demolition delay waiver is not appropriate.

Public Comment

William Belcher, a local individual, stated that he knows the property very well. He said that the house is an eyesore and cannot be occupied. He thinks that the building should be demolished as soon as possible. He said “when it comes time to let something go, let it go.”

Jonathan Ostrow of Worcester stated that he was only able to hear about half of the discussion and hopes his comments are still relevant. He disagrees with comments that not much of the original building is left,

stating that the vast majority of the building remains, including the massing, shape, fenestration, etc. He thinks that the house is the oldest Federalist style house, or the oldest home, in the city. He went on to speak to the history of the house and the history of the surrounding buildings. He thinks that the demolition of the building would be a great insult to the neighborhood and the history of the city. He asked if there would be any marker. He went on to say that the job of the Commission is to preserve the history of the city.

Mr. O'Neil stated that the fire damage and exposure to the elements are not insignificant and should be taken into consideration. He stated that asking a private individual to restore a residential house for the benefit of the history of Worcester is asking too much.

Patricia Hobbs of Worcester said that she gets very emotional when she sees things like this. She would hate to see something this valuable leave the city. She stated that she is a little ignorant of the process of asking for a financial hardship, and asked the Commission to explain it to her. Commissioner Wamback briefly explained the process of providing financial documentation for a financial hardship case, saying it is looked at on an individual-to-individual basis. Ms. Hobbs stated that the owner of 5 Richards owns 24 properties in the City and asked if the Commission is going to look at all those properties in relation to a financial hardship case for 5 Richards Street. Commissioner Wamback stated that at this point, there was no request for a financial hardship case by the applicant. The applicant is strictly requesting a demolition delay waiver based on the condition of the building. Commissioner Bloom stated that although the outside of the building looks relatively intact, the interior of the building is far less intact than he thinks most people would realize.

Susan Lozoraitis of 16 Congress Street, Worcester stated that she believed that someone who owns 24 other properties could work with tax incentives for historic development. She suggested that the Commission put some "muscle" into the applicant. She said if this was Boston, the building would be saved. She stated that other options should be looked at. Commissioner Wamback stated that the Commission cannot force anyone to do anything that is not in their minds to do.

Denise Pilato of Worcester asked if there is insurance is involved. Commissioner Wamback stated that whether or not insurance is involved is not something the Commission has purview over. Mr. O'Neil stated that the fire happened three years before his client purchased the house. Commissioner Wamback stated that it truly is not relevant in what they are trying to decide.

Patricia Hobbs of Worcester asked whether there was a caveat that during the delay period other buyers can be sought. Commissioner Wamback stated that another buyer would have to approach the owner directly, which has nothing to do with the Commission.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 6-0 to close the public hearing.

Commissioner Conroy asked if an economic hardship could be voted on without any numbers. Mr. Rolle stated that the Commission could base an economic hardship on the fact that the building is as far gone as it is.

Commissioner Bloom asked for additional clarification on whether or not the building is eligible for the demolition delay. Mr. Rolle agreed that that is a complicating factor but believes the Commission knows what they will do even without that consideration but the Commission could have a lengthier discussion on the matter.

There was further discussion on a possible economic hardship case should the waiver be denied.

There was further discussion of whether or not the subject property should fall under the purview of the Worcester Historical Commission. Mr. Rolle stated the stipulations a property must meet in order to fall under the purview of the Worcester Historical Commission. He stated typically a building must retain enough of its features that made it eligible in the first place to remain eligible. He stated that staff believes

that the property probably does not retain integrity. Ms. Johnstone echoed that sentiment, saying that the real question for the Commission to consider is whether the building retains its integrity.

Commission Theerman stated that the Commission has not seen reports from a restoration specialist to see what could be done with the building. Commissioner Wamback stated that since there has not been a financial hardship case, that has not yet been requested.

Commissioners Conroy, Wamback, and Theerman both said they were ready to vote. Mr. O'Neil also stated that they have no interest in pursuing a financial hardship case.

Commissioner Bloom asked if the Commission could suggest the salvage of some elements in the building. Mr. Rolle stated that the Commission could discuss conditions with the applicant, although conditioning can be hard with a Building Demolition Delay Waiver. He recommended making the condition very general and make it more of a suggestion.

Commissioner Theerman had some question about how they should frame the motion given the condition of the building, saying that she would like to make it clear that although the Commission doesn't like what happened, they understand why a demolition would need to be done.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 3-3 that the proposed work is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the City and voted to deny the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 5 Richards Street based on the current condition as specified in the two submitted structural reports, with Commissioners Wamback, Conroy, and Jerome Mezynski being the yeas, and Commissioners Bloom, Long, and Theerman being the nays.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 3-3 to issue a Certificate of Hardship for 5 Richards Street, with Commissioners Wamback, Conroy, and Jerome Mezynski being the yeas, and Commissioners Bloom, Long, and Theerman being the nays. Therefore, the motion did not pass.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated September 13, 2019, received September 13, 2019.

Exhibit B: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received November 7, 2019.

Exhibit C: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received November 21, 2019.

Exhibit D: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received December 12, 2019.

Exhibit E: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received January 9, 2019.

4. 22 Front Street – HC-2019-077 (MBL 02-025-007+8)

Petitioner: 10–30 Front Street LLC

Year Built: ca. 1941

Historic Status: MACRIS listed, FKA F.W. Woolworth & Company Store

Petition Purpose:

- Façade renovation

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: February 22, 2020

Felicio Lana, building owner, and John Paul Raymond appeared on behalf of the application. Mr. Lana stated that last time he appeared before the condition, the Commission had asked for him to go back to the design table to see if anything on the building could be saved and worked into the new design. He came prepared with three or four options with what could be saved from the façade. He explained each option

to the Commission. Commissioners Long and Jerome Mezynski expressed a preference toward one of the designs that used the art deco terra cotta tiles inside the proposed glass tower.

Commissioner Bloom stated that although the Commission can state what they like, he questioned whether or not they could really say what the façade could be replaced with since the only purview they have is over the removal of the façade. Mr. Rolle restated what was said in the last hearing in the meeting; that it is hard to condition a Building Demolition Delay Waiver unless it is for something very specific.

Mr. Lana stated that he thinks there has to be a way to preserve homes in Worcester with history, but not if it can't fall in line with an owner's criteria or finances. He thinks that the minute a property becomes bank owned, the Commission should make the bank preserve it.

Public Comment

Gabe Navar, a local resident spoke in disfavor of the application, saying that the aesthetic of Worcester is its own entity. He said that the design has all the aesthetic value of a pharmaceutical laboratory. He said that he does not see anything art deco in the proposed designs. He thinks that the Midtown Mall is beautiful and nothing need to be done to it.

Deborah Packard of Preservation Worcester commended the owner on coming up with some plans, however she remains against the application. She believes the building is important to the history and culture of the city. She admits that the Midtown Mall doesn't look great, but thinks that the terra cotta could be cleaned; that the storefront windows could be restored; and the building could be turned into something everyone could be proud of.

William Belcher of Worcester spoke in favor of the application. He stated that he and his wife are a business merchant at the Midtown Mall and that more work has been done since the owner purchased the property than has been done in the past 25 years. He said that preservationists don't get to get in the way of progress. As a renter of the midtown mall, he supports the proposals brought forward by the applicant.

Tim Carnett of 230 Salisbury Street spoke on behalf of Susan McDaniel Ceccacci, who wrote a letter to the Commission. Ms. Ceccacci is against the proposed demolition of the Midtown Mall façade. The letter spoke to the history of the F.W. Woolworth store. She said that the store is representative of the 20th century downtown shopping experience. She believes that as a part of one of the few intact downtown streetscapes, an effort should be made to save the façade.

Shaheen Adelinia spoke in opposition to the application. He disagreed with Mr. Belcher's claims, saying that although work has been being done in the mall, not all work is constructive. He stated his grievances with the current mall ownership. He stated that is important to preserve the historical integrity of the city, contending that it is being ripped apart piece by piece.

Jonathan Ostrow of Worcester spoke in opposition to the application. He distributed to the Commission historical postcards of F.W. Woolworths from when it was first constructed. He congratulated Mr. Lana on his effort but believes that there is no reason to search for compromises because he believes the existing façade of the Midtown Mall is beautiful and authentic. He thinks, in addition, that restoring the façade would offer a great savings to the applicant rather than demolishing and rebuilding it. He believes modern, energy efficient lighting in the second floor would solve the issue of not enough natural light coming in. Mr. Ostrow also mentioned that in the preservation community, it has become common knowledge that the proposed façade design was not Mr. Lana's idea, but an idea initiated by the WRA. He went on to describe the history and architectural design elements of art deco architecture. He challenged the WRA's stance that art deco is passé, saying that because art deco buildings are not constructed anymore, they have even more reason to preserve them. He also stated that from a waste standpoint, restoring the façade is much more environmentally-friendly than demolishing and reconstructing it. He stated that construction debris is the single biggest component of our landfills. He also stated that Commission should assist Mr. Lana in finding a way to restore the façade.

Dale Wickenheiser of 1 Ball Street appeared in opposition to the petition. He and his wife moved to Worcester three years ago from Boston and has been learning about Worcester and its history since he moved. He believes that Worcester feels like a small town compared to Boston, and has a fear that Worcester is moving in the direction of Boston in that everything is going to start to look the same. He thinks what is existing is much more interesting compared to everything being the same. He said that keeping that façade as is would make his experience living in Worcester much more pleasant.

Denise Pilato of Worcester stated that the building has an art deco, lovely façade. She inquired if there was a way to look nationally for a group of people that want to preserve art deco buildings. She thinks that there are probably artists or others across the country that would want to preserve art deco buildings and she thinks it would be wonderful to preserve the building.

Toni Ostrow of Worcester said that she is a fan of the current façade of the Midtown Mall and hopes that it can be restored. She thinks that having things that are beautiful, historical, and retro is an attraction – not a detriment. She thinks that the Woolworth’s sign could maybe be restored. She thinks something like that would draw people to downtown Worcester. She read an excerpt from an article on art deco architecture in Worcester.

Patricia Hobbs of Worcester stated she is not in favor of destroying this structure [only the façade is proposed to be demolished]. She thinks it is too beautiful to have anything happen to it. She thinks that a building style cannot really be termed as passé. She questioned why Mr. Lana would buy a building that he does not like. She questioned what Mr. Lana would do with the rest of the buildings he owned on the street. She thought it might be a good compromise to open up the roof to let light into the second floor.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 6-0 to close the public hearing.

Commissioner Conroy commended the applicant for the work that he put into preparing several different renderings for the Commission, and that she understands why he would want a building like that – but she thinks the building is too important to change.

Mr. Lana stated that he understands the comments of the Commission. He stated that had the buildings that were demolished by F.W. Woolworths to make way for the existing building still been standing, he would not be before the Commission asking for a Demolition Delay Waiver. He would be preserving them. He owns the rest of the Front Street block, and he is working to restore the other historic buildings on the block. He stated while he respects what they did for the purpose that they needed, the buildings torn down by F.W. Woolworths should never have been torn down. He does not believe that the current building serves the purpose of today. He also went on to say that everyone except one person who spoke during public comment does or did business in the mall. He said that he did not get any government funding for any of his projects. He also said that the WRA did not influence his designs. He stated that he wants to provide a healthy place for his tenants to do business. He asserted that although his name is on the deed, he respects the opinions of everyone. He didn’t have to do half the designs that he did, but he wanted to show the Board and everyone else that it is not his project, it is our project. He stated that if he had the tenants, he wouldn’t have a problem keeping the façade. He thinks that to bring people downtown, he has to do what he has proposed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 2-4 that the proposed work is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the City and voted to deny the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 22 Front Street, with Commissioners Jerome Mezynski and Long being the yeas and Commissioners Wamback, Bloom, Conroy, and Theerman being the nays.

The Commission asked the applicant if he was interested in pursuing an economic hardship. Mr. Lana stated that he does not believe that there is anything that he could do that would change the Commission’s mind. He stated that he wanted to just close it out.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated September 20, 2019, received September 20, 2019.

Exhibit B: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received November 7, 2019.

Exhibit C: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, received December 12, 2019.

NEW BUSINESS

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS & BUILDING DEMOLITION DELAY WAIVER

5. 10 Irving Street – HC-2020-005 (MBL 03-022-00002)

Petitioner: All Saints Episcopal Church

Year Built: 1877

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register (SR); Local Historic District (LHD)

Petition Purpose:

- Install pole signage on Irving Street
- Install pole signage on Pleasant Street

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 7, 2020

Commissioner Bloom recused himself.

Sarah Smongeski, the Executive Director of the Pakachoag Music School, spoke on behalf of the application. Pakachoag Music School is a tenant of All Saints Church. Ms. Smongeski stated that the intent of the application is to install two pole signs; one on Pleasant Street and one on Irving Street.

Commissioner Wamback asked why they wanted to install the signage. Ms. Smongeski stated that there are no signs for the school currently, and they would like their presence to be known. Commissioner Long asked how long the school has been at the church. Ms. Smongeski stated that they were going into their second year. A flag sign is the only signage that they have.

Commissioner Wamback asked Ms. Smongeski for a description of the proposed signage. She said the signs would be painted metal on two sides. One of the poles on Irving Street is to be an existing lamp pole, and a new pole would be installed on Pleasant Street in the parking lot of the church. The poles will be painted black. The signs will have a white background with black lettering with a purple P for Pakachoag Music School.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for 10 Irving Street as proposed.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated December 10, 2019, received January 7, 2020.

6. 18 Newbury Street – HC-2020-008 (MBL 06-006-00015)

Petitioner: Eulalio Jose

Year Built: ca. 1859

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register (SR); Local Historic District (LHD), FKA William L. Maynard House

Petition Purpose:

- Strip and replace existing asphalt shingle roof with new architectural shingle roof
- Remove existing chimney and rebuild a new chimney
- Demolish existing deck and rebuild a new deck to match existing configuration
- Replace four existing replacement aluminum windows on side of house with new vinyl windows
- Repair existing vinyl siding

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 14, 2020

Ciro Malo, contractor, and Eulalio Jose, owner, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Malo described the intent of the application, stating that they wish to tear off the existing three-tab asphalt shingle roof, which is two different colors at present due to fading from sunlight. They will use asphalt shingle with the same darker gray color that is currently in place to replace the roof. He asked the Commission if it would be acceptable to instead install an architectural shingle. Commissioner Wamback stated that he thought that would be fine. Commissioner Bloom agreed.

Mr. Malo stated that since the deck is structurally unsound, it would be torn down and rebuilt with materials and configuration to match the existing. Four windows will also be replaced on the south-facing elevation. They are currently vinyl with storm windows. They will be replaced with Classic Harvey vinyl windows. Minor siding repairs will be done to the existing vinyl siding.

Mr. Malo stated that the chimney is in very bad shape; is crooked; and could fall down. He hopes to rebuild it with a similar brick so that it would look exactly the same.

Mr. Malo stated that the steps to be replaced are part of the deck.

Commissioner Stefani asked if the deck to be rebuilt would be painted. Mr. Malo said they could paint it after six months since the pressure treated wood would be wet. He will paint it like in kind with white paint.

Commissioner Bloom stated that the first floor of the deck had a balustrade, likely to keep children safe. Since the deck is being rebuilt, he assumes that everything will be done to code. Mr. Rolle stated that the code specifies a four inch maximum width between the vertical openings. He stated that if the porch elements are reconstructed, they will have to meet the current code.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for 18 Newbury Street to include the stripping and replacement of existing asphalt shingle roof with new architectural shingle roof; the removal of existing chimney and rebuild of a new chimney with like materials; the demolition of the existing deck and rebuild a new deck to match existing configuration to be painted white; the replacement of four existing replacement aluminum windows on side of house with new vinyl windows; and the repair of existing vinyl siding.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 18 Newbury Street as proposed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 7-0 that the proposed work is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the City and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 18 Newbury Street.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated January 13, 2020, received January 14, 2020.

At 8:39 p.m., the Commission took a recess. At 8:43 p.m., the meeting resumed.

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

7. 16 Sycamore Street – HC-2020-006 (MBL 03-003-00009)

Petitioner: Robert Thomas

Year Built: ca. 1850

Historic Status: MACRIS listed

Petition Purpose:

- Remove and replace 18 windows
- Remove and replace exterior doors
- Change one existing window opening to an entrance
- Clean and repoint exterior brick wall
- Clean exterior architectural woodwork
- Remove lattice panel to allow for the construction of an enclosed, covered egress
- Repair and repoint brick chimney
- Install new asphalt shingle roof
- Remove and replace gutters and downspouts
- Reinforce deteriorated existing porch

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: February 24, 2020

Scott Dennet of Worcester, a consultant on strategic initiatives to Centro Las Americas, appeared on behalf of the application. Also representing the application was Jose Luis Martinez.

Mr. Martinez stated that many of the changes proposed had already been approved by the Worcester Historical Commission in the past. However, Centro was not able to get the funding to complete the project. He stated everything in the project would stay the same. He asked the Commission for an additional twelve months to complete the project. He said he is confident the project will be completed in 2020.

Commissioner Wamback stated that he would like to start the discussion with the proposed window replacements. He stated that in the application, he saw that the windows were to be replaced with Andersen Craftsman or Jeld Wen windows of the same profile. He asked if those would be used in all areas where windows would be replaced. Mr. Martinez restated the work to be done and stated that the scope of work has not changed since the last time the project came before the Worcester Historical Commission.

Commissioner Bloom asked for clarification on the proposal in regards to previous approvals. Ms. Johnstone stated that the work had already come before the Commission, but that there were different commission members on the Commission at that time. Commissioner Bloom asked if there was a way to move quickly to reissue the approval. Ms. Johnstone stated that since the Commission is now a new group of people than when the work was approved they would still need to vote on it, however they could use the previous decision to aid in their new decision. Mr. Martinez reiterated that Centro need more time to complete the project because they just secured the funding.

There was further discussion on what had previously been approved. Commissioner Bloom stated that he was trying to find the quickest way to get the proposed work approved.

Commissioner Wamback stated that the new application has more window replacements proposed than did the previously approved application. Commissioner Wamback stated that the same windows as previously approved would be used in all the windows to be replaced. The Commission said that that seemed fine.

Commissioner Stefani asked if the architectural work would be restored. Mr. Martinez stated that it would be fixed and refinished.

No Public Comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 that the proposed work is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the City and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 16 Sycamore Street.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated December 30, 2019, received January 10, 2020.

8. 10 Sycamore Street – HC-2020-007 (MBL 03-009-00008)

Petitioner: Michael Mason

Year Built: ca. 1870

Historic Status: MACRIS listed, FKA Mary Reed House

Petition Purpose:

- Remove existing wood siding and install vinyl siding

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: February 24, 2020

Michael Mason appeared on behalf of the application. He stated that he was there to ask permission to vinyl side the house. He stated that nothing would be changed architecturally. The vinyl siding would go up to underneath the eaves.

An inverted gutter also has collapsed and rodents got into it. He plans on fixing and encapsulating the inverted gutter. He said craftsmen don't even do inverted gutters anymore. Commissioner Bloom stated that it is done. Mr. Mason stated that he couldn't afford that.

Commissioner Wamback asked if a permit was pulled to do the work. Mr. Mason and Ms. Johnstone both stated that no permit was pulled. Commissioner Bloom stated that without having the permit, he is not able to see the condition of the wood siding from before the work began. Mr. Mason said that you can see how bad the siding is from the portion that isn't yet resided. He noted that the new vinyl siding would actually encapsulate the lead, and that no architectural details would be changed especially under the mansard. Additionally, he stated that removing and replacing the wood clapboard in kind would cost upwards of \$90,000 and that he couldn't afford that cost. He is just trying to improve the neighborhood. The home provides housing to low income families.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he had concerns about when the vinyl siding reaches the eaves due to the decorative work there. Mr. Mason said that he wants to mock the four brackets that are missing and that he loves that look.

Commissioner Bloom stated that something he already sees happening is that the vinyl siding is reducing the width of the trim boards [corner boards]. Mr. Mason stated that there was damage to the corner boards and that approximately 3 inches of corner boards would be lost. Commissioner Bloom asked if there was any chance of cutting off a portion of the vinyl siding and replacing the boards so that the width could be maintained. He mentioned that he is only concerned with the facade of the house. Mr. Mason stated that with that being said, on the facade, he would carry the corner board to where the existing clapboard is now. Commissioner Jerome-Mezynski asked if the corner boards would also be replicated on the sides. Commissioner Bloom stated that he is not as concerned about seeing it done on the sides. Mr. Mason stated that on both sides, he would put a grander corner on. He stated that right now it has a four inch corner, but he would have them put an eight inch corner on to have it carry over six-to-eight inches on either side. Commissioners Bloom and Jerome-Mezynski stated the corner should be duplicated exactly how it was originally. Mr. Mason stated that he would install an eight inch corner, thus doubling the width of the corner boards that would have been exposed with the installation of the vinyl siding. Mr. Mason stated that there are some fluted corner boards that he could install. Commissioner Bloom stated that that probably wasn't necessary because that likely would not have been there in the first place and that the applicant did not have to make it more upscale than it was. Mr. Mason stated that he understood.

Commissioner Stefani asked the applicant if he would be going around the window trim on the second-story windows. He said yes, he would use jumping sills and it would look the same. He also stated that wished the house would have been paintable because he would have loved to have kept the aesthetic.

Commissioner Theerman asked if he had the top moldings for both the windows on the first floor. Mr. Mason stated that those were rotten. He said that everything will be kept uniform, and the portico will be kept natural and painted.

No Public Comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver on the condition that the width of the corner boards be maintained.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated December 26, 2019, received January 10, 2020.

9. 526 Burncoat Street – HC-2020-009 (MBL 23-011-00004)

Petitioner: Kevin Provencher

Year Built: ca. 1870

Historic Status: MACRIS listed, FKA Burncoat Elementary School

Petition Purpose:

- Replace roof and fascia
- Repoint brick chimneys
- Remove membrane roofing on one chimney, followed by repointing and possible brick replacement in area
- Replace deteriorated cast stone accents

- Install accessible entrance ramp

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 1, 2020

Kevin Provencher of Habib and Associates Architects appeared on behalf of the petition. He stated that his firm had been engaged by the City of Worcester as the designer for several of the accelerated repair projects. Christina Kilday, an employee of the City of Worcester, represented the City.

Mr. Provencher stated that all projects to be discussed are roof repair projects involving Worcester Public Schools (items 9-12). He described the funding source for the projects, with consists of funding from the Massachusetts School Building Authority. He stated that all four schools will go under a single contract, and that the projects would be substantially complete in September or October.

The school at 526 Burncoat Street will include a roof replacement and some accessibility upgrades. The current roof is a built-up (tar & gravel) roof. Mr. Provencher believes that the roof has been replaced at least once. There is also masonry and cast stone elements on the roof that need to be repaired or replaced. One of the chimneys is wrapped in a rubber membrane. The intent is to remove the membrane and restore the underlying chimney.

A new, accessible ramp will be added to the rear of the building. The ramp will allow all windows to remain and will be as least intrusive as possible. A new door will be cut into the existing masonry to allow for a new door opening at the top landing of the ramp.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he assumes the chimneys are visible from the street. Mr. Provencher indicated which chimney is the one that is wrapped.

Commissioner Stefani asked if there was a lift considered in place of a ramp. Mr. Provencher stated that lifts were considered at each school, but that the City strongly prefers not to use lifts due to ongoing maintenance associated with them.

No Public Comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver as proposed.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated January 15, 2020, received January 16, 2020.

10. 1083 Pleasant Street – HC-2020-010 (MBL 25-014-00002)

Petitioner: Kevin Provencher

Year Built: 1909

Historic Status: MACRIS listed, FKA Tatnuck Grammar School

Petition Purpose:

- Replace roof
- Reconstruct a portion of one chimney, brick veneer, and stone cap
- Repoint all chimneys
- Remove membrane roofing on one chimney, followed by repointing and possible brick replacement in area

- Install accessible entrance and new stair on 1953 addition

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 1, 2020

Kevin Provencher and Christina Kilday appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Provencher restated the funding for the project and described the building. He stated that the roof, which is original tar and gravel on the main portion of the building and EPDM membrane on the addition, would be replaced with a black EPDM roof system. The copper-clad parapet will be maintained. The masonry on the roof will be repaired, repointed, and any membranes currently wrapping chimneys will be removed and the underlying masonry will be restored.

Mr. Provencher withdrew the proposed accessible entrance from the application.

No Public Comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver as proposed.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated January 15, 2020, received January 16, 2020.

11. 211 Providence Street – HC-2020-011 (MBL 35-030-00002)

Petitioner: Kevin Provencher

Year Built: 1930

Historic Status: MACRIS listed, FKA Providence Junior High School

Petition Purpose:

- Replace roof and fascia
- Reconstruct a portion of one chimney, brick veneer, and stone cap
- Repoint all chimneys
- Replace deteriorated cast stone accents
- Remove membrane roofing on sidewall of an intermediate roof structure located over the main entry; repointing, and possible brick replacement in area
- Install accessible entrance ramp

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 1, 2020

Kevin Provencher and Christina Kilday appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Provencher stated the existing roof at the subject property is an EPDM membrane that was installed in 1985. The masonry will be repaired if necessary.

A handicap-accessible ramp will be added. The firm had looked at several options, including a lift for accessibility. They chose a ramp to be installed at the back side of the building, not viewable from the public way. The ramp will be concrete and brick with painted metal handrails.

No Public Comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver as proposed.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated January 15, 2020, received January 16, 2020.

12. 420 Grafton Street – HC-2020-012 (MBL 18-003-00001)

Petitioner: Kevin Provencher

Year Built: 1922

Historic Status: MACRIS listed, FKA Grafton Junior High School

Petition Purpose:

- Replace roof and fascia
- Repoint brick chimneys and walls above roof
- Replace deteriorated cast stone chimney caps
- Remove attached rooftop greenhouse
- Remove and replace windows above main roof

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: March 1, 2020

Kevin Provencher and Christina Kilday appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Provencher stated that the subject property is likely the most complex project his firm would be doing this year. He described the building to the Commissioners, and stated that what sets the property apart from the other schools before the Commission is the presence of interior light wells. He stated that the existing tar and gravel roof quite possibly is the original roof. Several chimneys and parapet walls will require repair and repointing.

Mr. Provencher also stated that there are copper-clad accessory structures on the roof worth talking about, including a former rooftop greenhouse, which is obsolete. It has not been used for an extended period of time and has not been maintained and is damaged. The City would like to remove it and infill the opening with new roof. A copper-roofed ventilation shaft, also obsolete and sealed off from the interior will be removed. A copper-clad skylight on the roof will also be removed and infilled with new roof. Mr. Provencher noted that the greenhouse is largely invisible from the street.

The flat roof over the gymnasium has some original windows around the perimeter of the new roof that will need to be removed or replaced to accommodate the new roof. Four out of six will be removed, and two will be replaced with new windows. The windows to be replaced are not visible from the street.

No Public Comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver as proposed.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated January 15, 2020, received January 16, 2020.

COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Request for **new** letter of support re: 1 Exchange Place

Ms. Johnstone stated that the project at 1 Exchange Place (AKA the Waldo Street Police Station) consists of the rehabilitation of the building for market-rate apartments using federal tax credits.

Commissioner asked how the completed project will look. Ms. Johnston stated that since the applicant is using federal tax credits, it will meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for historic rehabilitation.

Commissioner Stefani asked what the interior would look like. Ms. Johnstone stated that the interior would be turned into apartments. Mr. Rolle stated that although at this stage of applying for tax credits design details are not usually available, the use of tax credits will bring the project under the purview of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the National Park Service.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Conroy, the Commission voted 7-0 to issue a letter of support to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for 1 Exchange Place.

- b. Notice of Massachusetts Historical Commission receipt of National Register Nomination for YWCA of Worcester, 1 Salem Square
- c. Letter of support request for the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board, re: 218 Shrewsbury Street

Ms. Johnstone described the letter of support request, which consists of a request for relief from the requirements of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board, which state that every entrance to a public building needs to be made handicap-accessible. The request is being made because the building already has one accessible entrance, and the addition of a second accessible entrance on the Shrewsbury Street (primary) elevation would require significant demolition to the building, thus altering its historic character.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 7-0 to issue a letter of support to the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board for 218 Shrewsbury Street.

OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Election of Commission officers.

Commissioner Conroy asked if anyone else wanted to serve as clerk.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Wamback, the Commission voted 7-0 to elect Mark Wamback as Chair; Devon Kurtz as Vice-Chair; and Robyn Conroy as Clerk.

b. Discussion of Building Demolition Delay procedures

Mr. Rolle explained that the system in which buildings get triggered to come before the Commission is flawed, both in that properties get missed and that properties that probably shouldn't be coming before the Commission are. He noted that there have been internal discussions both amongst staff and with the City of Worcester Law Department. He discussed the options discussed, and explained why the decision was made to request the Commission to have a discussion of eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

Preservation Worcester is also of the opinion that the City should go to an age based system.

Staff will bring an age-based model before the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Bloom asked if switching to an age based system would allow the Commission to use Building Demolition Delay even if the property is not on the National Register.

Mr. Rolle stated that the discussion of National Register eligibility is simply staff's recommendation on how Commission conduct meetings to best comply with the ordinance. He went on to note that moving to an age based system would require a change in the ordinance and would take several months at the quickest.

Commissioner Bloom asked about a property he had in mind. Mr. Rolle stated that either a property is under the purview of the Commission or it's not. The Commission has been reviewing many properties that it should not. An age based system would mean that more properties would come under the purview of the Commission.

There was a brief discussion between staff and the Commission about National Register eligibility requirements.

Commissioner Wamback stated that he would like the come to an agreement about how the Commission deal with retroactive work. Mr. Rolle stated that an item could be put on the agenda for a standard procedure to be followed. He also noted that the Commission can issue fines. Ms. Johnstone noted fines could be up to \$200 a day.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Stefani the Commission voted 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 p.m.