

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

APRIL 16, 2020

LEVI LINCOLN ROOM, ROOM 309 – CITY HALL

Commission Members Participating: Mark Wamback, Chair
Devon Kurtz, Vice-Chair
Randolph Bloom
Diane Long
Tomi Stefani
Janet Theerman
Erika Helnarski, Alternate
Cathryn E. Jerome-Mezynski, Alternate

Staff Members Participating: Stephen Rolle, Division of Planning and Regulatory Services
Michelle Johnstone, Division of Planning and Regulatory Services

Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 23, 2020 Order, as amended, imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting was conducted through remote participation. The meeting was livestreamed from the City of Worcester website and via the local cable access channel and is available for streaming online. Public participation was facilitated through a call-in number, 415-655-0001 (Access Code: 730323290#), which was publicized on the posted meeting agenda and during the video broadcast.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

April 2, 2020 – Commissioner Bloom expressed that he found a change that was needed in the meeting minutes from April 2. After a brief discussion and clarification by Ms. Johnstone, it was determined that no changes were needed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 6-0 to approve the April 2, 2020 Meeting Minutes, with Commissioners Kurtz and Jerome-Mezynski not voting due to their absence at the April 2, 2020 meeting.

POSTPONEMENTS

Certificate of Appropriateness & Building Demolition Delay Waiver

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

Petitioner: Helen & Dom 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)

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Stefani, the Commission voted 8-0 to postpone the petition to the April 30, 2020 meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

2. 126 Water Street – HC-2020-016 (MBL 04-022-00006)

Petitioner: Jean-Luc Wittner

Year Built: ca. 1910

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; located in the Blackstone Canal National Register Historic District, FKA Lewis Goldstein Apartment House

Petition Purpose:

- Remove the neon sign

The applicant for 126 Water Street was not present on the call. Ms. Johnstone presented the item.

Ms. Johnstone stated that the item has come before the petition before, where part of the application (the removal of the façade and its redesign) was approved. At that time, the Commission asked the applicant to come back for a plan for the neon sign on the building, which is to be removed. The building owner has indicated that the sign will be on display at the Wachusett Brewery at the Worcester Public Market, and at which time it is to be moved from the Worcester Public Market, ownership of the sign will revert to Edward Murphy, building owner. At that time, Mr. Murphy has suggested donating the sign to the Worcester Historical Museum.

The Commission members expressed their support for the proposal.

No public comment.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 6-0 to close the public hearing, with Commissioners Wamback and Bloom abstaining from the vote due to their absence at the February 20, 2020 meeting.

List of Exhibits

1. Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated January 29, 2020, received January 30, 2020.
2. Partial decision for petition, dated February 24, 2020.
3. Postponement form, dated February 27, 2020.
4. Postponement form, dated March 17, 2020.
5. Email correspondence from Edward Murphy to Michelle Johnstone regarding destination of neon sign, dated March 30, 2020.

NEW BUSINESS

Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver

3. 4 Congress Street – HC-2020-025 (MBL 03-026-00032)

Petitioner: Emilio Mendez

Year Built: 1850

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; Crown Hill Local Historic District (LHD); State Register of Historic Places (SR); National Register of Historic Places District (NRDIS); National Register Multiple Resources Area (MRA), FKA James and Persis H. Andrews/Freeman Brown – Louis Lewisson House

Petition Purpose:

- Paint house
- Pave driveway
- Replace windows
- Rebuild 30 feet of concrete walkway
- Erect fallen column next to driveway
- Replace wood fence

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: May 1, 2020

Mr. Rolle indicated that staff has had difficulty in reaching the applicant. The item was held until the end of the meeting.

At the end of the new business portion of the meeting, upon a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to postpone the petition to the April 30 meeting. Commissioner Bloom recused himself from the vote, and Commissioner Helnarski, alternate, voted in his place.

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

4. 37 Fruit Street – HC-2020-031 (MBL 02-046-00036)

Petitioner: Russ Haims

Year Built: 1884

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; National Register District (NRDIS); National Register Multiple Resource Area (MRA), FKA Francis M. Lincoln House

Petition Purpose:

- Remove deteriorating exterior sandstone stairs and replace with solid granite stairs

BDDW Constructive Grant Deadline: May 14, 2020

Russell Haims spoke on behalf of the petition. He stated the intent of the petition, which was to replace the compromised soft stone front exterior stairs with solid granite stairs. He stated that he has used solid granite stairs on other properties he owns and has shared an example of what they would look like with the Commission.

Commissioner Stefani asked whether the width of the stairs would be retained. Mr. Haims said the stairs would follow existing code. Commissioner Stefani said that his question was not about the rise or tread depth, but whether the overall width of the staircase would match what is existing. Mr. Haims confirmed that the width of the new stairs would match what is existing.

Commissioner Jerome-Mezynski asked if there would be a railing used, and if so, what it would look like. Mr. Haims stated that there would be a custom-made wrought-iron railing.

No public comment.

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

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition at 37 Fruit Street concerning the replacement of the granite steps is not

detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the city and voted to approve the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

List of Exhibits

1. Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated March 29, 2020, received March 31, 2020

COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Request from MacRostie Historic Advisors for updated letters of support for the following Historic Tax Credit projects:
 1. Waldo Street Police Station, District Court, and Fire Station – 1 Exchange Place
 2. 98 Beacon Street
 3. Elwood Adams Hardware Store – 154 Main Street
 4. Paul Revere Life Insurance Company – 18 Chestnut Street
 5. Quinsigamond Fire House – 15 Blackstone River Road
 6. Worcester Boys Club – 2 Ionic Avenue
 7. Whitcomb Manufacturing Company Factory – 134 Gold Street
 8. YWCA – 6-10 Chatham Street

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to issue updated letters of support for the above listed projects.

- b. Request from Anser Advisory for an updated letter of support for Historic Tax Credits for the YWCA of Worcester – 1 Salem Square

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 6-0 to issue an updated letter of support for the YWCA at 1 Salem Square.

- c. Communication from CBRE re: Section 106 compliance; invitation to comment on potential effect of collocation of antennas atop property located at 116 Belmont Street.

Ms. Johnstone explained that the building at 116 Belmont Street is not historic, but there are buildings in the area that are in the National Register of Historic Places and in MACRIS. The communication provides an opportunity for the Commission to comment on any potential effects that the collocation of the antennas could have to historic resources in the area. She stated that there is already a lot of non-historic infill in the area, so the effects would likely be minimal.

There was discussion among the commission members about the size of the proposed antennas and whether or not they would be located in a structure. Commissioner Stefani stated that the communication states that the antennas will be located in an enclosure. He asked whether the enclosure is already there or whether it would be brand new.

Mr. Rolle stated that these types of installations are commonplace and he wouldn't be surprised if it would be located in an enclosure. There is typically a hierarchy of preference used in such installations, starting with locating them within structures, and then collocating them where there are already wireless installations in place. He stated that this is the type of Section 106 notification the Commission has typically not provided comment on. He stated that unless the Commission finds anything of particular concern, they don't necessarily need to issue comment.

Commissioner Bloom asked where the building was in relation to UMass Memorial Hospital. Ms. Johnstone stated that the building is directly across from UMass Memorial Hospital.

Commissioner Stefani stated that he confirmed via Google street view that there is already an enclosure on top of the building.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 6-0 to not issue comment on the notification.

- d. Request from VHB for an updated letter of support for Historic Tax Credits for the J.R. Torrey Razor Company – 128 Chandler Street

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted 6-0 to issue an updated letter of support for 128 Chandler Street.

- e. Request from the Traggorth Companies, LLC, for an updated letter of support for Historic Tax Credits for Mission Chapel – 205 Summer Street

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to issue an updated letter of support for Mission Chapel at 305 Summer Street.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Stefani, the Commission voted 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at 6:36 p.m.