

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

**September 10, 2009**

**WORCESTER CITY HALL, 455 MAIN STREET, WORCESTER  
LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER (3RD FLOOR, ROOM 309)**

**Commission Members Present:** Peter Schneider, Chair  
Thomas Constantine  
Timothy McCann  
James Crowley

**Staff Present:** Luba Zhaurova, Planning and Regulatory Services

**REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Schneider called the meeting to order at 5:35 P.M.

**REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCES, EXTENSIONS OF TIME, POSTPONEMENTS,  
WITHDRAWALS**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes from the August 27, 2009 meeting were accepted as amended.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- 1. 27 and 27-1/2 Ellsworth Street (HC-2009-053) - Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Steven Szymczak, representative for the petitioner, is seeking to remove and replace shingles on the front of the building at 27 Ellsworth Street and to repair stairs on the side of the building at 27-1/2 Ellsworth Street. Mr. Szymczak confirmed that he is seeking to replace mansard roof shingles on the building at 27 Ellsworth Street that were damaged from fire. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition to remove and replace mansard roof shingles on the 27 Ellsworth Street building would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

Mr. Szymczak stated that he is looking to replace the siding on the 27 ½ Ellsworth Street building due to the presence of lead paint and asked if the Commission can vote on that petition. Chair Schneider responded that the Commission cannot vote on a petition that was not duly advertised.

Chair Schneider asked for details about the stair repair. The applicant responded that he plans to repair the existing stairs and to add a new flight of stairs above them. Chair Schneider stated that the stairs do not appear to be the historical feature of the house, and therefore, the Commission is not concerned with it. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Constantine and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed repair of the stairs on the 27 1/2 Ellsworth Street building would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

2. **41 Lancaster Street (HC-2009-054)** - Building Demolition Delay Waiver: Chair Schneider summarized to the Commission the letter sent by the applicant requesting the Commission's vote and stating that an effort will be made to move the existing building to a different location and to build a new building on the parcel. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner McCann and seconded by Commissioner Crowley, the Commission voted 1-3 (with Commissioner Constantine voting yes, and the rest voting no) that the proposed demolition of the structure would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester. The motion failed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was not approved. Deborah Packard of Preservation Worcester asked the Commission if the applicant demonstrated true interest in the property. She wondered if the applicant can demolish the building without getting permission from the owner. Chair Schneider responded that demolition cannot occur without an owner's permission. Commissioner Crowley stated that an attorney can represent both owner and buyer party and if the proof of true interest was not demonstrated, and that the City should verify the applicant's authority in submitting this petition.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

3. **50 Holden Street (HC-2009-055)** - Building Demolition Delay Waiver: Maria Leitao-Pina, petitioner, is seeking to replace existing asphalt roof shingles with new asphalt roof shingles. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition to replace existing asphalt roof shingles with new asphalt roof shingles would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.
4. **596 Cambridge Street (HC-2009-057)** - Building Demolition Delay Waiver: Patricia Reardon, representative for Roman Catholic Bishop of Worcester, petitioner, is seeking to repair and replace leaking tiled roof on the rectory. Ms. Reardon stated that the rectory at 596 Cambridge Street has an asphalt shingled roof which was installed in 1970s and is currently in disrepair and leaking. She added that the Church itself has slate roof, but not the rectory. Commissioner Crowley asked that the decision reflect the fact that the rectory roof is not made of slate tiles, but of asphalt shingles. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner McCann and

seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition to replace existing asphalt roof shingles with new asphalt roof shingles would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

- 5. 13 Montvale Road (HC-2009-058) - Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Paul Kelly, petitioner, is seeking to remove the existing rear porch and replace it with an enclosed porch using wooden shingles to match the siding on the house. Chair Schneider noted that he went on a site visit and saw that the proposed work has been done already by enclosing and shingling the porch, and that only replacing the stairs and painting shingles is left. The petitioner confirmed that observation and added that he is planning to extend the trim all the way around. Chair Schneider stated that a small portion of the porch is visible from the street. Commissioner Crowley stated that common lattice patterns at the bottoms of the porches in the district are horizontal and vertical, while the new lattice pattern on the petitioner's building is diagonal instead, which seemed inconsistent with the existing architectural details in the district. He suggested that the petitioner replaces his lattice to match the look in the district. He then added that the new porch door is not visible from the street. Roy Hegedus of 11 Montvale Road, spoke in strong support of the project. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner McCann and seconded by Commissioner Crowley, it was determined that the removal and replacement of the rear porch is appropriate and compatible with the preservation and protection of the Montvale Local Historic District as it relates to the historic and architectural value and significance of the site and structure and voted 4-0 to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following:

- Remove the existing rear porch and replace it with an enclosed porch using wooden shingles to match the siding on the house.

Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed removal of the existing rear porch and replacement with an enclosed porch using wooden shingles to match the siding on the house would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

Chair Schneider asked if the petitioner is planning to move the utility box from the rear of the house to the side. Commissioner Constantine stated that electric companies, not residents, usually determine the placement of these. Chair Schneider stated that he would prefer to have the utility box on the inside of the house.

- 6. 72 Jacques Avenue aka 12 Queen Street (HC-2009-059) - Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Brian Beaton and Ms. Bradley, representatives for Community Healthlink Inc., petitioner, are seeking to remove the fire escape. Chair Schneider stated that the fire escape is not visible from the public way, but that he saw it on the pictures included in the application. Mr. Beaton stated that in place of a fire escape, a second means of access

will be provided internally. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition to remove the fire escape in the rear of the building would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

- 7. 9 Wyman Street (HC-2009-060) - Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Gladis Osorio, petitioner, and Andrew Howarth from Worcester Community Housing Resources' Community Loan Fund, the lender and representative for the petitioner, are seeking to 1) install vinyl siding, 2) replace the front door with 6-panel fiberglass door and 3) replace windows on the back porch. Mr. Howarth stated that the siding paint is badly deteriorated. Chair Schneider stated that vinyl siding would cover main architectural features of the building, and while acknowledging that the neighborhood consists of a mix of building with original and vinyl siding, stated that he would not support replacing the existing siding with vinyl siding unless economic hardship documentation is provided. Chair Schneider asked if the applicant considered scraping and repainting the existing siding. Ms. Osorio stated that vinyl siding lasts longer and that vinyl siding would provide better insulation. Commissioner Constantine stated that polyform insulation provided with vinyl siding is only half an inch thick, and while it provides some insulation, it is not considerable. Chair Schneider suggested insulating between stud spaces instead. He added that the life span of most vinyl siding is 20 years, while the wood could last up to 100 years. Commissioner Crowley stated that he cannot vote to approve the proposal to replace siding with vinyl, because, in his opinion, it will be detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the City. Mr. Howarth stated that the existing siding and trim are considerably deteriorated and added that visible porches would be retained. Chair Schneider stated that he does not object to replacing windows in the rear of the building. He asked if there will be rental units in the building. Mr. Howarth responded that there will be two rental units. Commissioner Crowley asked if financing was available for restoration of building features. Mr. Howarth responded yes, but stated that the petitioner had a preference for replacement instead. Chair Schneider told to the petitioner that air infiltration around windows can be fixed thus improving building's overall energy efficiency. Mr. Howarth responded that most of the windows are vinyl and that insulation is already tight. Commissioner Constantine told the petitioner that if economic hardship documentation is provided, it should compare the pricing of materials and labor for wood siding restoration v. vinyl siding replacement, and should not take into consideration savings from potential energy savings as the Commission does not have the purview of that. Mr. Howarth asked if the Commission had a standard by which it judges economic hardship. The Commissioners stated that they judge each such petitioner on a case-by-case basis. Commissioner Crowley also added that the economic hardship documentation should provide evidence of existing damage. Ms. Osorio expressed concern, saying that she and her husband already paid half of the cost of vinyl siding replacement to the contractor. Upon Mr. Howarth and Mr. Osorio's request, and upon a motion my Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 4-0 to continue the item to October

8<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in order to give the applicant enough time to provide economic hardship information.

8. **264 Park Avenue (HC-2009-061) - Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Donald Bray, representative for Hopkins Realty, petitioner, is seeking to remove and replace roof and fascia. Mr. Bray stated that the roof is in disrepair, and that three layers of shingles seem to have been installed illegally. Therefore, he added, replacing the roof, as opposed to repairing it, seems more logical. Commissioner Crowley asked if the roof is visible from the street, to which Mr. Bray responded no. Chair Schneider wanted to clarify for the record that this petition is for roof and fascia replacement and that the 264 Park Avenue is also known as 266 Park Avenue. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition to remove and replace roof and fascia would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver was approved.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

9. **3-5 Brussels Street** – Ms. Zhaurova informed the Commission that on April 30, 2009, the Commission had approved demolition of the western two-story section of the 5 Brussels Street building. On August 13, 2009, the Commission had approved demolition of a two-story wood-frame structure (known as Whittall Mill #1) on the site. Ms. Zhaurova stated that while the boiler room was to be demolished according to the plans submitted with both applications, the Commission did not vote on approving its demolition. The Commission expressed the feeling that its demolition was implied since the building was shown on the submitted plans. Upon a motion by Mr. Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 4-0 to ask Ms. Zhaurova to write a revised decision including approval of the boiler room demolition.
7. **2 Massachusetts Avenue:** Ms. Zhaurova informed the Commission that only the Department of Inspectional Services can send compliance letters, and stated that Division of Planning and Regulatory Services will send a letter to the Department of Inspectional Services requesting that staff investigate a potential compliance issue with respect to replacing a front walkway without a Certificate of Appropriateness.
8. **856 Main Street:** Ms. Zhaurova stated that on May 28, 2009, staff informed the Commission that the Director of Inspectional Services had issued an emergency order for demolition of this property. She corrected that statement by saying that the order issued was an executive order, not an emergency order.
9. **Worcester Community Housing Resources' Community Loan Fund:** Commissioner McCann stated that a non-profit Worcester Community Housing Resources (WCHR) suggested to him that the Commission refer petitioners who file for economic hardship to apply for funding through WCHR. Chair Schneider proposed to have a list of agencies petitioners could be referred to. Commissioner McCann also suggested MassSAVE organization that helps subsidize weatherization. Ms. Zhaurova stated that there might be

a potential or perceived conflict of interest if the Commission were to have a list of suggestions companies and organizations. Commissioner Constantine asked if the Commission would like to request a legal opinion about this.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 P.M.