

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER
December 15, 2011**

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Thomas Constantine, Chair
Timothy McCann, Vice-Chair
Janet Merrill, Clerk
James Crowley
Kevin Provencher
Peter Schneider

Staff Present: Edgar Luna, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Constantine called the meeting to order at 5:43 P.M.

MINUTES:

The Historical Commission accepted the minutes from the December 1, 2011 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. 40 Temple Street (HC-2011-086) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Jordan O'Connor, representative for the Roman Catholic Bishop of Worcester, petitioner, and architect for the project, presented the petition. Mr. O'Connor stated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove the existing, rotted plywood shell on vertical surfaces and replace with new exterior grade plywood, moisture barrier and composite white trim to match the existing shell, (b) remove the existing rotted plywood roof tiers and replace with new lead coated flashing and ice & water shield, (c) remove the existing rotted plywood at the steeple based roof and replace with new single-ply membrane and (d) add a new structural steel frame to the roof to reinforce the existing heavy timber frames and to repair the existing masonry as needed. Mr. O'Connor stated that the repairs and restoration centered on the steeple. He also indicated that although the interior structure of the roof was in good condition, the area surrounding the steeple was severely deteriorated due to rain and snow sipping through. Mr. O'Connor stated that, in his opinion, the steeple's structural damage was caused by defective repairs implemented approximately in 1980. Mr. O'Connor also

Exhibit A: Application submitted by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Worcester, dated November 16, 2011 and received November 17, 2011.

Exhibit B: Steeple Support Framing Plans drawn by Jordan O'Connor & Associates dated November 16, 2011 and received October 24, 2011, and received November 17, 2011.

- 2. 6 Whitman Road (HC-2011-090) – Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Mary Gardner, owner and petitioner, presented the petition. Ms. Gardner stated that she was seeking Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to remove the asphalt roof shingles on the house and replace them with 30-year architectural asphalt shingles. Ms. Gardner stated that although the roof in place was not original to the structure, the proposed architectural roof shingles would match the existing roof singles in color, style, and texture. Commissioner Crowley stated that the site was important to the Montvale Local Historic District. Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Provencher, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed change was 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; therefore, the Certificate of Appropriateness for this project was approved. Upon a motion by Commissioner McCann and seconded by Commissioner Provencher, the Historical Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester, therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

Exhibit A: Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver application submitted by Mary Gardner dated November 18, 2011 and received November 18, 2011.

Exhibit B: Project Review Memorandum from Edgar Luna to the Worcester Historical Commission dated December 10, 2011.

3. **27-29 Westland Street (HC-2011-091) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Seth Popinchalk, owner and petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Popinchalk stated that he was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove 12 windows located in the western side of the building and replace them with 12 replacement double-hung windows.

He also indicated that he had changed several windows in the recent past and received a Building Permit from the Department of Inspectional Services without being required to seek approval by the Historical Commission. In addition, he indicated that he was surprised that when he submitted a Building permit request to remove and replace the 12 windows recently, he was advised that the proposed change required review by the Historical Commission. Chair Constantine stated that the site is listed in MACRIS and in the National Register of Historic Places; therefore, subject to the City's Building Demolition Delay Waiver Ordinance. He also indicated that while it was not clear why he had received a Building Permit in the recent past without following the due process through the Worcester Historical Commission, the current petition was properly before the Commission.

Commissioner Provencher asked Mr. Popinchalk to inform the Commission how many windows to be replaced were original wooden windows, and he responded that 12 were original windows, and 2 appeared to be replacement windows from the 1980's. Commissioner Provencher asked Mr. Popinchalk to indicate the location of the windows to be replaced and he indicated that 10 windows were located on the north side of the house, and 2 windows were located on the east side of the house. Commissioner Merrill asked Mr. Popinchalk to identify the reasons for the proposed changes, and he indicated that the windows to be changed were single-pane, drafty and deteriorated. He also stated that the goal of the proposed project was to make all windows functional and energy-efficient.

Commissioner Merrill asked Mr. Popinchalk if he had considered restoring the windows instead of replacing them, and he responded that he had not. Commissioner Provencher indicated that what was relevant for the Historical Commission was the removal and replacement of original architectural features, such as the original windows to be replaced and stated that, in this case, the petitioner had not demonstrated that window replacement was the only option, and/or, least expensive solution. He also indicated that there was a common misconception that new windows are more energy-efficient than original wooden windows; however, he indicated that such belief was not always accurate.

Commissioner Provencher also indicated that although the proposed Andersen Windows were good quality windows, the petitioner had not provided the Commission with written cost-estimates comparing window restoration versus window replacement. Therefore, he stated that in order for the Commission to consider the proposed project based on undue hardship, the petitioner would need to provide such information prior to the Commission rendering a vote on the matter.

Commissioner Crowley stated that due to the fact that the site was listed in MACRIS and in the National Register of Historic Places, the applicant would benefit from considering window restoration as an option as it would preserve and enhance the historic significance of the house. He also indicated that, if the petitioner were to consider window restoration as an option, he could contact Preservation Worcester for a list of window restoration vendors in the area.

Chair Constantine stated that the Commission had 2 options: (a) render a vote based on the information submitted, or (b), continue the hearing to the next meeting to allow the petitioner additional time to submit written cost-estimates comparing restoration versus window replacement. He also stressed that in both cases, the petitioner had the choice to decide one way or the other.

Mr. Luna informed Mr. Popinchalk that he could request a continuation of the hearing to the January 12, 2012 meeting, which would allow him additional time to submit the written cost estimates suggested by the Commission. Mr. Popinchalk responded that until now, he had only considered window replacement and not window restoration. Commissioner Schneider also indicated that the applicant could modify the petition to restore the front windows, and install new window on the side.

Commissioner Provencher also stated that the photographs submitted did not show clearly the location of the windows to be replaced, and asked that, should the petitioner consider requesting a continuation of the hearing that additional photographs be submitted clearly indicating the location of the windows to be replaced. Commissioner Schneider stated that, should the Commission approve the window restoration as proposed, the petitioner should consider saving one of the original wooden windows for future reference and to document the historic architectural features of the house.

Chair Constantine asked Mr. Popinchalk to inform the Commission whether or not he wanted to continue the hearing to a future meeting to allow him additional time to submit supplemental information, or, have the Commission vote on the petition as submitted. Mr. Popinchalk indicated that he had only considered replacing the windows; therefore, he asked that the Commission render a vote based on the information submitted. Upon a motion by Commissioner Provencher and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 2-4 (commissioners Provencher, Merrill, Schneider and Crowley voting no), that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester, therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was denied.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Susan Popinchalk, dated November 18, 2011 and received November 18, 2011.

- 4. 11 Gilman Street (HC-2011-092) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** William McCarthur, representative for Rudolph Selami, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. McCarthur stated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove and replace the asphalt roof shingles with 30-year architectural roof shingles, (b) remove and replace the chimney with like materials, (c) remove the staircase in the rear of the building and replace it with a staircase constructed of pressure-treated wood, (d) remove and replace the front porch, (e) remove and replace the front and rear doors, and (f), remove and replace one cellar window. Mr. McCarthur indicated that the house was severely deteriorated, and indicated that most of its architectural features had been altered, removed or collapsed during recent years due to age, neglect and/or deterioration. Commissioner Provencher indicated that although the base of the front deck was severely deteriorated and some sections appeared to have collapsed, most of the support columns, corbels, lintels and fenestration were still attached to the main frame of the porch, and could be repaired and reintegrated into a new porch. Mr. McCarthur confirmed that the architectural features of the upper section of the front porch seemed to be original to the house, and indicated that these could be repaired and re-integrated into the new porch. Commissioner Schneider asked Mr. McCarthur to inform the Commission what type of railing was proposed for the front porch. Mr. McCarthur indicated that the petitioner was proposing to replace the existing railing with wooden turned spindles as such architectural feature was more appropriate to the period of the house. Commissioner Crowley encouraged Mr. McCarthur to preserve, restore and re-integrate as many original architectural features as possible, and he responded that he would. Commissioner Provencher stated that, in his opinion, the Commission should consider adding as a condition of approval that the existing original exterior architectural features of the front porch such as the support columns, corbels, lintels and fenestration, be repaired, repainted and reincorporated into the new front porch. Upon a motion by Commissioner Provencher and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester, therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved with the following condition:

- *The existing original exterior architectural features of the front porch (support columns, corbels, lintels and fenestration), be repaired, repainted and reincorporated into the new front porch.*

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Rudolph Selami dated November 21, 2011 and received November 22, 2011.

- 5. 212 Beacon Street (HC-2011-093) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Steve Teasdale, representative for Beacon Brightly, LLC, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Tisdale stated that he was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove the chimney to below the roof level, (b), remove and

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Beacon Brightly, LLC dated November 21, 2011 and received November 23, 2011.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Chair Constantine informed the Commission that tonight's meeting was the last meeting that Commissioner Merrill attended as member off the Worcester Historical Commission, due to the fact that her term would expire at the end of the month. Therefore, he thanked her for her services to the Commission and the City of Worcester. Commissioner Merrill thanked all members of the Commission for their support during her tenure as member of the Worcester Historical Commission.

MEETING ADJOURNMEMNT:

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.