

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER
March 8, 2012**

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Thomas Constantine, Chair
Kevin Provencher, Clerk
Peter Schneider
Andrew Shveda

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

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Constantine called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

MINUTES:

The Historical Commission held the minutes from the February 23, 2012 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. 72 (aka 66-67) Shrewsbury Street (HC-2012-004) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Matthew Doyle, representative for J&M Batista Family Limited Partnership, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Doyle stated that the applicant was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to remove and replace twelve (12) mullioned “Buick” logo windows with mullioned glass insulated windows in the parapet. He also stated that this item was an integral part of the original petition which was submitted on January 19, 2012, and heard by the Commission at their February 9, 2012 meeting. In addition, he reminded the Commission that at such meeting, they approved all the items in the petition except the present item, which was continued to the March 8, 2012 meeting in order to provide the applicant additional time to consider alternative restoration plans.

Mr. Doyle indicated that following suggestions by the Commission, he searched regional artisan listings and found a stained-glass artisan who would be able to remove, repair and integrate the twelve (12) “Buick” logos into new insulated windows. He stated that after evaluating the twelve (12) windows, it was determined that five of them are damaged and the surrounding glass and metal are damaged beyond repair. However, he stressed that the artisan would be able to restore the five (5) damaged windows with original glass,

remove the logos from the damaged windows and attached them to the proposed windows. In addition he indicated that once the proposed windows had been installed, they would look exactly the same as the windows in place because they would contain the Buick logo in the center as the current windows do.

Commissioner Schneider expressed concern that the applicant had not considered restoring the original windows, and pointed out that the original logo windows were some of the most prominent and historic architectural features of the building. Mr. Doyle indicated that the proposed windows would meet code, were energy efficient, and more importantly, they would fit the existing profile in material and style. He also stressed that the windows would have a simulated lite and had double glass panes for insulation purposes.

Commissioner Shveda asked Mr. Doyle if the proposed windows would be affixed permanently, or if they could be opened if needed for ventilation purposes. Mr. Doyle responded that the proposed windows would be affixed permanently. Commissioner Provencher expressed concern with the proposed removal of the original windows, stating that they were original and unique architectural features of the building. Mr. Doyle indicated that he would darken the color of the metal surrounding the proposed restoration in order to provide an “aged patina”. Commissioner Provencher reiterated his concern that the loss of original materials was important to preserve the originality of the windows.

Commissioner Schneider asked is any of the twelve (12) could be saved in their entirety, and Mr. Doyle responded that it was difficult to ascertain due to the fact that they were still attached to the frames. Commissioner Schneider stated that if it was determined that all the windows could not be saved, he encouraged the petitioner to save at least one window for future reference and/or donate it to Preservation Worcester for safe keeping and historic window demonstrations.

My. Doyle stated that he had made his best effort to meet the requirements and suggestions of the Commission. He indicated that he was aware, and appreciated, the importance of restoring original windows; however, he stressed that the windows in question had deteriorated beyond repair. Jo Hart expressed support for the restoration of the original windows. She also indicated that, alternatively, the petitioner may consider encasing the original windows in their original frames between two new glass panes.

Commissioner Provencher stated that he was not certain the applicant had considered all the restoration options available, and added that what the petitioner was proposing was to remove the logo and attach it to new window, and indicated that during that process, the originality of the windows would be lost. Mr. Doyle indicated that window frames were rotted and could not be saved. He also stressed that that the Department of Inspectional Services required him to bring the building to code, hence his need to restore the windows.

Mr. Doyle indicated that he would like to request a continuation of the hearing to provide him additional time to reconsider the restoration plan. Mr. Luna stated that approving the continuation request would allow Mr. Doyle an opportunity to submit the cost estimates and the proposed restoration plan information previously requested by the Commission. He also indicated that if so, Mr. Doyle would need to submit such information one (1) week prior to the meeting.

At the request of the petitioner's representative and upon a motion by Commissioner Schneider and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, the Commission voted 4-0 to continue the hearing to the April 19, 2012 meeting to allow the petitioner additional time to submit a restoration proposal regarding the removal and replacement of the twelve (12) mullioned 'Buick' logo windows with mullioned glass insulated windows in the parapet, and to extend the constructive approval date to May 7, 2012.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by J&M Batista Family Limited Partnership, dated January 18, 2012 and received January 19, 2012.

Exhibit B: Request for Continuance/Constructive Approval Date Extension, dated March 8, 2012 and received March 8, 2012.

2. **185 Salisbury Street (HC-2012-000) – Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Andrew Cariglia, representative for the American Antiquarian Society, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Cariglia stated that the petitioner was seeking Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove the copper sheets on top of the dome, and replace them with copper sheets of the same size, texture and gauge, and (b), remove, re-point, repair, and/or replace marble where needed.

He stated that the copper sheets located on top of the central dome had deteriorated beyond repair due to age and use. He indicated that the corroded sheets were causing internal leakage into the library section of the building, and damage to the marble blocks. In addition, he indicated that the materials proposed would be the same as the materials currently in place.

Mr. Luna asked Mr. Cariglia to specify if the gauge of the proposed copper sheets would be the same as the sheets in place, and he responded that the petitioner was proposing to install thicker copper sheets around the base of the dome, but indicated that the remaining sheets would be of the same gauge. Commissioner Shveda asked if all the metal pieces in place would be removed and replaced, and Mr. Cariglia responded affirmatively. Commissioner Schneider asked Mr. Cariglia to describe the extent of the damage to the marble slabs and re responded that the damage was minimal; however, he stressed that it would be addressed as best as possible.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Schneider and seconded by Commissioner Provencher, the Commission voted 4-0 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 Schneider and seconded by Commissioner Provencher, the Commission voted 4-0 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 American Antiquarian Society dated February 3, 2012 and received February 6, 2012.

Exhibit B: Project Review Memorandum from Nancy Tran to the Worcester Historical Commission dated February 28, 2012.

3. **74 Providence Street (HC-2012-009) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Mullen Sawyer and Andrew Howard, representatives for Oak Hill Community Development Corporation, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Sawyer stated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove the existing roof shingles from the front porch roof and replace them with architectural shingles to match those existing on the left side of the building, (b) remove the roof tiles on the addition and replace them with architectural shingles to match those existing on the left side of the building, (c) remove the existing tiles on the chimney cap and replace them with metal to match the proposed cupola, (d) remove and replace the front door, and (e), add columns to the front porch to replicate the original detail referenced in the 1983 MHC Form B Survey Report.

Mr. Sawyer stated that the proposed changes were needed in order to address advanced deterioration due to age and neglect, as well as to preserve the integrity and originality of the building. He indicated that the front doors were not original to the structure, and stressed that the design of the proposed doors would be more historically appropriate to the period and style of the house.

Commissioner Provencher stated that the design of the proposed doors appeared to be more accurate to the period of the house. However, he expressed concern with the removal and replacement of the Spanish-Style tiles, due to the fact that they appeared to be original architectural features of the house. Commissioner Schneider also expressed concerns that the petitioner was proposing to remove the existing tiles on the chimney cap and replace them with metal to match the proposed cupola. Mr. Sawyer indicated that the tiles in place were damage beyond repair; therefore, restoration would not be possible.

Commissioner Schneider stated that the current overall appearance of the chimney was a unique architectural feature of the building, and indicated that he was uncertain if the applicant had exhausted all options to preserve them. Chair Constantine indicated that the Commission supported the preservation of original architectural features such as the roof

tiles. Commissioner Shveda indicated that, in his opinion, preserving the original exterior architectural features was important; however, he also stressed that over the years, historic homes undergo changes which may or may not be in the same style and/or period of the house; however, these changes also become an important part of the history of the house. Commissioner Shveda also expressed concern with the proposed project.

Commissioner Provencher stated that it appeared that over the years, several poor decisions were made in an effort to repair the structure and as a result, the house lost several important architectural features such as the Spanish-Style tiles and others. Commissioner Schneider expressed concern that the applicant had not submitted cost estimates comparing restoration versus replacements. Commissioner Provencher stated that although the roof of the house had several prominent features at different angles, it was basically a hip-roof. Mr. Howard indicated that the roof was causing major internal damage due to its deteriorated state. He also added that the condition of the roof was beyond repair.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Provencher and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, the Commission voted 2-2 (Commissioners Schneider and Shveda voted no) that the proposed changes would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester. The motion failed and the Worcester Historical Commission considered the Building Demolition Delay Waiver with respect to the petitioner's evidence related to undue economic hardship. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Provencher and seconded by Commissioner Shveda, the Worcester Historical Commission voted 4-0 that failure to issue a waiver would result in undue economic hardship; therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waived for this project was approved.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Oak Hill Community Development Corporation, dated February 7, 2012 and received February 7, 2012.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- 4. Worcester State Hospital Clock Tower Update:** Commissioner Schneider stated that he had attended the Clock Tower signing ceremony on Thursday, February 27 at Preservation Worcester, and signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on behalf of the Worcester Historical Commission.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.