

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

APRIL 28, 2016

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Andrew Shveda, Chair
Timothy McCann, Vice-Chair
Randolph Bloom, Clerk
Devon Kurtz

Commission Members Absent: Robyn Conroy
Cheryll Holley, Alternate
Karl Bjork, Alternate

Staff Members Present: Stephen S. Rolle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Deborah Steele, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

Approval of Minutes

April 7, 2016 - Minutes held as not enough members present who could vote on item.

New Business

1. 44 May Street – HC-2016-024

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver

Petitioner: Mariarjulia Pires

Present Use: Two family residence

Year Built: 1889

Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, NRD (National Register District), NRMRA (National Register Multiple Resource Area), and (fka) George Miller House

Petition Purpose: De-leading 47 windows

Timothy Hansen from the City of Worcester Housing Department appeared on behalf of the application. Mr. Hansen stated that they are looking permission to replace the windows on the house.

Vice-Chair McCann asked how many windows were going to be replaced. Mr. Hansen stated that he did not have total count but it almost every window.

Vice-Chair McCann stated that his concern is the percentage of windows being replaced and where they are located on the home. He told Mr. Hansen that the Commission did not want to see a hodgepodge of windows on the home that are a mix of both old and new. Mr. Hansen stated that would make sense.

Chair Sheveda asked on the scope where it states replace sash is the sash itself being replaced. Mr. Hansen stated that would be the whole window and most of the windows are non-operable and would not survive being dipped.

Chair Shveda asked if the storm window would be replaced. Mr. Hansen stated that it would.

Chair Shveda asked on the scope where it states that they would scrape the sill; would that be inside and outside of the unit? Mr. Hansen stated that it could be either/or depending on the window.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he did visit the property and asked about the bay window on the front side of the home and whether it would be saved as it is an unusual window. Mr. Hansen stated that window is leaded.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if that window could be abated as it is unique. Mr. Hansen stated that the re-hab specialist stated that the window wouldn't survive a dip.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he doesn't think any of the windows are original to the home.

Mr. Hansen stated that the replacement windows will be replaced in size and kind to what is existing.

Chair Shveda stated that the Commission is in receipt of letter from Massachusetts Historical Commission relative to the project which states that they have reviewed the project and finds that it will have no adverse effect provided that the replacement materials match existing.

Commissioner Bloom stated that they do not know what the window replacement would look like. Mr. Hansen stated that it is vinyl replacement window.

Chair Shveda pointed out that this property is not in a historic district so the Commission's purview is only what historic material is being taken away.

Vice-Chair McCann stated that he also would note that it would be economic hardship to replace the amount of windows in wood and there is some question whether these windows are original.

Mariarjulia Pires, the property owner, stated that the windows inside are so bad that on several occasions she had to leave her home as cold air is coming into the home and she asking Commission to allow her to put the windows in.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received March 28, 2016 and dated March 22, 2016.

Exhibit B: Communication from Massachusetts Historical Commission re: De-leading, 44 May Street dated April 12, 2016 and received April 15, 2016.

Old Business

2. 68 Gardner Street – HC-2016-021

Petition:	Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner:	Simshabs Capital Partners, Ltd.
Present Use:	Industrial Building
Year Built:	1900
Historic Status:	MACRIS Listed
Petition Purpose:	Demolish Building

Paul Connors of Strategic Environmental Services appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Connors stated that he was representing Raffi Weiss of Shimshabs Capital Partners LTD who is presently negotiating to buy the property.

Chair Shveda asked if asked if the applicant does not own the property is the application allowed to go forward. Ms. Steele stated that staff had checked with the Law Department and application is allowed to go forward.

Mr. Connors stated that Mr. Weiss is anticipating on closing on the property soon and wants to demolish the property as it is not sound and is in a very difficult condition. He stated that a structural engineer has surveyed the building and has deemed it not salvageable and there are environmental hazards that need to be considered. He stated that coal bins have been found on the property that could have been potentially been filled with asbestos demolition debris and they need to remove it but it not practical to do with the building standing as there could be exposure to people going into the building to asbestos fibers. He stated that the remediation work prior to demolition is estimated to cost \$600,000 and the demolition of the building could be another \$400,000. He stated that Mr. Raffi initially wanted to preserve the building but it would cost several million dollars to make the building safe.

Chair Shveda asked what was the plan for after the building was demolished. Mr. Connors stated that the proposed owner wants to refurbish the building and turn it into residential apartments. Commission members asked what other properties has the applicant developed and whether he has done any on this large of a scale. Mr. Connors stated that the developer has met with City of Worcester officials and given them details of other projects.

Vice-Chair McCann stated that he was having a hard time with the application as it was vague and there no real goal for development of the property and there are several vacant lots right in vicinity that could be used for new construction.

Chair Shveda stated that it would take probably more than a million dollars just to get the site prepared for construction and would take more than a year before the applicant would be ready to build on the site and because of the murky nature of the application and who owns the building, the transfer of ownership and what is the actual plan for the site he would have hard time saying that this building needs to come down.

Mr. Connors stated that the building, according to the courts, needs to be torn done as there is a court order for the site and owner is being assessed fines for not complying.

Chair Shveda stated that if building is condemned and needs to be demolished the Commission would have received notice from Inspectional Services.

Mr. Rolle stated that based on information he had received the building has not been condemned but has been ordered to be made safe but he can follow up on that.

Vice-Chair McCann asked Mr. Connors if he would like to continue the item to another meeting so that the proposed owner could be present and more details about the plan for the property could be provided. Mr. Connors stated that he would like to continue to another meeting date.

Julie Darwin spoke in opposition to the building being demolished and expressed concern about the cobblestone road next the building being demolished and stated that the building should not be demolished as it is an important part of the neighborhood.

Jo Hart spoke in opposition to the building demolished stating that the applicant doesn't own the building and wants to see in writing how that is okay for this applicant to go forward.

Mr. Rolle stated that another applicant can apply for the Building Demolition Delay Waiver as long as the person has permission from the current property owner which the applicant has provided.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Commission voted 4-0 to continue the meeting until the May 19, 2016 Historical Commission meeting and to extend the constructive grant deadline until May 27, 2016.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received March 18, 2016 and dated March 15, 2016.

Exhibit B: WPI study received by Ms. Darwin at the April 7, 2016 Historical Commission meeting.

3. 371-385 Main Street (aka 379 Main Street) – HC-2016-025

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: SJ Realty, LLC
Present Use: Mixed Use Building
Year Built: 1885
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, (fka) People’s block & Grout’s Block
Petition Purpose:

- Replace metal areas with like material
- Replace stucco and aluminum sheathing with stucco

Dan Jalbert along with Jon Le, the architect for the project, appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Jalbert stated that he had appeared before the Commission in 2012 for restoring the façade of the building and they are before Commission tonight to make a modest change in the retail portion of the façade so that it will go in-line with the proposed changes that City of Worcester has planned for the streetscape. He stated that they have a new tenant coming to the building and they are trying to accommodate their façade needs.

Mr. Jalbert stated that this a low key change with not much modernization and that they are just trying it make it more uniform across the front of the building.

Mr. Le stated that currently there are four or five different types of material on the façade and what they are trying to do is simplify it so they would keep the profile of the exterior and remove the mixed material and replace with one stucco.

Mr. Jalbert stated that none of the windows in the proposed area are original to the building.

Chair Shveda asked if when they do removal of material from the Second Empire building if they find something interesting underneath such as detailed masonry work would the applicant maintain that. Mr. Jalbert stated that he would.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Kurtz and seconded by Vice-Chair McCann, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application received March 29, 2016 and dated March 29, 2016.

4. 56 Florence Street – HC-2016-023

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: VF Properties, LLC
Present Use: Three family apartment building
Year Built: 1890
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, (fka) Oliver Blake-Bruno Handfield House
Petition Purpose:

- Repair front porch with new footings and flooring
- Add Victorian railing and balusters
- Replace cedar shingles

Leonard Vairo appeared on behalf of the application. Mr. Vairo stated that they had appeared before the Commission last year for fixing a porch and dormer and they completed the dormer but that they are still working on the porch.

Mr. Vairo stated that he needs to put the footings in and was thinking of putting in a railing but thinks the home would look better without it. The Commission agreed but stated that Mr. Vairo should check with Inspectional Services to make sure that home would meet code without the railings.

Mr. Vairo stated that there are some cedar shingles that also need to be replaced.

Chair Shveda asked if the 6x6 post would go from the framing down. Mr. Vairo stated yes.

Chair Shveda stated that the applicant is doing his best to maintain historic detail of the home.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application received March 25, 2016 and dated March 25, 2016.

5. 9 Goulding Street – HC-2016-022

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: VF Properties, LLC
Present Use: Three family apartment building
Year Built: 1900
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, and part of the Goulding Plot Area
Petition Purpose:

- Demolish enclosed wrap around porch
- Restore mansard roofline and dormers

- Extension of vinyl siding
- Replace main roof
- Repair and re-point chimney

Leonard Vairo appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Vairo stated that was porch was added on to the home and is sagging and he would like to be able remove it and then restore the front of the house.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if there were stairs as well. Mr. Vairo stated no just the porch.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if the windows would be replaced in coil stock to match rest of home. Mr. Vairo stated that is what he would like to do.

Chair Shveda asked if the previous exterior surface was still existing and if Mr. Vairo wanted to maintain that. Mr. Vairo stated yes.

Chair Shveda asked if the entire porch was being removed. Mr. Vairo stated yes as porch was not original and stated that he will restore the front and he would do some landscaping in front and he would also would repair and re-point the chimney.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if the fascia on the mansard would the element be replicated. Mr. Vairo stated that he did not have answer to that. Vice-Chair McCann stated that without that mansard the roofline would look funny and Mr. Vairo may want to maintain that.

Chair Shveda stated that given Mr. Vairo’s track record before the Commission he is sure the applicant will do everything to maintain the historical details of the home.

Vice-Chair McCann asked if the current asphalt roof shingles were being replaced with an architectural shingle. Mr. Vairo stated yes.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received March 25, 2016 and dated March 25, 2016.

6. 123 Harrington Way – HC-2016-027

Petition:	Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner:	WAARC, Inc.
Present Use:	Single family residence
Year Built:	1852
Historic Status:	MACRIS Listed, (fka) Daniel Harrington House

Petition Purpose:

- Repair and replace decking on front porch
- Replace framing under deck
- Replace deck steel pipe footing
- Replace lattice

Michael Kendrick and Robert the General Contractor appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Kendrick stated that they are looking to repair the front porch as it unsafe so they would like to remove the decking and replace it.

Chair Shveda asked if the fir decking would be replaced in kind. Robert stated yes.

Chair Shveda asked if the handrails would be maintained. Mr. Kendrick stated yes.

Chair Shveda asked if the lattice would be replaced in kind. Robert stated that they would like to use vinyl as where the lattice is located is down in the shrubs.

Commissioner Bloom stated that you can't see the area from the street.

Chair Shveda asked if a frame would be built for the lattice. Robert stated yes on the back of it.

Chair Shveda stated that it is beautiful porch and understands that lattice would be expensive to replace in kind but with all the effort is taking to maintain the beautiful front porch that he would ask that the applicant take some effort to understand how the look of the vinyl lattice would look from the street.

Chair Shveda stated that the house is set back pretty far and the shrubs surround it. Robert stated that they could look at adding another shrub to hide the lattice.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for this project was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver received March 31, 2016 and dated March 31, 2016.

Commissioner Kurz recused himself from the item and left the meeting room.

7. 14 Whitman Road – HC-2016-026

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness
Petitioner: Wardens Vestry of all Saints Church.
Present Use: Single family residence
Year Built: 1920
Historic Status: MACRIS Listed, (fka) Harold Ashley House. MACRIS listed, NRD (National Register District), NRMRA (National Register Multiple Resource Area), and part of the Montvale Local Historic District

Petition Purpose:

- Landscaping in front of the house
- Remove and replace driveway

Donna Crocker and David Okerland appeared on behalf of the application.

Ms. Crocker stated that they appeared before the Commission last year asking to build a wood fence and to take out some overgrown shrubbery and stated that they did the work after getting approval and now the proposed plan is to do the plantings. Ms. Crocker stated that they have provided a detail listing of the plantings for the property to the Commission. Ms. Crocker stated that they will also be putting in new grass.

Mr. Okerland stated that the driveway is in horrendous shape. Ms. Crocker stated that they will be replacing the driveway in kind.

Chair Shveda stated that he likes the plant list and has no issues with the application.

Commissioner Bloom stated that the application is appropriate for the District.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Commission voted 3-0 that the Building Demolition Delay Waiver is Non-Applicable for this application as no historic material was being removed.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann, and seconded by Commissioner Bloom, the Commission voted 3-0 that the application is 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 3-0 to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness received March 29, 2016 and dated March 29, 2016.

Commissioner Kurtz returned to the meeting room.

8. Preservation Plan Update

Mr. Rolle stated that a workshop had been scheduled for May 11, 2016 from 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. in the Levi Lincoln Chambers, City Hall.

9. Communications

- a. Communication from MacRostie Historic Advisors, re: Request for Letter of Support, 18 Chestnut Street received electronically April 6, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Vice-Chair McCann the Commission voted 4-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- b. Communication from vhb, re: Request for Letter of Support, 50 Franklin Street received electronically April 6, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Vice-Chair McCann the Commission voted 4-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- c. Communication from vhb, re: Request for Letter of Support, 82 Franklin Street received electronically April 6, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Vice-Chair McCann the Commission voted 4-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- d. Communication from Massachusetts Historical Commission, re: 100 Institute Road received April 11, 2016 and dated April 4, 2016.

The Commission requested that staff submit copy of the Historical Commission minutes to Massachusetts Historical Commission relative to the item.

- e. Communication from MacRostie Historic Advisors, re: Request for Letter of Support, 18 Grafton Street received electronically April 6, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Commissioner Bloom the Commission voted 4-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- f. Communication from vhb, re: Request for Letter of Support, 507 Main Street, received electronically April 6, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and second by Vice-Chair McCann the Commission voted 4-0 to issue a Letter of Support contingent upon the applicant's plan matching the description of the work proposed in the letter from vhb dated April 6, 2016 to the Worcester Historical Commission.

- g. Communication from MacRostie Historic Advisors, re: Request for Letter of Support, Lincoln Square received electronically April 6, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Vice-Chair McCann the Commission voted 4-0 to issue a Letter of Support.

- h. Communication received from Tetra Tech, re: Worcester Stormwater Improvements along I-290 received April 1, 2016 and dated March 29, 2016.

No comment.

- i. 2017 Meeting Schedule

The Commission stated that they were fine with the upcoming 2017 schedule.

- j. Communication from vhb, re: Request for Letter of Support & Determination of Eligibility, 155 Ararat Street, received electronically April 25, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Vice-Chair McCann the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the Letter of Support and Determination of Eligibility.

- k. Communication from vhb, re: Request for Letter of Support & Determination of Eligibility, 16 Norwich Street, received electronically, April 25, 2016.

Upon a motion by Chair Shveda and seconded by Vice-Chair McCann the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the Letter of Support of Determination of Eligibility.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion the Commission adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.