



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

Thursday, November 3, 2022

Worcester City Hall - Levi Lincoln Chamber,
with remote participation options available via Webex online at
<https://cow.webex.com/meet/historicalncommissionwebex> and
call-in number 415-655-0001 (Access Code: 1608081191).

Commissioners Present: Diane Long, Chair
Janet Theerman, Vice-Chair
Steven Taylor, Clerk
Erika Helnarski
Tomi Stefani
Vanessa Andre, Alternate
Donald Northway

Commissioners Absent: Devon Kurtz

Staff Present: Michelle Johnstone, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Michelle Smith, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)

Call Commission to Order – 5:30 PM

Approval of Minutes – No discussion

Old Business

Certificate of Appropriateness

1. 111 Austin Street (MBL 03-016-00022) – HC-2022-051

Jesse Hilgenberg appeared on behalf of Rebecca & Daniel Yarnie. He stated the new proposal features a DaVinci artificial slate tile.

No Commission discussion

No public comment

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes were appropriate for the Crown Hill Local Historic

District. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Certificate of Appropriateness for 111 Austin Street was thus approved.

New Business

Certificate of Appropriateness

2. 32 Newbury Street (MBL 06-006-00028) – HC-2022-074

Naomi Richardson described her application to replace the existing deck on the property with pressure treated wood and replace the mortar. Chair Long asked the applicant to confirm that she is replacing the existing deck with like materials.

Ms. Johnstone stated the deck is non-historic and the new materials will be composite, and pressure treated wood which is not exactly the same material.

Commissioner Theerman the applicant if they plan to paint the deck; Ms. Richardson stated she will paint the deck as reddish color. Commissioner Theerman asked if it's visible from the street, Ms. Richardson confirmed.

Ms. Johnstone described the deck as a later addition and the only reason the Board has purview is because it's being replaced with composite instead of all pressure treated wood.

No Public Comment

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes were appropriate for the Crown Hill Local Historic District. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Certificate of Appropriateness for 32 Newbury Street was thus approved.

3. 5–7 Ashland Street (MBL 03-029-00017, -00018)– HC-2022-083

Zachary Kirdulis with Remodel and Home Improvement spoke on behalf of the applicant. He described the poor condition the rear deck and stairs are currently in, and the materials it will be replaced with. He stated there will be no changes to the brick façade.

No Public Comment

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes were appropriate for the Crown Hill Local Historic District. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Certificate of Appropriateness for 5–7 Ashland Street was thus approved.

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

4. 230 Park Avenue (MBL 11-INX-0002A) – HC-2022-066

Jason Cronin, on behalf of Cornerstone Bank described the existing slate roof on the structure and proposed the slate to be replaced with a synthetic slate roof. Mr. Cronin described the attempts to preserve some of the slate to maintain the historic fabric but has been unsuccessful.

Commissioner Long asked the applicant to describe the proposed synthetic slate roof. Commissioner Northway asked if the applicant had tried to obtain reclaimed slate from another location; the applicant stated he was not aware if this is an option. Commissioner Taylor asked if they had tried to get a new slate roof, the applicant stated there is only poor slate available and it deteriorates so quickly they would prefer not to go with a slate roof.

Commissioner Stefani asked if the slate roof is original; Ms. Johnstone confirmed it is.

Public Comment

Deborah Packard, of Preservation Worcester described the architect and historic nature of this property. Ms. Packard described the prior attempts to preserve the building and the direct attempt Preservation Worcester made with Spencer Bank to aid in historic preservation through designing the drive-thru kiosk and signing a 70-year lease. Ms. Packard asked the Commission to explore other options here to replace or repair the roof

Jonathan Ostrow, with Save Notre Dame Alliance, seconded Ms. Packard's comments

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted zero (0) in favor and seven (7) opposed that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having failed to gain a majority affirmative vote, the motion failed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 230 Park Avenue was thus denied.

5. 12 Woodford Street (MBL 35-023-00036) – HC-2022-067

Jakeline Silveira described her petition and how much this property means to her as an immigrant homeowner. She described the issues with water leaks and her rush to get it fixed, unaware that it was a historically protected property.

Ms. Johnstone described the change in siding and urged the Board to consider that at late as 2019 the structure had synthetic siding. Ms. Johnstone described the Commission's role is to determine whether the removal of the underlying wood shingle siding is detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the city. She noted that the wood shingle siding had been covered for up to thirty years in vinyl siding.

No public comment

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 12 Woodford Street was thus approved.

6. 7 Circuit Avenue East (MBL 14-018-00007) – HC-2022-071

Quoc Bui, the owner, described the petition to the Board and his hope to remodel the home. Mr. Bui described the dangerous condition of the rear entrance and stated he would like to enclose the porch.

Commissioner Taylor asked the applicant if an entrance will remain in that location, the applicant confirmed that it would.

Public Comment:

Deborah Packard stated this building is on the Preservation Worcester endangered building list and is excited to see the building protected and preserved.

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 7 Circuit Avenue East was thus approved.

7. 1 Brattle Street (MBL 49-010-00003) – HC-2022-072

Donald O’Neil, attorney representing the petitioners, described the petition before the Board. Mr. O’Neil described the prior waiver that the Historical Commission had granted, the setbacks from the pandemic, and the other City approvals that have been in process. Mr. O’Neil asked the Commission to grant a waiver to allow demolition of the existing mixed use building at 1 Brattle Street, and stated that if not approved, they will wait out the waiver.

Commissioner Taylor asked for a summary of the prior discussion; Ms. Johnstone described the petition to demolish and reconstruct the structure, and concerns expressed by the Commission previously. She stated the commission voted that it was eligible for listing and authorized the demolition in 2020. Mr. O’Neil described the challenges associated with the small space and an aging property but have shown commitment to this area of the city and this location.

Public Comment

Jonathan Ostrow stated that it’s sad to see a building with such history be demolished. Mr. Ostrow stated that waiting out the demolition isn’t an acceptable route, and it’s designed to give applicants’ time to explore other options and work with the Commission.

Chair Long stated that she doesn’t feel it’s reasonable to make the applicant wait another year since they have been acting in good faith.

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted one (1) in favor (Chair Long) and six (6) opposed (Commissioners Theerman, Taylor, Helnarski, Northway, Stefani, and Andre) that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having failed to gain a majority affirmative vote, the motion failed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 1 Brattle Street was thus denied.

15. 321 Plantation Street, Unit 204 (MBL 19-01B-00204) – HC-2022-082

Taken out of order.

Edmond Gutierrez described the loose and damaged windowpanes. Mr. Gutierrez stated that a contract he contacted stated they needed to be replaced due to the extent of the damage.

Chair Long asked if they are the same; Mr. Gutierrez stated the new windows are identical to the existing windows. Commissioner Taylor asked if the other windows in the building need to be replaced; Ms. Johnstone stated she had been contacted by another owner of the condo and stated the Board could choose a standard window going forward for other condo owners from the same property. Commissioner Andre asked what type on contractors they applicant had contacted; Mr. Gutierrez described.

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and one (1) (commissioner Andre) opposed that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a majority affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 321 Plantation Street was thus approved.

8. 34 Blackstone River Road (MBL 10-016-00008) – HC-2022-075 (heard with item 9 and 10)

Gershon Gulko, attorney for the applicant, described the petition to provide affordable housing and preserve the historic nature of the property. Andrew Hall, an architect described the proposed changes to the structure; exposing stained glass covered by vinyl siding; preserving wood windows; restore bay windows; save all existing trim; and blend the architecture from the existing façade to the new top floor.

Adam Gaval, the general contractor with an ownership interest described more in-depth the storefront on the first floor. He stated the first floor will be accessible and an elevator will be installed, described replacement windows.

9. 36 Blackstone River Road (MBL 10-016-00008) – HC-2022-076 (heard with item 8 and 10)

Mr. Hall described the patio trim he hopes to restore along with the stained-glass windows, bay windows similar to 34 Blackstone River Road. Chair Long asked if they are raising the roof; Mr. Hall stated they are only expanding the dormers to preserve the shape while allowing expansion. Ms. Johnstone stated she requested the applicant not place a full fourth story on the building to preserve the relationship with the gables and dormers.

Commissioner Taylor asked if the exteriors will match; Mr. Hall described.

Commissioner Theerman asked if the stained-glass windows are in apartments; Mr. Hall confirmed.

10. 38 Blackstone River Road (MBL 10-016-00008) – HC-2022-077 (heard with item 8 and 9)

Mr. Hall stated the structure at 38 Blackstone River Road is heavily fire damaged and has been condemned for 22 years. He stated the new construction will be able to be fully accessible.

No public comments

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed, that the proposed demolition at 34 Blackstone River Road would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a majority affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 34 Blackstone River Road was thus approved.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed, that the proposed demolition at 36 Blackstone River Road would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a majority affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 36 Blackstone River Road was thus approved.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed, that the proposed demolition at 38 Blackstone River Road would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a majority affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 38 Blackstone River Road was thus approved.

11. 45 Cedar Street (MBL 02-046-0055A) – HC-2022-078

Russ Haims of Hampton Properties distributed some prior historical restoration projects he completed to the Commission. Mr. Haims stated he purchased the Becker Campus and has found most of the Becker properties have been poorly maintained. He showed photos of the porch roof that is unsalvageable due to the poor condition, but the roof can be repaired. He described the proposal to replace the porch roof with a metal matte roof; replace the vinyl windows with divided light windows.

Commissioner Stefani asked what type of roof they are looking at; Mr. Haims stated it is copper. Mr. Stefani asked if he had considered copper as a replacement material; Mr. Haims stated it is unreasonably expensive material.

Ms. Johnstone reminded the Commission they are tasked to determine if the demolition is appropriate, not yet to determine if the chosen material is appropriate.

Mr. Northway asked about the replacement windows; Mr. Haims stated he would match the grids on the existing windows and would be either black or almond in color.

Public Comment

Jonathan Ostrow asked for the rationale for replacing the slate roof with metal instead of slate. Ms. Johnstone explained that the removal of the roof is the purview of the commission, and proposed material is typically not taken into consideration outside of local historic districts that do have design review purview.

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 45 Cedar Street was thus approved.

12. 48 Sever Street (MBL 02-040-00076) – HC-2022-079

Russ Haims of Hampton Properties described the prior use of the structure, poor maintenance and structural issues that need to be addressed. Ms. Johnstone asked if the decorative window between the cross bays will remain; Mr. Haims stated if that's what the Commission would like he will keep it.

Commissioner Theerman asked what style of windows will replace the existing windows; Mr. Haims stated that the windows are a variety of styles and will replace each with a matching style.

No public comment

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 48 Sever Street was thus approved.

13. 60 William Street (MBL 02-040-00074) – HC-2022-080

Ms. Johnstone gave a brief history of the property.

Russ Haims of Hampton Properties described the intention to turn the property into a multi-family dwelling and his application to replace the windows. Mr. Haims stated this property has been used as an office by Becker College previously and the windows have not been maintained. He stated the windows are not operable or able to be repaired and plans to replace with black windows in the same 4/4 style that is there presently.

No public comment

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 60 William Street was thus approved.

14. 54 West Street (MBL 02-046-00052) – HC-2022-081

Russ Haims of Hampton Properties described the intention to turn the property into apartments, requesting the Commission to approve replacement windows. He stated the final windows will be black or almond and similar to his previous project they will replace the same style of previous windows.

No public comment

On a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted seven (7) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for 54 West Street was thus approved.

Communications

- A. Communication from Ben Haley, National Register Director at Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), to Joy Beasley, Keeper of the National Register at the National Park Service (NPS), notifying her of the positive vote of eligibility for the listing of the Main & Murray Avenue Historic District to the National Register by the State Review Board

Ms. Johnstone gave a brief discussion of the communication.

- B. Communication from Brona Simon, State Historic Preservation Officer at MHC notifying Allison Lee of Worcester Community Housing Resources, Inc., of a determination that a project proposed at 12 Congress Street will have no adverse effect, provided that a Certificate of Appropriateness is obtained from the Worcester Historical Commission.

Ms. Johnstone gave a brief description of the communication.

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman, seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted 7-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:08pm.