

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER
February 9, 2012**

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Timothy McCann, Vice-Chair
Kevin Provencher, Clerk
James Crowley
Peter Schneider
Meagen Mulherin
Andrew Shveda

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

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice-Chair McCann called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

MINUTES:

The Historical Commission accepted the minutes from the January 12, 2012 & January 26, 2012 meetings.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. 16 Wachusett Street (HC-2012-001) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Adam Gaval, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Gaval stated that he was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) install siding with insulation over the existing asbestos panels, (b) remove and replace roof shingles in the Mansard roof, (c) remove and replace rotted wood, and install aluminum edges along the roof, (d) seal off some windows to comply with exterior renovations, and (e), install a vent heating system with an outlet on the side. Mr. Gaval stated that he purchased the structure in disrepair and indicated that he was planning to restore it based on the fact that it was a historic building.

Commissioner Provencher stated that the application submitted was lacking important information such as the location of the windows to be removed, and a clear description of the proposed window replacements. Commissioner Schneider also expressed concern that the application was not clear and descriptive. Mr. Gaval responded that he was proposing to remove and replace 4 windows with a reduced-size vinyl windows, and seal off 4

windows located in the first and second floor. He also said that he was proposing to seal off one side door and install a small window in its place. Commissioner Schneider asked Mr. Gaval to show the Commission the location of the windows and door to be replaced based on the photograph submitted and Mr. Gaval responded that he needed additional time to provide such information. Vice-Chair McCann stated that the Commission would continue with the next petition in the meeting agenda, and would reconvene at the end of the meeting to address this petition.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application submitted by Adam Gaval dated January 12, 2012 and received January 12, 2012.

2. **89 Blithewood Avenue (HC-2012-002) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Valerie Fisk, petitioner, presented the petition. Ms. Fisk stated that she was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following change: (a) remove and replace the front and rear doors with 20-gauge steel doors. She also stated that the doors were not original to the house and indicated that they were replaced approximately in 1950. Ms. Fisk stated that the doors in place were damaged beyond repair, and indicated that she was proposing to replace them with six-panel steel doors that would blend harmoniously with the exterior architectural features of the house. Commissioner Provencher stated that the doors in place could be original based on the fact that the casings around the openings were consistent with the casings located around the house. Ms. Fisk stated that the casings in place would be repaired and retained. Upon a motion by Commissioner Schneider and seconded by Commissioner Provencher, 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 Waived for this project was approved.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application submitted by Valerie Fisk dated January 18, 2012 and received January 18, 2012.

3. **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 petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) Remove and replace 12 large storefront windows and frames with insulated glass windows, (b) remove and replace 12 mullioned 'Buick' logo windows with mullioned glass insulated windows in parapet, (c) remove and replace 2 storefront doors with like materials and similar design, and (d), retroactive approval for recently completed roof work.

Mr. Doyle also indicated that he was proposing to raise the window sill two (2) feet in the front façade and install the store windows above it. Commissioner Provencher stated that raising the windows sills of the store windows fronting Shrewsbury Street two feet would change the integrity of the exterior architecture. He also indicated that the application did not include the proposed raising the window sills. Mr. Luna confirmed that such portion of the proposed work has not been advertised in accordance with the legal notice requirements of the City of Worcester and Open Meeting Law regulations.

Mr. Doyle stated that the request to raise the window sills was due to the fact that a prospective tenant had requested it. Therefore, he indicated that his petition would remain as originally submitted and clarified that the front-store windows proposed would fit the size and profile of the windows in place. He also indicated that he was proposing to replace all the windows located above the front-store windows due to the fact that they included a "Buick" logo in the middle and some of them were damaged and would be difficult to replace.

Commissioner Schneider stated that such windows were a significant and integral part of the original architecture and function of the building. He added that the removal and replacement of these important architectural features would significantly alter the originality and uniqueness of the building. Commissioner Crowley indicated that if removing and replacing these windows was the only alternative, the applicant should consider installing them indoors due to their historic significance. Mr. Doyle stated that he had considered such alternative, and indicated that whether used or not, he was planning to retain them regardless. Commissioner Schneider asked Mr. Doyle if he was planning to sell such windows and he responded that he had decided not sell these windows.

Commissioner Provencher stated that the significance and uniqueness of the upper windows derived from the fact that the design of these windows included a Buick logo in the central part of the glass, and denoted its original use as a Buick vehicle display and dealership. He also indicated that although some of the windows may be damaged and defective, they could be restored and retained. Mr. Doyle stated that he understood the concerns expressed by the Commission and indicated that would like to consider different restoration and replacement alternatives for the upper windows prior to the Commission rendering a vote on this matter; therefore, he requested the Commission to continue this item to the February 23, 2012 meeting to allow him additional time to accomplish this task.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Schneider and seconded by Commissioner Crowley, the Commission voted 6-0 to continue the petition item regarding the removal and replacement of 12 mullioned 'Buick' logo windows with mullioned glass insulated windows in parapet to the February 23, 2012 meeting.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Schneider and seconded by Commissioner Crowley, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition regarding the removal and replacement 12 large storefront windows and frames with insulated glass windows, the removal and replacement of 2 storefront doors with like materials and similar design, and retroactive approval for recently completed roof work 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: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by J&M Batista Family Limited Partnership, dated January 18, 2012 and received January 19, 2012

4. **16-22 Greenwood Street (HC-2012-005) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Rev Lee Bartlett, representative for Quinsigamond Community Center, petitioner, presented the petition. Rev. Bartlett stated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove and replace asphalt roof shingles with 30-year architectural roof shingles, (b) repair steeple's framing and trim. He indicated that the proposed renovations were needed in order to repair fire damaged cause a recent lightning which damaged the steeple. He also indicated that the asphalt shingles in place were not original to the structure.

Commissioner Provencher asked if the fire had damaged other sections of the roof and Rev. Bartlett indicated that the fire did not extend beyond the steeple. Upon a motion by Commissioner Schneider and seconded by Commissioner Mulherin, 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.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Quinsigamond Community Center dated January 19, 2012 and received January 19, 2012.

5. **15 Russell Road (HC-2012-006) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Charles Wilmont, representative for Divexco Corporation, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Wilmont stated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove and replace the existing pressure-treated front porch base with like materials, (b) remove and replace the existing 2-story porch and railings with like materials, (c) remove and replace existing four steel-doors with like materials, (d) remove and replace the asphalt roof shingles with like materials, (e) remove and replace 6 wooden windows (not original to the house) with vinyl windows, (e) repair vinyl siding as needed.

Mr. Wilmont stated that the proposed changes were needed in order to address disrepairs and deterioration caused by age and neglect. He also indicated that the windows in place are not original to the house; however, he indicated that the proposed windows would match the existing style and profile. Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Provencher, 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.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Divexco Corporation dated January 16, 2012 and received January 19, 2012.

- 6. 134 Burncoat Street (HC-2012-007) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Charles Demers, Joseph Pirelli, Timothy Williams, and Joseph Crowley, representatives for Chestnut School of Elm Park, petitioner, presented the petition. Ms. Demers stated that the petitioner was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to make the following changes: (a) remove and replace damaged sections of the roof with asphalt and rubber roofing material, (b) demolish the car-port and construct a roof where the carport adjoined the structure, (c) remove and replace gutters in damaged areas, and (d), remove and replace the handicapped ramp. Mr. Demers indicated that the proposed changes were needed in order to rectify disrepairs and deterioration caused by age and regular use.

In addition, he indicated that the school had received a grant for maintenance and repairs to the building. He also stated that the decision to demolish the carport and construct a roof where the carport adjoined the structure was triggered by the fact that the structure was poorly built and posed immediate danger to children and staff. He also indicated that the roofing material was not original to the building.

Commissioner Provencher expressed concerns with the removal of the carport, indicating that its removal would change significantly the overall appearance of the building. Mr. Pirelli stated that the structure was seriously compromised and could, in fact, fall down during a winter storm. Commissioner Provencher asked if the structure had been condemned by the Department of Inspectional Services and Mr. Pirelli responded that it had not. However, he indicated that the main concern was that the building on site functioned as a pre-school.

Commissioner Provencher asked if the petitioner had considered repairing the structure instead of the proposed demolition. Mr. Williams indicated that the Board of Directors had considered such option but upon further evaluation determined that the carport was structurally deficient, the footings were damaged, and the exterior materials were damaged beyond repair. Commissioner Schneider also expressed concern that the proposed demolition of the garage would change the originality of the structure.

Commissioner Crowley stated that the Commission appeared to have consensus regarding items (a) (c) and (d). Therefore, he asked that the Commission consider voting on these items first. Vice-Chair McCann stated expressed agreement with Commissioner Crowley's suggestion. Upon a motion by Commissioner Schneider and seconded by Commissioner Provencher, 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.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Provencher, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed removal and replacement of damaged sections of the roof with asphalt and rubber roofing material, the removal and replacement of gutters in damaged areas, and the removal and replacement the handicapped ramp would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of

the City of Worcester, therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waived for this project was approved.

Upon a motion by Commissioner McCann and seconded by Commissioner Crowley, the Commission voted 0-6 that the proposed demolition of the car-port and construction a roof where the carport adjoined the structure 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, the Worcester Historical Commission voted 5-1 (Commissioner Provencher voting no) 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 Chestnut School of Elm Park dated January 19, 2012 and received January 23, 2012.

At the end of this petition, the Commission continued the hearing regarding 16 Wachusett Street (HC-2012-001) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition. Mr. Gaval, provided the Commission with a hand-written sketch (Exhibit "B"), showing the location of the windows to be replaced and/or sealed off. He also clarified that the petition item regarding the proposed removal and replacement of rotted wood, and installation of aluminum edges along the roof included removing the existing original brackets in order to secure it to the building. Commissioner Provencher indicated that the removal of the brackets would have a negative impact on the exterior appearance and originality of the exterior architecture.

Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, the Worcester Historical Commission voted 5-1 (Kevin Provencher voting no) that the installation of siding with insulation over the existing asbestos panels, the removal and replacement of roof shingles in the Mansard roof, the removal and replacement of 4 windows with reduced-size vinyl windows, sealing off 4 windows, sealing off one door, and the installation of a vent heating system with an outlet on the rear of the residential building would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester; therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waiver for items (a) through (f) were approved.

With respect to the proposed removal and replacement of rotted wood and installation of aluminum edges along the roof, the Commission determined that the proposed work would be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester; therefore, the Commission considered this portion of the proposed work based on undue economic hardship. Upon reviewing the request submitted and the evidence provided, the Worcester Historical Commission voted 0-6 (Commissioners McCann, Crowley, Provencher, Schneider, Mulherin and Shveda voting no) that failure to issue a waiver would result in undue economic hardship; therefore, the Building Demolition Delay Waived for the removal and replacement rotted wood, and installation of aluminum edges along the roof was denied.

OTHER BUSINESS:

7. **Worcester Stated Hospital Clock Tower Update:** Deborah Packard, Executive Director of Preservation Worcester and Architect Robert Parra provided an overview of the efforts being considered to preserve and restore the Worcester State Hospital Clock Tower and the proposed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which will be written by the Division of Capital Asset Management on behalf of the State and the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health. She indicated that in addition to Massachusetts Historical Commission, Congressman Jim McGovern, State Senator Harriet Chandler, Preservation Worcester, and the Worcester Historical Commission will be signatory parties.
8. **Requests for Letters of Support:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Schneider and seconded by Commissioner Crowley, the Commission voted 6-0 to approve a Letter of Support for the following:
 - Hill Envelope Company factory – 48 Water Street – Massachusetts 2012 Preservation Award.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.