

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

**October 29, 2020**

**CITY HALL\***

**Commission Members Participating:** Mark Wamback, Chair  
Devon Kurtz, Vice-Chair  
Randolph Bloom (joined late – participated for Item 2–  
adjournment)  
Diane Long  
Tomi Stefani  
Janet Theerman

**Commission Members Not Participating:** Erika Helnarski, Alternate

**Staff Members Participating:** Stephen Rolle, Division of Planning and Regulatory Services  
Michelle Johnstone, Division of Planning and Regulatory  
Services

\*Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 23, 2020 Order, as amended, imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting was conducted through remote participation. The meeting was livestreamed from the City of Worcester website and via the local cable access channel and is available for streaming online. Public participation was facilitated through a call-in number, 415-655-0001 (Access Code: 1608081191#), which was publicized on the posted meeting agenda and during the video broadcast.

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**CALL COMMISSION TO ORDER**

The Commission was called to order by Chair Mark Wamback at 5:35 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**October 1, 2020:** On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioner Bloom had not yet joined the meeting) to accept the meeting minutes from October 1, 2020.

**October 15, 2020:** On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 4-0 to accept the meeting minutes from October 15, 2020. Commissioner Bloom had not yet joined the meeting, and Commissioner Kurtz was ineligible to vote due to his absence at the October 15, 2020 meeting.

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**OLD BUSINESS**

**Certificate of Appropriateness & Building Demolition Delay Waiver**

1. **220 Salisbury Street – HC-2020-038 (MBL 20-007-0030A)**  
Petitioner: Erjona Mehillaj  
Year Built: 1952  
Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register of Historic Places (SR), within the Montvale Local Historic District (LHD)  
Petition Purpose:
  - Redesign front exterior concrete stairs and front walkway (retroactive)

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Erjona Mehillaj, the owner, participated on behalf of the application. She stated the work that had been done, and the steps that she had taken since her most recent appearance before the Commission in terms of finding a suitable railing in conjunction with the Inspectional Services Division. She also reminded the Commission of appearance of the walkway and the stairs prior to the changes that were made.

Commissioner Wamback stated that he likes the existing walkway as altered, and doesn't see an issue with the proposed handrails, which are iron construction.

Commissioner Stefani agreed, stating that he thinks that the new walkway and stairs look better than they did before and that he thinks the proposed railings compliment the work.

*No Public Comment.*

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to close the public hearing. Commissioner Bloom did not vote due to his absence for most of the discussion.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the retroactive changes consisting of upgrading the walkway and stairs at 220 Salisbury Street are appropriate for the Montvale Historic District, and approved the Certificate of Non-Applicability. Commissioner Bloom did not vote due to his absence for most of the discussion.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 5-0 that the retroactive demolition at 220 Salisbury Street is not detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the City of Worcester, and approved the Building Demolition Delay Waiver. Commissioner Bloom did not vote due to his absence for most of the discussion.

### **List of Exhibits**

*Exhibit A: Certificate of Appropriateness & Building Demolition Delay application, dated June 4, 2020, and received June 9, 2020.*

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Certificate of Non-Applicability**

#### **2. 39 Whitman Road – HC-2020-081 (MBL 20-002-6A+16)**

Petitioner: Nadia & Timothy McGourthy

Year Built: ca. 1916-1918

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; listed on the State Register of Historic Places; within the Montvale Local Historic District (LHD)

Petition Purpose:

- Remove a section of existing wood fence and replace with an identical wood fence

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Nadia McGourthy, one the owners, participated on behalf of the application. She described the proposed project, consisting of the removal and replacement of two sections of deteriorated cedar fencing and gates with identical cedar fences and gates.

The Commission did not have comment on the application.

*No public comment.*

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed changes consisting of replacing the wood fences and gates with like materials at 39 Whitman Road is not under the jurisdiction of the Commission, due to the fact that they are barely visible from the street and like materials are being used, and is therefore not applicable, and approved a Certificate of Non-Applicability.

### **List of Exhibits**

*Exhibit A: Certificate of Non-Applicability application, dated October 8, 2020, and received October 18, 2020.*

### **Certificate of Appropriateness**

#### **3. 18 Crown Street AKA 75 Chatham Street – HC-2020-074 (MBL 03-024-00020)**

Petitioner: Michael Kline

Year Built: 1850

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; listed in the State Register of Historic Places; listed in a National Register of Historic Places District (NRDIS); within a National Register Multiple Resource Area (NRMRA); within the Crown Hill Local Historic District (LHD), FKA the Reverend Elam and Louisa J. Smalley House

Petition Purpose:

- Repaint the house navy blue with white trim

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Michael Kline, the owner, spoke on behalf of the application. He stated the intent of the project, which is to repaint the house navy blue with white trim. He stated that if any pieces of rotted wood are found, they would be replaced with new wood before painting commenced.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he finds it challenging to picture whether the navy blue wood look appropriate. He stated that the Commission needs more guidelines on appropriate color palettes.

Commissioner Theerman stated that there are currently at least three colors on the house currently, but noted that only two colors are proposed. She stated that she thinks that it would be more appropriate to have more color variation to make the architectural details stand out more. Commissioner Long agreed. The owner stated that he would be willing to use a couple shades of blue in addition to white to bring the architectural details out.

*No public comment.*

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed changes at 18 Crown Street consisting of a color change would be appropriate for the Crown Hill Local Historic District, and thus approved the Certificate of Appropriateness.

#### **List of Exhibits**

*Exhibit A. Certificate of Appropriateness application, dated and received October 5, 2020.*

### **Certificate of Appropriateness & Building Demolition Delay Waiver**

#### **4. 16 Congress Street – HC-2020-075 (MBL 03-026-00014)**

Petitioner: Susan Lozoraitis

Year Built: 1857

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register of Historic Places (SR); National Register District (NRDIS); National Register Multiple Resource Area (NRMRA); Local Historic District (LHD), FKA the Joshua S. Wheeler House/Joseph A. Perry House

Petition Purpose:

- Remove a section of wood clapboards and replace in-kind, and prime (not paint)
- Install a new iron fence and gate in the front yard
- Replace four vinyl windows, in-kind

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Susan Lozoraitis, the owner, participated on behalf of the application. She described the intent of the application, consisting of replacement of a section siding, replacing four vinyl windows with new vinyl windows, and the installation of a gate and fence.

Commissioner Wamback asked why the new clapboards would only be primed and not painted. The applicant stated it is because she had not picked a color.

Commissioner Wamback asked for a description of the proposed gate and fence. Ms. Lozoraitis stated that they will be as simple and plain as possible and will be wrought iron construction. The fence will be five feet, and the gate will not be as high.

Commissioner Wamback stated that he didn't see any problems with the application.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he liked that the applicant is proposing a simple design for the gate and fence.

*No public comment.*

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed changes at 16 Congress Street consisting of replacing damaged clapboards, adding an iron fence and gate, and replacing vinyl windows in kind would be appropriate for the Crown Hill Local Historic District, and thus approved the Certificate of Appropriateness.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition at 16 Congress Street would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester, and thus approved the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

### **List of Exhibits**

*Exhibit A: Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated and received October 6, 2020.*

#### **5. 8 Montvale Road – HC-2020-076 (MBL 20-007-00028)**

Petitioner: Vaidas Leimantas o/b/o David & Mary Kalmanovitch)

Year Built: ca. 1916

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register of Historic Places (SR); Local Historic District (LHD),  
FKA the John F. Tinsley House

Petition Purpose:

- Remove all original wood windows and storms on the east (street-facing) elevation and replace with new aluminum-clad wood, simulated divided light windows with grid patterns to match the original windows

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Vaidas Leimantas, the contractor, and David Kalmanovitch, the owner, participated on behalf of the application. Mr. Leimantas described the intent of the application, which is to replace the windows on the front of the house. He stated that the aluminum storms would be eliminated and the existing windows would be removed and replaced with white simulated divided light aluminum clad wood windows with matching grid patterns. No trim is proposed to be altered.

Commissioner Wamback asked Ms. Johnstone if the proposed windows have been approved for use in historic districts in the past. Ms. Johnstone confirmed that this type of replacement window has been approved for use in historic districts previously.

Mr. Rolle stated that the Commission's preference has traditionally been to request that windows be restored, but where that isn't an option, the Commission has approved full wood windows or wood windows with exterior aluminum cladding.

Commissioner Wamback asked why replacement windows are being proposed rather than restoring the existing windows. Mr. Kalmanovitch stated that the windows have been sealed in; there are broken sashes; and there are deteriorated muntins. He also stated he would prefer new windows for improved airflow, improved energy efficiency, and ease of cleaning. He also stated that during COVID-19, he would prefer to have the windows quickly replaced rather than having a craftsman spend long periods of time in his house. He stated that he will be installing the best quality windows he can.

Mr. Rolle commented that he is very familiar with the proposed window product, and reminded the Commission that while the preference is to restore windows where feasible, this is one of the rare occasions where an applicant is proposing a high quality product. He noted that from the public way, it would be difficult to notice a difference between the original windows and the replacements.

Paul and Nicole Vitello of 14 Montvale Road submitted comments electronically in regards to the application. They were in support of the application, noting that the look of the home will remain the same, and will even be improved with the removal of the storm windows.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Kurtz, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed changes at 8 Montvale Road, consisting of replacing the windows, are appropriate or the Montvale Local Historic District, and approved the Certificate of Appropriateness.

And, on a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition at 8 Montvale Road would not be detrimental to the historical and architectural resources of the City of Worcester, and thus approved the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

### **List of Exhibits**

*Exhibit A: Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated October 6, 2020 and received October 8, 2020.*

### **Building Demolition Delay Waiver**

#### **6. 14 Haviland Street – HC-2020-073 (MBL 11-010-00006)**

Petitioner: Ronaldo Solano o/b/o Alex Khoury

Year Built: 1904

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register of Historic Places (SR); National Register of Historic Places District; National Register Multiple Resource Area (NRMRA), FKA the Harry J. Heslor House

Petition Purpose:

- Demolish one chimney from the roofline and build a new chimney in its place
- Re-lay 8-10 rows of a second chimney using existing bricks

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Shane Monks of H&R Roofing participated on behalf of the application. He gave an overview of the application, stating that the left chimney will be completely replaced, the middle chimney will be repointed, and 8-10 rows of damaged bricks on the right chimney will be replaced. He also noted other aspects of the project that are not under review by the Commission, including a complete roof replacement and the installation of a new gutter system.

Commissioner Stefani noted that it appears as though the chimney to be replaced is stuccoed, and asked if stucco would be applied to the new chimney. Mr. Monks stated that the stucco was used as a temporary fix, and would not be replicated.

*No public comment.*

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition at 14 Haviland Street consisting of replacing/restoring two chimneys, would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester, and thus approved the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

### **List of Exhibits**

*Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated September 28, 2020 and received September 29, 2020.*

#### **7. 49 Perry Avenue – HC-2020-077 (MBL 05-034-27+28)**

Petitioner: Attorney Gary Bridgman o/b/o Barbara and Karol Pysk

Year Built: ca. 1918

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register of Historic Places; National Register of Historic Places District (NRDIS); National Register of Historic Places Multiple Resources Area (NRMRA), FKA the John Ringiewicz Three Decker

Petition Purpose:

- Remove existing wood clapboard and shingle siding and replace with vinyl siding
- Remove wood porch decking and replace with pressure-treated decking

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Gary Bridgman, attorney, and Barbara Pysk, the owner, participated on behalf of the application. Mr. Bridgman gave an overview of the application. He stated that the existing siding is badly in need of replacement, and the porch decks are also in need of replacement. He stated that the owners have selected a high quality light gray vinyl to

replace the existing siding, and will use pressure-treated wood for the porch decks. He also noted that there are four homes in the historic district that the subject property is located in, two of which have vinyl siding. The owners believe vinyl siding will improve the appearance of the home, as well as be more functional.

Commissioner Wamback asked why the Commission was reviewing the application retroactively. Mr. Bridgman stated that the owners did not know they needed permits to complete the work. A licensed contractor was engaged to complete the work, and he did not apply for a permit.

Commissioner Bloom voiced his disappointment that a licensed contractor did not pull a permit for the work, and stated that it was very frustrating that the application was coming before the Commission retroactively. He also stated that he was disappointed that the banding on the façade and side elevation was removed.

Mr. Bridgman stated that he had spoken with the owners, and they would be willing to replicate the look of the banding with using vinyl shingles and vinyl clapboards in alternating colors.

Ms. Johnstone clarified the revised proposal, confirming with the applicant that everywhere that originally was clad in cedar shingle will be clad in vinyl shingles, and everywhere that originally was clad in wood clapboard will be clad in vinyl clapboard. The applicant confirmed that was the case.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he noticed that there were brackets under the eaves, and said that he hoped that those would remain. Ms. Pysk stated that they would remain.

*No public comment.*

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition at 49 Perry Avenue, including changing the wood siding to vinyl siding, but retaining the banding, the pedimented gable, and corbels, and replacing the porch flooring with pressure treated wood would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester, and thus approved the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

### **List of Exhibits**

*Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated received October 8, 2020.*

#### **8. 526 Burncoat Street – HC-2020-078 (MBL 23-011-00004)**

Petitioner: Kevin Provencher of Habeeb and Associates Architects o/b/o the City of Worcester School Department

Year Built: 1917

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; National Register of Historic Places Determination of Eligibility (NRDOE), FKA Burncoat Elementary School

Petition Purpose:

- Demolish existing canopy facing Burncoat Street and replace with a new canopy to match the existing size and configuration

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Kevin Provencher of Habeeb Architects and Christina Kilday of the City of Worcester participated on behalf of the application. Mr. Provencher described the application, stating that recently, while making preparations to replace the canopy roof, a project that was approved by the Commission on February 6, it was discovered that the canopy framing is rotten. The canopy needs to be removed and rebuilt in its original configuration. The columns will be retained. Additionally, the profiles of the canopy will be reproduced and the wrought iron trim details, which are in good condition, will likely be preserved. All replacement materials will be metal, mostly aluminum.

Commissioner Bloom stated that it would appear that when the project is completed, it will look nearly identical to what it looks like now. Mr. Provencher stated that that was the intent. Commissioner Bloom asked if the canopy was original. Mr. Provencher stated that it was his opinion that it is original.

Commissioner Stefani asked if the chains would be retained, and if the paneled ceiling would be recreated. Mr. Provencher stated that the chains would remain, and that the soffit panels would be reproduced with prefinished aluminum in ivory.

*No public comment.*

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition at 526 Burncoat Street would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester, and thus approved the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

### **List of Exhibits**

*Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated received October 13, 2020.*

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Request for CLG opinion from the Public Archeology Laboratory, Inc., regarding the Gage Street School, 51 Gage Street.

Ms. Johnstone described the intent of the request, which was to request the Commission's opinion regarding the eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places of the Gage Street School at 51 Gage Street. She stated that it was her opinion that the school is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criteria A and C. James Cunningham, the project proponent, stated that the reason they were seeking designation is so that tax credit funding may be accessed.

On a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to accept the draft CLG opinion as written, thus recommending the property eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. Request for approval of revised Building Demolition Delay Waiver, Certificate of Appropriateness, and Certificate of Non-Applicability application forms.

Ms. Johnstone briefly described the changes made to the forms, which were mostly done for ease of use, clarity, and conciseness.

On a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 to accept the revised forms as written.

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Commissioner Bloom noted that he finds the issue of paint colors confusing and frustrating. He requested that the Commission get better guidelines to go by, and a clearer process for handling painting requests.

Mr. Rolle stated that staff would take a look at the issue and create some better guidance for paint, as well as for windows.

Commissioner Stefani also stated that he had questions about paint and windows.

Mr. Rolle stated again that staff would work on getting guidance put together.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.