

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

November 12, 2020

CITY HALL*

Commission Members Participating: Mark Wamback, Chair
Randolph Bloom
Diane Long
Tomi Stefani
Janet Theerman
Erika Helnarski, Alternate

Commission Members Not Participating: Devon Kurtz, Vice-Chair

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.

CALL COMMISSION TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 29, 2020: The approval of minutes was held until the December 3, 2020 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Certificate of Non-Applicability

1. 2 Congress Street – HC-2020-087 (MBL 03-026-00035)

Petitioner: Randolph R. Bloom

Year Built: 1856

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register of Historic Places (SR); National Register Determination of Eligibility (NRDOE); within a National Register District (NRDIS); Preservation Restriction (PR); Local Historic District (LHD), FKA the Walter Daniels House and Lyman J. Taft – Thomas C. Carroll House

Petition Purpose:

- Install a 27” vent pipe out a cellar window on the side of the house, behind a bay, along with a small sign as required by code
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Commissioner Bloom was recused from the item, as he was the petitioner.

Randolph Bloom, owner, participated on behalf of the application. He stated the intent of the application, which is to install two vent pipes, approximately 27” high, on the west side of the house beyond a bay window in order to improve heating and energy efficiency in the home. The pipes will be installed just above, or to the left or right of the cellar window. The vent pipes cannot be seen from the street.

Commissioner Long asked if this was being considered as a Certificate of Non-Applicability or a Certificate of Appropriateness. Ms. Johnstone stated that the application is a Certificate of Non-Applicability.

The Commission did not have comment on the item.

No public comment.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed changes consisting of adding vent pipes at 2 Congress Street is not under the jurisdiction of the Commission, due to the fact that they cannot be seen from the street, and is therefore not applicable, and approved a Certificate of Non-Applicability.

List of Exhibits

Exhibit A: Certificate of Non-Applicability application, dated and received November 3, 2020.

Certificate of Appropriateness

2. 24 Crown Street– HC-2020-080 (MBL 03-024-00021)

Petitioner: Thomas Aquino

Year Built: 1866

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; State Register of Historic Places (SR); National Register of Historic Places District (NRDIS); National Register Multiple Resource Area (NRMRA); Local Historic District (LHD), FKA the Elijah F. and Mercy W. Brooks House & Trinity Hall – First Methodist Church Hall

Petition Purpose:

- Replace existing asphalt driveway with permeable driveway

David Aleksanyan of Arsenal Eco-Pavers, on behalf of the owner, participated on behalf of the application. He described the intent of the application, which is to replace the existing asphalt driveway and parking area with a new permeable driveway and parking area. He stated that the paving system, called True Grid, allows storm water to be naturally infiltrated back into the ground. It has a base of compacted gravel above geo-material to filter water. The gravel will be topped with a grid. Mr. Aleksanyan stated that this system will alleviate standing water.

Commissioner Wamback confirmed the color of the gravel to be used, which is natural gray.

Commissioner Bloom stated he was happy with the owner’s choice of driveway product.

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 24 Crown Street consisting of replacing the driveway with a new permeable driveway 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 October 14, 2020, and received October 18, 2020.

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

3. 37 Somerset Street – HC-2020-079 (MBL 02-041-00002)

Petitioner: Madazus Home Improvement Corp. o/b/o Intellectual Properties, LLC

Year Built: 1932

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; positive National Register Determination of Eligibility

Petition Purpose:

- Replace all original windows with new aluminum-clad wood windows with grid patterns to match

The item was taken out of order (after 104 Vernon Street) due to the applicant having technical difficulties.

Geniana Rodrigues spoke on behalf of the application. She stated that the intent of the project is to replace the windows. They will be the same in appearance as the existing windows.

Commissioner Wamback asked if windows have been replaced on the home in the past. Ms. Rodrigues stated that that was the case.

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 of replacing windows at 37 Somerset 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 October 8, 2020 and received October 13, 2020.

4. 104 Vernon Street – HC-2020-082 (MBL 05-036-00019)

Petitioner: Mary Fierro

Year Built: ca. 1880

Historic Status: MACRIS listed, FKA the George L. Robbins House

Petition Purpose:

- Replace all second-story windows with new aluminum-clad wood windows with grid patterns to match
- Replace all south-facing first-story windows with new aluminum-clad wood windows with grid patterns to match

This item was taken out of order (ahead of 37 Somerset Street) due to the applicant for 37 Somerset Street experiencing technical difficulties.

Mary Fierro, the homeowner, participated on behalf of the application. She gave an overview of the application, which is to replace most of the original windows, which are in bad shape. They are beyond repair. The replacement windows will be vinyl-clad wood rather than aluminum.

Commissioner Wamback asked if this window brand had been approved by the Commission in the past. Ms. Johnstone stated that they had been.

Commissioner Long stated that she thinks that based on the Commission's history of approvals of these windows, it would seem redundant to go over it again. Commissioner Wamback agreed.

Commissioner Stefani asked if the grid would be outside the glass or embedded in it. Ms. Fierro stated it would be embedded in the glass. Ms. Johnstone stated that from what she can tell from the website, it appears as though the muntins will be outside the glass. Mr. Rolle stated that he would see if he could get a definite answer off of the company website.

No public comment.

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

Mr. Rolle stated that it does appear that the product has the raised muntins.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed demolition of replacing windows at 104 Vernon Street 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: Building Demolition Delay Waiver application dated and received October 19, 2020.

5. 124 Russell Street – HC-2020-083 (MBL 02-047-00055)

Petitioner: Jerris Lee o/b/o Kenneth Harling

Year Built: ca. 1924

Historic Status: MACRIS listed

Petition Purpose:

- Remove three structural columns on front porch and replace with new composite columns
- Remove and replace porch boards with new, tongue and groove mahogany porch boards

Kenneth Harling, the building owner, participated on behalf of the application. He stated the intent of the application, which is to replace three structural columns on the front porch with new, tapered, round composite columns with a cap and a base to match the existing columns, and to replace the existing fir porch boards with new mahogany boards of the same dimensions. He stated that there is rot on the existing columns.

Commissioner Wamback commended the applicant on his choice of columns.

Commissioner Stefani asked if the existing columns are solid wood. Mr. Harling stated that they are hollow.

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 124 Russell 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 October 19, 2020, and received October 22, 2020.

6. 670 West Boylston Street – HC-2020-084 (MBL 23-019-00002)

Petitioner: Steve VanDyke, Nault Architects o/b/o Steve Holmes, Quinsigamond Community College

Year Built: 1906–1946

Historic Status: MACRIS listed; positive National Register Determination of Eligibility, FKA Assumption College Preparatory School

Petition Purpose:

- Reconstruct front stairs using mostly original materials to allow for stabilization and installation of handicap ramp

Commissioner Stefani recused himself from the application.

Steve VanDyke of Nault Architects participated on behalf of the application. He stated the intent of the application, which is to stabilize the front stair on the building for safety reasons, and make the stair handicap accessible through the installation of a ramp.

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 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Long and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed demolition at 670 West Boylston 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 October 19, 2020, and received October 22, 2020.

COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Notice from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) of Section 106 filing for 55 Union Street.

No comment.

OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Announcement of date of Worcester Preservation Awards, to be held virtually on December 10, 2020 at 5:30 PM.

Ms. Johnstone gave a brief overview of the Worcester Preservation Awards.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Wamback and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the meeting was adjourned at 6:13 PM.