

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

June 11, 2009

**CHASE BUILDING, 44 FRONT STREET, WORCESTER
SUITE 300 – CONFERENCE ROOM**

Commission Members Present: Peter Schneider, Chair
Thomas Constantine
Timothy McCann
James Crowley
Michael Theerman

Staff Present: Luba Zhaurova, Planning and Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schneider called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the May 28, 2009 meeting were accepted.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. 6 Ashland Street (HC-2009-020)** - Building Demolition Delay Waiver: Noel Williamson, petitioner for Pleasant Street Baptist Church, is seeking to remove and replace five windows on the south of the house and replace accessory structure with new accessory structure. Chair Schneider clarified that the house and the shed were two separate structures. Commissioner Theerman asked if the windows proposed to be replaced are original to the house. The petitioner answered yes and said that the reason for the replacement is that they are not energy efficient. Chair Schneider inquired why the petitioner does not want to restore the windows. Mr. Williamson responded that the cost differential for the job would be too great, especially since one of the parishioners would install the windows for free. He also noted that the rest of the historic windows on the house had already been replaced before he moved into the house, therefore, restoring the originals would not fit the overall look of the house. Chair Schneider pointed that window restoration is not necessarily as expensive as many people think, and that it would be worthwhile to get a quote for the job. Commissioner Constantine agreed with the applicant that it would look better to have all windows look the same. When Chair Schneider asked, the petitioner responded that he would be willing to store the original windows in the basement in case a future owner might want to restore and install them again. Commissioner Crowley asked how much the petitioner would pay for the new windows, to which Mr. Williamson responded that it would approximately cost \$1,000

with free installation. Commissioner Crowley stated that he would be inclined to vote for economic hardship instead. Commissioner Theerman opined that replacing the last five original windows in the back of the house would not be detrimental to the architectural resources of the City. Chair Schneider said that since the shed is not a historic feature, the Commission does not have to vote on it.

Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Crowley, the Commission voted 5-0 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 was approved.

2. **695 Southbridge Street (HC-2009-021)** - Building Demolition Delay Waiver: Joseph Chilton and Robert Townsend, representatives for St. Matthews Church, are seeking to repair stucco and rotted wood; install wood trim with aluminum panning to match the existing Tudor look, paint trim and crown molding; and install an Omega Panel System to match original architectural design of stucco. Mr. Chilton stated that he proposes to use an aluminum stucco panel in cream color that would look the same from the distance as the existing stucco. He added that it would be less expensive over the long term to use timber verticals clad in aluminum, than painting the wood, because there is a 20 year guarantee on the aluminum finish. When asked by the Commission, Mr. Chilton stated that it would cost approximately \$20,000 to repaint the existing wood and do minor repairs to the stucco, while it would cost \$28,000 to replace the existing stucco and timbers. Commissioner Theerman indicated that the petitioner might be risking its National Register Individual Property designation if like materials are not used when replacing stucco. Chair Schneider indicated that the Commission prefers that petitioners restore original materials or replace them with like materials, and while he would not vote against the project, he asked the petitioners to consider replacing stucco and wood with like materials. Commissioner Crowley stated that unlike window restoration and replacement issue, in this case the replacement stucco and wood would look the same as the original materials, and that therefore he does not object to the project. Chair Schneider added that since the proposed material will have a pebbly, and not sharp, finish, it will look similar to what is there now. Commissioner Constantine voiced no objections.

Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 4-1 (with Commissioner Theerman voting no) 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 was approved.

3. **9 Regent Street (HC-2009-022)** - Amendment to Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Demolition Delay Waiver: Dan Benoit, architect and representative of the American Antiquarian Society, the petitioner, is seeking to amend the previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness regarding windows, by restoring 41 existing windows, removing and replacing 6 basement windows and 1 casement window on the

third floor and installing 12 new windows in the new addition. Mr. Benoit presented the project and the results of the Wood Window Conditions Survey which showed that generally wood windows are in excellent condition and are good candidates for restoration. He then asked if the Commission was amenable to approving replacing single-pane glass in the windows with double-pane glass. He stated that this change would eliminate the need for storm windows. Commissioner Constantine stated that because the thickness of the glass would increase, this would make the profile on the muntins shallower. Commissioner Crowley indicated that based on the studies he is aware of, it is not clear to him that the glass in windows plays a significant part in heat retention as opposed to other issues including insulation around the window and weather-stripping. He then asked if the petitioner is still planning to use storm windows if after window restoration energy efficiency improves. Mr. Benoit responded that he was not yet sure. Commissioner Theerman stated no objections to the double-glazing of the windows. Chair Schneider noted that the National Park Service prefers that the historic buildings are repaired first and indicated that he personally would prefer single-paned windows. Commissioner Theerman thanked the petitioner for taking the time and financial resources to do the Wood Window Conditions Survey. Commissioner Crowley agreed by commending the petitioner, and stated that he has no objections to the proposed work.

Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner McCann and seconded by Commissioner Theerman, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed work is appropriate and compatible with the preservation and protection of the Massachusetts Avenue Historic District as it relates to the historic and architectural value and significance of the site and structure, and that the demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester. Therefore, the Amendment to Certificate of Appropriateness and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver were approved for the following exterior work:

- Restoration of the 41 existing windows;
- Removal and replacement of the 6 basement windows and 1 casement window on third floor;
- Installation of 12 new windows in the new addition.

- 4. 12 Congress Street (HC-2009-023) - Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** The petitioner did not appear for the hearing. The Commission was amenable to consider the petition without the petitioner present. The petitioner is seeking to remove and replace asphalt shingles and plywood with similar materials and repoint chimney. Marjorie Purves of 8 Congress Street was present and stated that she supported the project because she felt it would make the neighborhood look better. Chair Schneider had concern about boarded up windows on the house and asked Ms. Zhaurova to contact the petitioner and to let her know that any changes to the windows would constitute a separate Building Demolition Delay Waiver consideration by the Commission.

Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Constantine and seconded by Commissioner McCann, the Commission voted 5-0 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 was approved.

5. **85 Chatham Street (HC-2009-024)** - Building Demolition Delay Waiver: Spencer Hicks, representative for Chatham Realty Trust, LLC, the petitioner, is seeking to repair and repoint brick over window cap; rebuild side pillars and ground and repoint the brick around the chimney. Upon reviewing the petition submitted and the evidence provided, and upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission voted 5-0 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 was approved.

Adjournment: Chair Schneider adjourned the meeting at 6:30 P.M.