

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

**April 8, 2010
LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL**

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

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

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schneider called the meeting to order at 5:37 P.M.

MINUTES

The Historical Commission approved the March 25, 2010 minutes with minor changes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. 4 King Street (HC-2010-011) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Peter Stevens, representative for the petitioner and Matthew Feinstein, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Feinstein stated that he was seeking Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval to repair and rehabilitate the residential structure on site which was severely damaged by a major fire in 2009. Mr. Stevens stated that while the fire damaged the entire building, the sections most severely damaged were the back ell, the front porch, doors, and sections of the roof. In addition, Mr. Stevens indicated that every window was torn out by fire fighters while extinguishing the blaze. Mr. Feinstein indicated that in order to restore and rehabilitate the building, he was proposing to implement the following changes: (a) replace 47 windows with vinyl replacement windows, (b) repair the front doors, (c) replace the 3 doors located on the back of the ell with like materials, (d) repair and/or replace damaged vinyl siding where needed, (e) remove and replace the front porch utilizing like materials, (f) remove the rear porch and replace it with one story addition, (g) re-point and/or replace damaged bricks on the two front chimneys, (h) remove the rear chimney, (i) repair the main roof with slate from the rear ell, and (j) demolish the rear ell and rebuild it with like materials and simulated slate roof. Mr. Stevens stated that

- 2. 129 Ararat Street (HC-2010-012) – Building Demolition Delay Waiver:** Michael Sacco, owner and petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Sacco stated that he was seeking Building Demolition Delay waiver approval to remove the wood siding and replace it with vinyl siding. Mr. Schneider stated that while visiting the site, he noticed that the proposed replacement had been almost completed, and expressed concern that Mr. Sacco had not sought Building Demolition Delay Waiver approval prior to making such replacement. He also indicated that the house was an important architectural asset of the City of Worcester, as it was an integral part of the Indian Village North Village District, which is registered in the National Register of Historic Places and listed in the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System. In addition, Mr. Schneider asked Mr. Sacco if he was aware that he also needed a Building Permit prior to making changes to the house. Mr. Sacco acknowledged that he began removing and replacing the siding without the proper permits. Mr. Sacco stated that he began removing and replacing the siding because the wood siding in place had deteriorated and was allowing water from rain and snow to seep through the walls and damage the interior walls. He also stated that the house was not insulated, and indicated that he added insulation to the sections of siding already replaced. Mr. Schneider stated that while he understood that the problems described by Mr. Sacco needed to be addressed, he indicated that the wooden shingles removed were original architectural features of the house, and had served well most houses in the Indian Village for more than 100 years. Mr. Sacco stated that several residential structures in the Indian Village had vinyl siding. Mr. Schneider indicated some of the siding removal and replacement may have been completed prior to the Building Demolition Ordinance being enacted. Mr. Schneider indicated that in his opinion, the proposed removal and replacement of the wooden siding was detrimental to the architectural and/or historical resources of the City. In addition, Mr. Schneider stated that the Commission may consider this petition as undue economic hardship to the applicant, and asked Mr. Sacco if he had any written estimates of the cost difference between restoring the wooden siding versus its replacement with vinyl siding. Mr. Sacco stated that he did not have any written cost estimates. He also expressed concern that if the siding was not completed within a short time span, the spring rain would continue damaging the rest of the house. Mr. Schneider stated that he could install a membrane to protect the walls from the elements until all required permits and approvals had been approved. He also indicated that in his opinion, replacing the siding with cedar shingles would be a good option and would also make the property more valuable. Mr. Crawley stated that the house was historic and the wooden siding was a historical feature of the house. He also indicated that utilizing vinyl to re-side the house would depreciate the

OTHER BUSINESS:

Crown Hill Local Historic District Study Committee Update: Mr. Luna informed the Commission that there was no new information on this matter.

Adjournment: Chair Schneider adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM.