

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER
August 21, 2014**

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Kevin Provencher, Chair
Andrew Shveda, Vice Chair
Timothy McCann, Clerk
Randolph Bloom
Robyn Conroy
Karl Bjork

Commission Members Absent: Erika Dunn

Staff Members Present: Stephen S. Rolle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Deborah Steele, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

7/10/14 - Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Commission voted 6- 0 to approve the minutes of 7/10/2014 with one edit.

7/24/14 – Upon a motion by Chair Provencher and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Commission voted 5- 0 to approve the minutes of 7/24/2014 with one edit.

8/7/14 – Not available.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. 15 Kingsbury Street (HC-2014-030)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Lakhveer Sahota
Present Use: Multi-Family Residence, formerly the William Maynard Three Decker
Year Built: Circa 1912
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed property
Petition Purpose: Remove/replace the front porch

2. 15 Kingsbury Street (HC-2014-049)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Lakhveer Sahota
Present Use: Multi Family resident
Year Built: Circa 1912
Historic Status: Multi-Family Residence, formerly the William Maynard Three Decker
Petition Purpose: Remove/replace roof with architectural shingles

Items #1 & 2 were taken up contemporaneously.

Lakhveer Sahota and Eugene Supernor appeared on behalf of the item.

Chair Provencher stated that this item had come before the Historical Commission and the item was continued in order for the applicant to provide more information on the porch and the applicant also has another item before the board for a roof replacement and they will discuss both matters together.

Chair Provencher stated that they asked the applicant submit an estimate for repairing the existing porch and restoring it to its original condition. They had also requested that drawings be provided with the porch details proposed and he does see the drawings have been provided along with an estimate of \$50,000 and asked what exactly the \$50,000 was for.

Mr. Supernor stated the \$50,000 was for the columns because they are tongue and groove and they are not available anywhere so he is proposing to keep them wood and wrap them. The entire framework would stay the same except the tongue and groove.

Chair Provencher asked if the \$50,000 was for the columns alone. Mr. Supernor stated that it was for the whole porch including the columns. If the columns could be found, they would be about \$20,000.

Chair Provencher asked if \$50,000 was to restore the porch to its original condition. Mr. Supernor stated that it would cost that much because the integrity of the structure is gone and the second page of the proposal describes the condition of the porch.

Chair Provencher asked how much it would cost to replace the porch. Mr. Supernor stated that it would cost about \$28,000.

Chair Provencher asked if Mr. Supernor can reproduce the components to some degree with the exception of the columns. Mr. Supernor stated that he could.

Chair Provencher stated that the proposal incorporates some components of the original where you can salvage some material and replace where you can't reproduce.

Chair Provencher asked how long Mr. Sahota had owned property and how much he paid for it. Mr. Sahota stated that he bought it about a month ago and it cost about \$72,000.

Chair Provencher stated that the value of the work to the value of the property is pretty high.

Chair Provencher stated that this proposal is a good improvement from last meeting.

Chair Provencher stated that he thought it is in the interest of the City that this property be brought up to code and become an income producing property and the applicant has now provided financials regarding repair versus replace and he appreciated that.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if the difference between the \$28,000 and the \$50,000 was solely the columns. Mr. Sahota stated that it was.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if they had looked at having a cast made of the column to reproduce the column. Mr. Supernor stated that they didn't because of the structural integrity and it would probably cost \$700 - \$800 a column and there are 20 columns.

Commissioner Conroy stated that the drawings were a little confusing but Mr. Supernor had done a good job of explaining them.

Commissioner Bloom stated that he still had a problem as the porch on the property has an unusual double column feature and he can't tell from drawing and if that will still be a part of structure. Mr. Supernor stated that it would be.

Commissioner Bloom also stated that he did not feel enough research was done into finding round columns that are more affordable than square column. Mr. Supernor stated that the square will be wrapped in 1/8" pine and will have a pine look.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if the spacing would remain the same. Mr. Supernor stated that all will stay the same except the columns.

Chair Provencher stated that he is willing to let the round columns go and he is aware there would be way to do it but the cost would be excessive to the owner as the home was only bought for \$70,000.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that he is pleased with the progress that has been made and understands the cost of the column is prohibitive but the overall form and esthetic of the porch will remain and he would support it.

The Commission voted on **15 Kingsbury Street (HC-2014-030) item.**

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 0-6 that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion failed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was denied.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 6-0 that the denial of the petition would cause an unfair economic hardship. The motion passed and the petition was approved.

Chair Provencher stated that there are two quotes on the roof replacement and asked Mr. Supernor to explain the scope of work.

Mr. Supernor stated that the outer edge and the soffit are rotted and the roof needs to be stripped down to roof boards to see if anything is salvageable. If it is then just he would repair any of the broken rotted ones and plywood over it and the cost would be about \$10,000.

Chair Provencher asked how many layers of roofing are on house. Mr. Supernor stated that there were three.

Chair Provencher stated that three layers is illegal and it shouldn't have more than two.

Chair Provencher asked if the intent is to replace any rot that's found. Mr. Supernor stated that was the intent.

Chair Provencher asked if anything will be painted or wrapped in aluminum. Mr. Supernor stated that nothing will be painted or wrapped.

Vice-Chair Shveda asked if the gutters are going to be replaced. Mr. Supernor stated that they are currently wood gutters and will be replaced in kind with wood.

Chair Provencher stated that he applauds the effort by homeowner for not wrapping the home in aluminum.

The Commission voted on HC-2014-049

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver; dated June 24, 2014 and received June 24, 2014.

Exhibit B: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver; dated July 31, 2014 and received July 31, 2014.

NEW BUSINESS

3. 258 Pleasant Street (HC-2014-044)

Petition: Certificate of Appropriateness
Petitioner: 256-285 Pleasant Street, LLC

Present Use: Restaurant/nightclub
Year Built: Circa 1925
Historic Status: Crown Hill Local Historic District
Petition Purpose: Install a mural

Commissioner Bloom rescued himself for this item and left the meeting room.

Chris Bettencourt, Steven McElwee and Susan Champeny appeared on behalf of the item.

Mr. Rolle stated that this is a first for the Historical Commission and it is a request to install a mural on the side of the building at the Raven Nightclub and the Crown Hill Neighborhood Association is involved as well.

Chair Provencher asked where on the building the mural will be. Mr. Bettencourt stated that it will be on the West side on Newbury Street, the lower half of the building.

Ms. Champeny stated that the mural will be roughly 100 feet long; it will be painted along the Newbury Street side of the building. It will range in height from 5 feet at the Pleasant Street end to nearly 10 feet at the other end of the building, and it will cover the building's concrete lower portion. The artwork will depict various historical and cultural characteristics, since it is one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city.

Ms. Champeny said the mural will include a map of the Crown Hill Local Historic District as well as a welcoming image to the district. It will also include renderings of notable individuals who lived in Crown Hill, as well as the neighborhood's architecture and history, including Congress Alley and the musicians who made it famous.

Ms. Champeny stated that members of the rock group Orpheus have given permission to have their likenesses depicted on the mural along with other notables.

Tom Johnson, a resident of Crown Hill Historic District, stated that the idea for the mural originated with fellow Crown Hill resident Elizabeth Mullaney and it has been concerted effort by the neighborhood that began three years ago. He also thanked Mr. Bettencourt for allowing the mural to be painted on the side of his club.

Chair Provencher stated that the rendering is in black and white and asked if the mural would be black and white. Ms. Champeny stated that it will be in color.

Elizabeth Mullaney stated that she was co-chair of the Neighborhood Association and the monies are being provided from the City of Worcester and state funding.

Commissioner members stated that the proposal was in perfect keeping with the history and culture of the neighborhood and support the proposal.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 5-0 that the petition was appropriate for the district. The motion passed and the Certificate of Appropriateness was approved

Exhibit A: Application for Certificate of Appropriateness; dated July 22, 2014 and received July 22, 2014.

Commissioner Bloom returned to meeting room.

4. 244 Pleasant Street (HC-2014-045)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness
Petitioner: 244-250 Pleasant Street, LLC
Present Use: Mixed-used property
Year Built: Circa 1894
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed property, Crown Hill Local Historic District
Petition Purpose: Repair a fire-damaged porch wall to match existing

Steven McElwee appeared on behalf of the petition.

Chair Provencher stated that he did not believe the porch was visible from the street. Mr. McElwee stated that it was not since it is in the back.

Chair Provencher asked about the work proposed. Mr. McElwee stated that it was to re-sheathe and install new siding.

Chair Provencher stated that this was straightforward since it was not visible from the public way and the material is not original.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Commissioner Bjork, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 6-0 that the petition was appropriate for the district. The motion passed and the Certificate of Appropriateness was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver & Certificate of Appropriateness; dated July 22, 2014 and received July 22, 2014.

5. 218 Shrewsbury Street (HC-2014-047)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Arthur F. Croteau, Jr.

Present Use: Commercial Warehouse
Year Built: Circa 1925
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed property, formerly known as the M.H. Laipson & Co. Building
Petition Purpose: Remove and install aluminum wall signs on the building

David Winchester appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Winchester showed images of the proposed signs and stated that there was signage already up there and they want to replace one sign with the name of the new business and one sign will be a directional sign.

Chair Provencher asked how the signs would be affixed. Mr. Winchester stated that it will be with a masonry anchor.

Chair Provencher stated that it looks like a simple application as the façade that faces Shrewsbury Street has the important features and this side has limited historic value. He stated that he does not see this property being comprised by adding the signs.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 6-0 that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver; dated July 22, 2014 and received July 22, 2014.

The Commission recessed from 6:35 to 6:40 p.m.

Commissioner Conroy recused herself and left the room.

6. 174 Woodland Street (HC-2014-48)

Petition: Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner: Trustees of Clark University
Present Use: Academic Building
Year Built: Circa 1897
Historic Status: MACRIS-listed property, formerly known as New Woodland Street Schoolhouse
Petition Purpose: Remove/replace asphalt roof

Derek Lundstrom appeared on behalf of the application.

Mr. Lundstrom stated that they are replacing asphalt shingles with asphalt shingles.

Chair Provencher stated that from what he can tell this building didn't have a hipped roof originally and it was added at some point. Mr. Lundstrom stated that the roof was installed in the 1980's.

Chair Provencher stated that the roof is not original and this is an asphalt shingle replacement.

Chair Provencher asked if any work would be done to the skylight. Mr. Lundstrom stated that he did not think so but it would depend on what they find once they start the work.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair Shveda and seconded by Secretary McCann, the Commission voted 5-0 that the proposed Building Demolition Delay Waiver is not detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City. The motion passed and the Building Demolition Delay Waiver petition was approved.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver; dated July 23, 2014 and received July 23, 2014.

Commissioner Conroy returned to the meeting room.

7. 421 (aka 425) Grove Street (HC-2014-046)

Petition:	Building Demolition Delay Waiver
Petitioner:	Six Realty, LLC
Present Use:	Commercial Use Building
Year Built:	1923-1933
Historic Status:	MACRIS-listed property
Petition Purpose:	Complete demolition of building

Steven Kaza and Bob Murphy appeared on behalf of the item.

Mr. Kaza stated that he has a purchase and sale on the building and he would like to put another building on the site.

Chair Provencher stated that the application is for demolition of the entire building. Mr. Kaza stated that was correct.

Mr. Kaza stated that he has been approached by Allied Communication, who have numerous ATT stores around the state, and they viewed this location as a prime site to locate one of their flagship sites and a new building would be put up that would be closer to the street and parking would be in the back for about twelve cars.

Mr. Kaza stated that the building on location is very small and underutilized and when they first got involved they were told the location did not have any historical significance but later found out it was MACRIS listed.

Chair Provencher stated that the applicant has said that the building is not economically feasible in the condition it is right now but the applicant has not provided a pro-forma or financial documentation for cost to rehabilitate and reuse versus cost to demolish. Mr. Kaza stated that he did not provide but could provide.

Chair Provencher stated that there was a very good write up with a detailed history of this property and why it is historically important and stated he had viewed the property and agrees it not in good condition but is not convinced that it is not salvageable. Therefore, the question is whether or not it is economically viable to rehabilitate the property and he does not feel enough evidence has been presented for Commission to review.

Chair Provencher stated that he received Mr. Murphy's report that the building was constructed of brick with a slate roof and the walls appear structurally sound. The front of the roof appears intact, however the rear roof has a section that is in disrepair and water leakage has damaged the roof rafters and support beams in the area between the original building and the addition. The existing brick chimney is also in need of repair. Since the building was constructed as slab on grade and is masonry construction it is Mr. Murphy's professional opinion that it is not economically feasible to move the structure.

Chair Provencher explained that the applicant has the option of allowing Commission to vote tonight or request to continue to next meeting in order to provide the financial documentation and put together a cost proposal.

Secretary McCann stated that he would also have a hard time without seeing the hard numbers to be able to make an informed decision.

Vice-Chair Shveda stated that this building is listed for its individual features but as part of a group and it's important as it tells a story about the historical significance of the area and removing one piece will change area. He agrees with other members that not enough information has been provided to determine whether the applicant has explored every option for the best use for the property.

Mr. Kaza stated that he did not know he needed to provide that but is able to but does not think it will change and building needs to be demolished in order to make the property economically feasible.

Commissioner Bjork stated that the building has been there a long time and it is an old building and understands the applicant's case but this is the dilemma of a historical property.

Commissioner Bloom stated that in general communities undervalue their older gas stations and he doesn't feel that all of the possible future uses for the property have been presented since the applicant has only presented one.

Chair Provencher asked that the financial documentation be provided to staff by August 29, 2014 so that staff has time to send it to the Commission members for their review.

Upon a motion by Secretary McCann and seconded by Vice-Chair Shveda, the Commission voted 6-0 to continue the meeting until September 4, 2014 and to extend the constructive grant deadline until September 20, 2014.

Exhibit A: Application for Building Demolition Delay Waiver; dated July 23, 2014 and received July 23, 2014.

Exhibit B: Letter from Division of Planning & Regulatory Services; dated August 20, 2014.

OTHER BUSINESS

Communication:

- a. Letter from EBI Consulting re: 39 First Street (Section 106 Review); dated June 22, 2014; received July 29, 2014.-No comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion the Commission voted 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.