

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

Thursday, August 24th, 2023

Worcester City Hall - Levi Lincoln Chamber,
with remote participation options available via Webex online at
<https://cityofworcester.webex.com/meet/historicalcommissionwebex> and
call-in number 415-655-0001 (Access Code: 1608081191).

Commissioners Present: Diane Long, Chair
Janet Theerman, Vice-Chair
Erika Helnarski
Tomi Stefani (Remote)
Steven Taylor, Clerk (Remote)
Vanessa Andre, Alternate

Commissioners Absent: Donald Northway
Devon Kurtz

Staff Present: Michelle Johnstone, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Michelle Smith, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)

Call Commission to Order – 5:30 PM

Approval of Minutes - MARCH 9 & 23, MAY 4, JUNE 1, 15 & 29, JULY 13 & 27, AUGUST 10, 2023 - HELD

Old Business

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

1. 100 Chandler Street (06-17A-00008) – BDDW-23-11 (out of order, taken second)

Petition Purpose: Replace windows (retroactive)

Patrick Sullivan stated that he found a company that could make reproduction windows that will fit the arch point and would have to be custom made. He claims they are extremely expensive and the cost to get the windows made, insulated, and installed would be about \$3,000 each. He wishes to change the front two windows and try his best to make the rest of the square windows look less noticeable by dyeing the vinyl from white to a color that matches the color of the building instead.

A three-minute recess was held to scan images of potential changes to commissioners who joined the meeting remotely.

The hearing resumed.

Mr. Sullivan claims that before he purchased the property the church no longer had the original windows.

Ms. Johnstone clarified that as far as 1983 there the property had arched wood frames with clear glass. Until the previous owner changed the glass for a few windows.

Mr. Sullivan said the windows are a modern style insulated window that is extruded aluminum and would not be wood.

Ms. Johnstone mentioned that the original frames had moldings. She asked whether the molding of the original frames is going to be matched.

Mr. Sullivan responded that they will match the molding as close as they can.

Commissioner Theerman asks for clarification on the proposed changes on the side windows.

Mr. Sullivan explained that he stained the white plastic to blend in with the color of the building. Then place decals on the glass to give more of a church window design. However, he said he could also have the glass without the decal as it was before.

Ms. Johnstone recommended that the black plywood could be inserted above the square windows to provide a better contrast.

Replacement of the front windows to custom made windows to match those which were removed. They will be clear glass and moldings to match what was removed. The windows on the side of the windows will remain, but the vinyl windows will be dyed green to match the front new windows. The wood above and to the sides of the side windows will be painted black and a molding to match the windows in the front in the building will be applied within the arch and painted green to match.

Public comment: Fiana S asked whether the building is still a church.

Mr. Sullivan said it used to be a Koi Fish Supply store, but as of now it is currently vacant and undetermined what it would be.

On a motion made by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed to close public comment.

Chair Long asked Mr. Sullivan to bring the commission a receipt that the windows have been ordered and a better drawing of how the windows would look like.

The applicant needs to produce receipts for the changes that need to be made.

Chair Long informed Mr. Sullivan that if he does not return to the September 7th hearing with receipts and a contract they will be discussing the fines that will be given to him for this project.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Janet Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted five (5) in favor and one (1) opposed, with Commissioner Stefani being the nay, that the proposed changes at 100 Chandler Street, of the replacement of the front windows to custom made windows to match those which were removed with clear glass and moldings to match what was removed, the windows on the side of the property will remain, but the frame vinyls will be dyed green to match the front windows. The wood above and to the sides of the side windows will be painted black and a molding to match the windows in the front of the building will be applied within the arch and painted green to match is appropriate to the historical or architectural resources of Worcester. Having gained a majority affirmative vote, the motion passed, and a Building Demolition Delay Waiver was thus approved.

2. 88 Webster Street (27-032-00004) – BDDW-23-13 (taken out of order – taken first)

Petition Purpose: Construct addition. Selective replacements of bricks, concrete blocks, windows & window grates

Donald O’Neil, attorney, was here on behalf of Gold Star Builders. O’Neil stated that his clients propose to add four additional floors, renovate the original building and four stories to the one-story original building.

Commissioner Taylor pointed out that the new addition to the building has a different shade of exterior color than the original building.

Attorney O’Neil stated that that shade of brick is the closest they could access to the original building.

Public comment: None

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Janet Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes at 88 Webster Street, of constructing an addition and selective replacements of bricks, concrete blocks, windows & window grates is appropriate to the historical or architectural resources of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed, and a Building Demolition Delay Waiver was thus approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

3. 4 Meade Street (05-014-00006) – BDDW-23-42

Petition Purpose: Replace knee wall caps on all three front porches with pressure treated lumber to match existing. Realign all front porch support posts, replace as necessary, paint or wrap. Remove and replace decking on the front first floor landing with composite decking. Install composite decking and new reinforced steel vinyl railing and handrail system on D side porch.

Sean Durgin, was here on behalf of the applicant, Ariel Lim. He said he has gotten this work approved once, but it expired.

Mr. Durgin stated that they plan to replace knee wall caps on all three front porches with pressure treated lumber to match existing, realign all front porch support posts, replace as necessary, paint or wrap, remove and replace decking on the front first floor landing with composite decking, and install composite decking and new reinforced steel vinyl railing and handrail system on D side porch.

Mr. Durgin mentions that they will install new steel reinforced vinyl railing and there is not a way they can replace it with the exact same vinyl.

Public comment:

Mary Francois, owner of the building, stated that she does not wish to remove the shingles. This is because the shingle was a part of the house and is in good condition. She said if there are sections that are damaged then those areas could be repaired.

Mr. Durgin said that the existing siding should not be repaired, he said in order to correctly replace or repair siding there has to be replacing the shakes.

Ms. Johnstone recommended that the applicant request to withdraw the siding portion of this application.

Mr. Durgin requested to withdraw the vinyl siding.

On a motion made by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Northway, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed to close public comment.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Janet Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes at 4 Meade Street, of replacing knee wall caps on the three front porches with pressure treated lumber to match existing, realigning all front porch support post replacing them as necessary with paint or wrapping, removing and replacing the decking of first floor landing with composite decking, installing composite decking, and replacing the railing as needed is appropriate to the historical or architectural resources of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed, and a Building Demolition Delay Waiver was thus approved.

4. 23 Germain Street (11-009-00009) – BDDW-23-43

Petition Purpose: Remove large front door and sidelights and replace with a historic double door

Petitioner would replace the large front door and sidelights with a historic double door.

The board was very pleased with the potential replacement.

Ms. Johnstone clarified that the porch itself will not be coming before the commission because there is no demolition because it was already demolished and they will be rebuilding it.

The applicant stated they plan to paint the replacement door lavender.

Public comment: None

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Janet Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes at 23 Germain Street, of the removal of sidelights and replacement of large front door to historic double door is appropriate to the historical or architectural resources of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed, and a Building Demolition Delay Waiver was thus approved.

COMMUNICATIONS – None

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Discussion on former Norton Company – Saint Gobain site visit on August 16, 2023.

Chair Long shared how she and Commissioner Theerman toured the Norton Company and reviewed the preservation of historical items in the buildings and possible creation of a garden or memorial displaying these items.

B. Discussion on historic inventory in Worcester.

Ms. Johnstone stated that the Commission can no longer rely on a list to protect buildings. Down the line they would have to switch to an age-based system and give up some of the smaller projects that are regulated.

For instance, if a building is 75 years or older a small amount of regulation will be given to this commission. It would likely include full demolition, demolition of outbuilding, demolition of porches, and demolitions of a certain amount of contiguous wall space. It would not be possible to regulate windows and roofs on every house that is older than 75 years in the city of Worcester.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Chair Long, the Commission voted six (6) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:56 p.m.