

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

MAY 10, 2007

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

Commission Members Present: Peter Schneider, Chair
Thomas Conroy, Clerk
Thomas Constantine
James Crowley

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

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Upon a motion by Thomas Conroy and seconded by Tom Constantine, it was voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2007 meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Mr. Luna informed the Commission that there were no updates regarding the Historic Commission procedures and guidelines.
2. Mr. Luna provided the Commission with a written report from Joel Fontane, Director of Planning and Regulatory Services Division, regarding the Special Property Tax Assessment for owner-occupied properties listed in the State Register of Historic Places. In his report, Mr. Fontane indicated that after researching the matter, it was determined that the program offers minimal benefits to home-owners. Therefore, he recommended that the City of Worcester not implement such policy. On motion by James Crowley and seconded by Tom Constantine, it was voted 4-0 not to adopt the Special Property Tax Assessment for owner-occupied properties listed in the State Register of Historic Places.
3. **28 Marble Street (HC-07-04).** Richard Martell, representative for the Seven Hills Foundation, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Martell stated that the petitioner was seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver to remove and replace the existing front porch/portico due to its advanced state of disrepair and deterioration. In addition, Mr. Martell indicated that the petitioner had reviewed the concerns

expressed by the Commission on April 26, 2007, regarding their proposed restoration plans. These concerns include the following:

- The proposed style and material of the porch railings do not replicate the originals.
- The two existing round columns adjacent to each of the square columns would not be replaced.
- The proposed pitched roof does not replicate the existing flat roof.
- The existing balustrade on the roof would not be replaced.
- The proposed dentils do not replicate the originals.
- The detailed drawings did not clearly depict the proposed design and scale of the structure.

Therefore, Mr. Martell indicated that in response to these concerns, the petitioner was proposing to make the following modifications to their previous restoration plan:

- The existing wooden porch railings have deteriorated beyond the point of reasonable repair, and replicating the existing design would not meet current building codes. Therefore, at the suggestion of the Commission, the petitioner proposes to install wrought iron railings on the porch.
- The original porch design includes one smooth, straight, square column flanked by two smooth, straight, round columns at each of the two front corners. All of these columns have deteriorated beyond the point of reasonable repair. The original proposal did not include replacing these four round columns, however, at the suggestion of the Commission, the petitioner proposes to remove and replace the existing round columns with non-structural columns of similar design and scale as the originals, and rebuild the two square columns to match the originals.
- The structure supporting the existing flat roof and the surrounding balustrade have deteriorated beyond the point of reasonable repair, and replicating the existing design would be prohibitively expensive. While the petitioner acknowledged the Commission's preference to replicate the original flat roof and balustrade design, the structural requirements for a flat roof, the cost of a metal roofing material and its limited life expectancy, renders such design extremely costly and impractical. In addition, replicating the balustrade would be extremely expensive and would complicate the installation and maintenance of the roofing material. Therefore, the petitioner proposes substituting the flat roof of the porch with a shallow 4:1 pitch roof, which would not compromise the architectural integrity of the structure and would be cost-effective. The petitioner proposes to use conventional roof shingles to match the existing roof shingles on the main roof. The petitioner also proposes using a hip-type architectural detail across the front of the porch.
- Many of the existing large dentils have deteriorated beyond the point of reasonable repair. The original proposal did not include replacing the dentils,

however, at the suggestion of the Commission, the petitioner proposes replicating the dentils as closely as possible.

Mr. Martell stated that Seven Hills Foundation operates a group-home on site for 5 physically and mentally challenged individuals, with funds provided by the State of Massachusetts and the Federal Government (HUD). He also indicated that over the past 2 years, the petitioner implemented necessary repairs to the building totaling over \$60,000. In addition, he stated that the revised proposal surpassed the original \$15,500 cost estimate by approximately \$6,000, and if the petitioner were to replicate the flat roof and balustrade, the total cost could exceed \$40,000. Therefore, he asked the Commission to approve the revised design and proposed building materials. Upon reviewing the petition submitted, and the evidence provided, the Worcester Historical Commission, on a 2-2 vote, found that the proposed demolition would be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester. Therefore, on motion by Tom Constantine and seconded by Tom Conroy, it was voted 4-0 to grant the Building Demolition Delay Waiver based on hardship as demonstrated by the petitioner.

4. **29 Whitman Road (HC-07-05):** Richard and Anne Martin, petitioners, presented the petition. Ms. Martin stated that they were seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness to implement the following renovations: (a) remove the existing deck, (b) remove a sliding door on the first floor and replace it with a double set of windows, and (c) remove and replace three windows on the first floor, and seven windows on the second floor. Mr. Crowley stated that the proposed windows were not appropriate to the architectural period of the house in style and materials; therefore, he requested that the petitioners consider substituting the proposed windows with windows made out of wood, which would be more appropriate to the period of the house. Ms. Martin stated that she would like to have an opportunity to research vendors in the area that offer new windows in styles and materials that would be not only more appropriate to the period of the house but also energy efficient. Therefore, she requested continuation of the hearing until May 24, 2007 to allow her time to submit alternative plans for the window replacements. Upon a motion by Jim Crowley and seconded by Tom Constantine, it was voted 4-0 to continue the hearing until May 24, 2007.
5. **41 Bellevue Street (HC-07-06):** Richard Daniel Gray, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Gray stated that he was seeking a Building Demolition Delay Waiver to implement the following changes and renovations to the house (a) remove the remaining portion of the attached barn due to its advance deterioration, (b) remove and replace the roof with asphalt shingles of similar style and color, (c) remove and replace the roof on the overhang utilizing asphalt shingles of similar in style and color. Upon reviewing the petition submitted, and the evidence provided, the Worcester Historical Commission found that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester. Therefore, on motion by Tom Conroy and seconded by Tom Constantine, it was voted 4-0 to grant the Building Demolition Delay Waiver.

6. **1 Massachusetts Avenue (HC-07-07):** Atilla Kariko, petitioner, presented the petition. Mr. Kariko stated that he was seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove and replace the roof on the dwelling structure and garage with asphalt shingles of the same color, design and texture as the roofing currently in place. He indicated that the current roofing was not original to the house. Upon reviewing the petition submitted, and the evidence provided, the Worcester Historical Commission found that the proposed demolition would not be detrimental to the architectural or historical resources of the City of Worcester. *Upon a motion by Commissioner Conroy and seconded by Commissioner Constantine, the Commission determined that the proposed exterior work was appropriate for the historic and architectural value and significance of the site, building, and structure and voted 4-0 to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed removal and replacement of the roof on the dwelling structure and garage on site.* The Certificate of Appropriateness was granted.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Schneider adjourned the meeting at 7:00 pm.