

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER
August 23, 2012**

LEVI LINCOLN CHAMBER – CITY HALL

Commission Members Present: Timothy McCann, Vice-Chair
Meagen Mulhern
Andrew Shveda
Erika Dunn

Staff Members Present: Joel Fontane, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Nancy Tran, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER:

Commission Site Views

Requests for Continuances, Postponements, Withdrawals

Approval of the Minutes: 07/12/2012 & 7/26/2012

Vice Chair McCann asked if anyone had anything to add or any changes to the July 12, 2012 minutes. There were no comments.

Vice Chair McCann stated on the July 26, 2012 minutes he had one correction on page 3 of 6, second paragraph it stated that Chair McCann suggested historic renovations and he stated his comment was that was regarding historic tax credits.

Upon a motion the Commission the Commission voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of July 12, 2012 and July 26, 2012.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 27-29 Westland Street (HC-2012-049) Building Demolition Delay Waiver

The applicant, Seth Popinchalk, appeared to present the application for the hearing. He stated he was before the Commission to request permission to remove and replace 12 windows with Andersen replacement windows. Twenty-six windows on the house had been previously replaced with Andersen with the most recent work completed last November and all of the windows in the front of 27 & 29 Westland Street and all the windows on the 27 side except for some on the third floor and the basement. The application request was to complete the project and replace the remaining windows on back and side of the house.

Vice-Chair McCann asked how many windows would be updated. Mr. Popinchalk responded that 12 windows in total would be replaced.

Vice-Chair McCann asked how many in the back.

Mr. Popinchalk stated there are three windows on the right side of the house of 29 Westland Street. It is one on the third floor, two on the second floor and on the combo of 27 & 29 you have one on first floor and three on the second floor. On the left side of the house – 27 Westland Street side it is the first floor and two basement windows.

Vice-Chair McCann asked about style of the windows. Mr. Popinchalk presented pictures to the Commission (Exhibit A).

Vice-Chair McCann asked how many are original windows.

Mr. Popinchalk stated only three and that he had labeled pictures showing the windows. All the remaining windows were done in the seventies.

Vice-Chair McCann stated their purview doesn't extend to the rear of the house not viewable from the public way so what really is before the Commission is the two windows that are visible in the bump out.

Vice-Chair McCann stated nothing is really being changed historically except for those two windows.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shevda and seconded by Commissioner Mulherin, the Commission voted 4-0 that the proposed demolition is not detrimental to the architectural or cultural resources of the city.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Seth Popinchalk, dated and received July 20, 2012.

OTHER BUSINESS:

2. 4 Crown Hill (HC-2011-059) – Consideration of Economic Hardship under BDDW Ordinance, Section (h)

Miguel Rivera, Director of Housing for the City of Worcester, along with the applicant, Nettie A. Dejarnette, appeared on behalf of the item. Mr. Rivera stated this item has been going on for some time and they are before Commission to provide an update.

Mr. Rivera stated originally the roof was going to be replaced and they are only talking about the roof at this point and time and they are trying to remove four to six feet of the asphalt and that was what was approved and during the time of the project the contractor that was hired could not accomplish the scope of the project. They have since put the project back out to bid and Mr. Rivera provided a copy of the bid to the Commission members (Exhibit A).

Mr. Rivera said that ten bids had been solicited and unfortunately given the scope of the condition of the roof they could not obtain any bids due to the limitations of the project the contractors could not guarantee the safety of the roof. At that time Mr. Rivera stated he authorized some additional funds to bring in a consultant rehab specialist and gave the City a new scope addressing replacing the whole roof and guaranteeing the roof. Mr. Rivera stated there is still a blue tarp on the roof and it is causing her monthly hardship. In August a new scope of work was issued and provided for the use of artificial shingles and a letter was provided to the Commission (Exhibit B).

Mr. Rivera stated that at this time they are able to commit funds to the architectural asphalt shingles proposed to address the roof in the next 2-3 weeks and close the project.

Vice-Chair McCann asked whether the contractors solicited stated they could not guarantee the roof that it would hold.

Mr. Rivera stated that he has gone to the house and they are concerned about the safety and integrity of the entire house.

Vice-Chair McCann stated what was being presented was an economic hardship and asked about the cost to install slate. Mr. Rivera stated that was not recommended as the cost would be too high. Vice-Chair McCann asked if there was any public comment regarding the item.

Randy Bloom, 2 Congress Street, stated his preference would be slate replacement but due to the circumstances does not see how it could be done and his second choice would be for artificial slate so from ground it would look like slate and third would be asphalt.

Vice-Chair McCann asked whether synthetic slate has been looked at.

Mr. Rivera stated that all of the funding had been exhausted and that cost would not be feasible but he would be willing to look at something that would be more compatible but cost feasible. Vice-Chair McCann stated slate or synthetic slate would be preferred and they are appreciative that owner is trying to keep up the property. Mr. Rivera stated that roof is unfortunate situation as it is unsalvageable.

Mr. Fontane, Director of Planning & Regulatory Services, expressed his gratitude to Mr. Rivera for assisting with finding funding to assist with renovations to this home. Mr. Fontane asked that due to economic hardship does the Commission plan to extinguish the remaining portion of the delay.

Vice-Chair McCann stated that would be correct.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shevda and seconded by Commissioner Mulherin, the Commission voted 4-0 that the project has displayed economic hardship. The waiver request was granted.

Exhibit A: Building Demolition Delay Waiver Application submitted by Nettie Dejarnette, dated and received September 2, 2011.

Exhibit B: Memorandum from Larry Escobar re: 4 Crown – Slate Roof repair & Evidence of Economic Hardship dated July 21, 2012 and received August 23, 2012.

3. Crown Hill Local Historic District Discussion

Mr. Fontane stated staff was unable to provide the Commission the complete draft study and the finishing touches were being made to the study.

Vice-Chair McCann stated they look forward to seeing the final report.

4. Received Communication:

a. Invitation to Comment

- re: 111 Park Avenue; dated August 1, 2012 and received August 6, 2012
- Vice-Chair McCann asked whether there were any comments from the Commission members and this only invitation to comment.
- re: 266 Lincoln Street; dated August 2, 2012 and received August 14, 2012

- re: 100 Grand Street; dated August 7, 2012 and received August 14, 2012
- re: 280 May Street; dated August 7, 2012 and received August 14, 2012
- re: 101 Plantation Street; dated August 7, 2012 and received August 14, 2012
- re: 495 Shrewsbury Street; dated August 7, 2012 and received August 14, 2012

Commissioner Shevda stated there seems to be a lot of wiring in these cases and is the wiring interior or exterior.

Vice-Chair McCann stated in past they have been in the interior as the antennas are usually in the interior.

Commissioner Shevda and Commissioner Mulherin expressed their concerns that cables should be in the interior of the building.

Vice-Chair McCann stated then comment would be that cables would not be visible from the exterior of the building except for the smokestack.

b. Request for Letter of Support – re: Printer’s Building, 44-50 Portland Street, Worcester, MA; from: MacRostie Historic Advisors; received August 6, 2012.

Vice-Chair McCann stated he believed the Commission should have continued support for the Printer’s Building.

Upon a motion by Vice-Chair McCann and seconded by Commissioner Shevda, the Commission voted 4-0 that staff draft a letter in support of the Printer’s Building.

c. Information – re: Renovations and Improvements at Elm Park, 121 Russell Street, Worcester, MA; from: Massachusetts Historical Commission; received August 10, 2012

Vice-Chair McCann confirmed that everyone had received the letter and it was given to the Commission for informational purposes and if members would like to add anything they could do so at next meeting when Elm Park is brought up.

Deborah Packard from Preservation Worcester stated they are meeting with Bob Moylan and the designers next week to come to a consensus as to what is to be built and Commissioners could comment to DPW as to what they would like see built.

Jo Hart, city resident, stated she was outraged by this proposal as public is being hoodwinked by this project. Ms. Hart stated that the Mayor has refused to put her on the task force for this project but she has presented her concerns to the City Council and she understands that this is not Historical Commission’s purview but thinks the public needs to be informed about this.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

The Commission voted 4-0 to adjourn the meeting at 6:19 p.m.