



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

Thursday, June 15, 2023

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

Commissioners Present: Diane Long, Chair
Janet Theerman, Vice-Chair
Donald Northway
Tomi Stefani (Participated Remotely)
Steven Taylor, Clerk (Participated Remotely)
Vanessa Andre, Alternate

Commissioners Absent: Devon Kurtz
Erika Helnarski

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

Call Commission to Order – 5:30 PM

Approval of Minutes – MARCH 9, MARCH 23, APRIL 20, MAY 4, MAY 18, JUNE 1, 2023 – Minutes held

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE

1. 88 Webster Street (27-032-00004) – BDDW-23-13 – Request to continue to June 29, 2023
Petition Purpose: Construct addition Selective replacements of bricks, concrete blocks, windows & window grates

Chair Long stated that the petition has a request for a continuance of June 29, 2023, meeting to extend the constructive grant deadline to July 14, 2023.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Northway, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed to continue the item to the June 29 meeting and extending the constructive grant deadline to July 14, 2023.

NEW BUSINESS

Certificate of Non-Applicability

2. 15 Oxford Street (03-025-00012) – CNA-23-20

Petition Purpose: Temporarily remove selective siding to blow in insulation (damaged wood members replaced in-kind if required)

Marc Tumeinski stated they are working with Mass Save to temporarily remove sliding to blow in insulation. He states it would take only a few days to complete this work.

Public comment: None.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Northway, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes at 15 Oxford Street consisting of the removal of clapboards to blow in insulation and then replacing the clapboard is not under the jurisdiction of the Commission. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the request for a Certificate of Non-Applicability was approved.

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

3. 54 Elm Street (03-028-00007) – BDDW-23-19

Petition Purpose: In-kind window replacements, Relocation of fire escape, replace select egress doors with windows, install new egresses, remove modern shed roofs, alter select carriage house windows

Brian Falk was present on behalf of George Menninger & Ann Cheeseman. He states that they plan to restore the building for use as a lodging house. They learned about the property while visiting their son, a WPI student and decided to purchase the property. The property was previously used as a dormitory by Becker College.

Architect Mark Lansburg states he was tasked to construct a cooperative living space for the track team of WPI. They will be removing illegal kitchens and constructing one main kitchen. They will be saving every piece of wood and reusing it. Also, Mr. Lansburg plans on removing the old fireplace. Some windows would be replaced to replicate the original and some would be a different style.

Ms. Johnstone clarified that the commission is only concerned with the architectural changes to the property and is not concerned with the use of the building before opening public comment.

Public comment:

Frank Hallahan states he could see the construction of the property from his home. Mr. Hallahan states that the owners have shared their architectural plans and assures they are doing their best to preserve the architectural view of the property.

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

On a motion made by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Northway, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed demolition to replace in-kind window replacements, relocation of fire escape, replace select egress doors with windows, install new egresses, remove modern shed

roofs, alter select carriage house windows would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed, and a Building Demolition Delay Waiver was thus approved.

4. 84 William Street (02-047-45+83) – BDDW-23-20

Petition Purpose: Wrap half timbers in synthetic overlay

Michael Sweeney stated that he plans to paint the property, but certain repairs are needed before he could do that. The conditions of the timbers are fair, but years of paint layers have affected the timbers. He plans to redo the half timbers in synthetic overlay, which would be the best option economically.

Two letters were submitted as public comment. Chair Long recited them.

Public comment:

Letter 1: Patricia Wiener, a neighbor of the property wrote she wants to make sure Mr. Sweeney does not do whatever he wants to the architecture. She hopes and strongly suggests that he follows the proper procedures to preserve the architectural make-up of the property.

Letter 2: Russ Haims states that he supports Mr. Sweeney's proposal and believes that the synthetic overlay will prolong the lasting of the paint.

Rene Norton, participated via call and lives across the street from the property. Ms. Norton shared that they have done a great job with the renovations they have done so far and believes that the proposed plan is a great solution.

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

Chair Long believes that this material has been used in this area before and that it would not look bad.

Commissioner Taylor stated he does not understand what is exactly being demolished.

Ms. Johnstone clarifies that this is not a demolition, but this is what they need to do according to their ordinance.

Commissioner Northway mentioned that the other possible options could be a financial hardship.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Northway, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes at 84 William Street consisting of wrapping half timbers in synthetic overlay is appropriate and would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed, and a Building Demolition Delay Waiver was thus approved.

Certificate of Appropriateness & Certificate of Non-Applicability

5. 10 Crown Street (03-026-0041A) – COA-23-7 & CNA-23-18

Petition Purpose: Remove steps to yard from sidewalk (COA)

Peter McNamara stated his wife suffered from a stroke and she has been in the hospital ever since. In one to two months, she will be moving back home and will likely be on a wheelchair. His initial plan was to purchase a portable ramp but found out this would not be reasonable. He plans to remove the stairs regrade it and lay out new concrete at a slope along with retaining walls.

Public comment: None.

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

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Northway, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes at 10 Crown Street consisting of removing steps to the yard from the sidewalk, regrading the walkway to the front porch with stamped concrete pavers use of the edges of the walkway, while widening and replacing a door that is not visible from the street to make it more handicap accessible are appropriate for the City of Worcester. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness was approved.

6. 86 Austin Street (03-023-001-8) – COA-23-8

Petition Purpose: Replace signage

Beacon Management joined remotely and presented their request to replace signage. He clarified that the new signage would maintain the same size and font as the previous one, ensuring consistency in appearance.

Public comment: None.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Theerman and seconded by Commissioner Northway, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes at 86 Austin Street consisting of a new signage is appropriate for the Crown Hill Local Historic District. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness was approved.

COMMUNICATIONS

None

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Design Review Guidelines project updates – meeting with Heritage Strategies LLC

Peter Benton, an architect from Heritage Strategies LLC, was hired to design the commission's Design Review Guidelines and was present remotely during the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Long, the Commission voted six (6) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:30 p.m.