



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

Thursday, July 27, 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
Erika Helnarski
Donald Northway
Steven Taylor, Clerk
Vanessa Andre, Alternate (Remote)

Commissioners Absent: Devon Kurtz
Tomi Stefani

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

Call Commission to Order – 5:30 PM

Approval of Minutes - NONE

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE

1. 88 Webster Street (27-032-00004) – BDDW-23-13

Continued to August 10, 2023

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

Gold Star Builders filed a request to postpone 88 Webster Street until August 10th and extend the constructive grant deadline to August 25th, 2023.

Upon a motion made by Chair Janet Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted six (6) in favor and zero (0) opposed to postpone 88 Webster Street until August 10th and extend the constructive grant deadline to August 25h, 2023. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed, and the item was postponed.



OLD BUSINESS

Building Demolition Delay Waiver

2. 75 William Street (02-048-00092) – BDDW-23-32

Petition Purpose: Demolish a section of wall to accommodate a rear addition. Associated work required to convert into a five-unit dwelling.

Before the initiation of this case Ms. Johnstone mentioned that commissioner Taylor was not eligible to vote on this item.

Attorney Donald O’Neil came on behalf of the owners, Daniel & Rebecca Yarnie/Polar Views LLC and invited Jesse Hilgenberg, the architect, to answer any questions the commission may have regarding the changes on the property.

Jesse claimed that the plan is to create five units. Jesse professionally advised owners that there should be a three family at this property instead of a five family, but the owners insisted on creating a five family. He believed that the chimney would most likely need to be rebuilt.

Public comment:

Deborah Packard, director of Preservation Worcester and Worcester and resident stated that this project would be detrimental and change the history and character of the neighborhood. Ms. Parker claimed the owner owns about 11 properties in the city and wants to make sure that he understands that the neighborhood should preserve its architectural character.

Juliet Fernandez lives immediately adjacent to the property. Ms. Fernandez is a physician that works in Boston and what keeps her from leaving is the history of their unique property and neighborhood. Ms. Fernandez stated that she has a deep concern of the lack of oversight and maintenance exhibited by the owner.

Russ Haims stated that he purchased 24 homes in the Becker neighborhood with the intention of protecting the historical integrity of the neighborhood. Mr. Haims converted commercial properties into family homes. He bought so many to keep the residential consistency within the area, that being said he closed by stating he does not support this project.

Letter from Rene Norton (81 Williams Street): Ms. Norton stated that this project would propose significant changes that would be visible from Williams Street and because of this she respectfully requested for the commission to deny this proposal.

Mr. O’Neil mentioned that although he understands that there was discussion to create a historic District in this area, it has not been created yet. Therefore, he believed that this fact should be taken into consideration and this project should be treated as a property that is not located in a historic district. He does not believe the addition would be visible from the street.

Chair Long clarified that the commission would not be looking at the property as if it were in a Historic District because it is not. What they will be looking at is whether or not the changes to this building would impact the historic integrity of properties in the City of Worcester.



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.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Janet Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted (0) in favor and five (5) opposed that the proposed changes at 75 William Street, of demolishing a section of the wall to accommodate a rear addition and associated work to convert into a five unit dwelling would not be detrimental to the historical or architectural resources of the City of Worcester. Having gained a zero vote in favor, the motion failed, and a Building Demolition Delay Waiver was thus denied.

Certificate of Appropriateness & Building Demolition Delay Waiver

3. 114 Austin Street (03-024-00002) – COA-23-13

Petition Purpose: Demolish house and a portion of the carriage house. Construct a replacement building, incorporating the façade of the carriage house.

Before the initiation of this item Ms. Johnstone mentioned that commissioner Taylor was not eligible to vote on this item and clarified that at the last meeting the demolition of the front portion of the house was approved. What the commission should focus on is the design of the new building.

Attorney O'Neil was present on behalf of the owners, Daniel & Rebecca Yarnie/Polar Views LLC. Mr. O'Neil invited Jesse, the contractor, to answer any questions for the commission.

Jesse clarified that they are not trying to copy the color of the property in front of the house. He stated that there will be some composite material. They were proposing real wood shutters and a white lattice underneath the deck.

Ms. Johnstone asked if the windows around the house would be one over one.

Jesse stated that they do not mind if the windows are either one over one or two over two as long as the windows are different from the ones installed on the carriage house.

Chair Long stated the colors seem neutral and two over two would be the window suggestion.

Public comment: None

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.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Janet Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted five (5) in favor and zero (0) opposed that the proposed changes at 114 Austin Street, consisting of the mockup, two over two windows, and the neutral coloring is appropriate for the Crown Hill Local Historic District. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed, and a Certificate of Appropriateness was thus approved.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Janet Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted five (5) in favor and zero (0) opposed the proposed changes at 114 Austin Street of the demolishing the house and a portion of the carriage house and constructing a replacement building incorporating a facade of



the carriage house 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

4. 17 Russell Street (06-008-00051) – BDDW-23-33

Petition Purpose: Replace fascia, Install gutters, soffits

Maria Mateo participated online and is the owner of 17 Russell Street. Mrs. Mateo stated that she is trying to restructure the property. Claimed that the fascia is in very bad shape and that they need to install gutters. They would use fiber cement because it would be hard to find the original material and this material would be the most affordable. The gutters material would be made of metal. Mrs. Mateo clarified there would not be any renovations on the roof.

Public comment: None

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.

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 the proposed changes at 17 Russell Street, consisting of the replacement of the fascia and install gutters, are 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.

5. 36 Butler Street (10-043-00012) – BDDW-23-34

Petition Purpose: Demolish entire building

Stephen Madaus of Mirick O'Connell was present on behalf of Butler Street Realty Trust. Mr. Madaus mentioned that this property was a licensed funeral parlor, however, the business moved to another location. The current owner has owned the property for twenty years and the property has been for sale for ten years with no prospective buyers. The owners are trying to sell the property, but would like to see if the building demolition proposal could be approved to have on standby.

Public comment:

Letters:

Joseph Glenecki claimed that he had offered to purchase the property for the listing price several times and had been refused by the owner. He believed that he was not denied as a buyer for personal reasons, but due to the owner's own economic gain. He claimed that he does not believe this proposal should be approved.

Unknown did not support the demolition of the property and believed that this property is valuable to the character and history of Worcester.

Judy Phillips requested for the commission to find another solution to the demolition of this historical property.



Cathy F. asked to not allow the demolition of this beautiful historic building.

Unknown supported the denial of the demolition proposal of this property and suggests that waiving this demolition delay would be detrimental to Worcester.

Public (in person comments/virtual)

Deborah Packard, Preservation Worcester, and Worcester resident stated that they are more than willing to help promote the sale of the building. Ms. Packer claimed that she believes that several resources are willing to help preserve and promote the sale of the building.

Dan Donahue, State Representative for the Worcester District mentioned that not many historical buildings are left in this area and he would love to see this building remain.

Bryan Saska, resident, stated that he shares a backyard with this property and hopes to see this building remain.

Ms. Johnstone mentioned that the property had been seen under contract on Loopnet.

Mr. Madaus claimed that the owner did not mention that to him.

Joseph Glinecki claimed that he offered to purchase the property, but due to different business reasons they were not able to make the deal.

Susan Ceccacci, an architectural historian residing in Holden, claimed that the property has significant historical value and should not be demolished.

Dr. Mira, grew up in Worcester and said that she frequently drives by this building almost every single day and she has never seen a "for sale" sign.

Jonathan Ostrow asked if the property owners could provide a monthly report of the property.

Chair Long answered that the Commission does not request monthly reports for the properties they deal with.

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.

Upon a motion made by Vice-Chair Janet Theerman, and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Commission voted zero (0) in favor and six (6) opposed the proposed demolition at 36 Butler Street, consisting of the demolition of the entire building, is appropriate to the historical or architectural resources of Worcester. Having failed to have gained majority affirmative votes, the motion failed and a Building Demolition Delay Waiver was denied.

6. 15 Larch Street (06-007-00015) – BDDW-23-35

Petition Purpose: Install egress windows in basement wall

Richard Kubert needed to install basement windows for safety reasons (emergency exit).



Public comment: None

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.

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 15 Larch Street, installing egress windows in the basement walls 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.

7. 605 Millbury Street (10-003-00018) – BDDW-23-36

Petition Purpose: Remove, reconfigure, and replace select windows and doors, re-open rear porches, associated work.

Rafael Hernandez was present on behalf of David Dominguez and stated that at some point the buildings were resided and it did not have egress. The owner plans to rent out units and changes need to be made in order to do this.

Mr. Hernandez plans to replace windows and re-open porches to adjust for tenant living.

Public comment: none.

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.

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 605 Millbury Street, consisting of remove, reconfigure, and replace select windows and doors, re-open rear porches, and associated work 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.

8. 270 Pleasant Street (06-006-00038) – BDDW-23-37

Petition Purpose: Reconstruct a storefront.

Laurian Banciulescu, owner of the property stated that he plans to remove and replace the storefront in order to make the space more attractive and rent out the property.

Public comment: None

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.

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 270 Pleasant Street, consisting of reconstruction of the storefront and associated work 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

A. Letter from Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) to Preservation Worcester regarding selection for a matching allocation of \$50,000 from the MHC's Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund.

Preservation Worcester shared that this is a matching grant so it would be 100,000.

B. Request from Epsilon Associates for updated letters of support for Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit allocations for:

- i. Walker Shoe Factory, 28 Water Street
- ii. Second State Mutual Company, 340 Main Street
- iii. Worcester County Institution for Savings, 365 Main Street
- iv. Ransom Taylor Block, 526 Main Street
- v. Kane Building, 204 Main Street
- vi. Sargent Card Clothing Company, 300 Southbridge Street

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 Commission provide updated letters of support for all of these properties for Rehabilitation Tax Credits. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed.

C. Request from Ryan LLC for updated letters of support for Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit allocations for:

- i. Waldo Street Police Station, District Court & Insurance Fire Patrol, 1 Exchange Place
- ii. P.E. Somers Manufacturing Company, 35 Lagrange Street
- iii. L. Robbins Machine Shop, 42 Lagrange Street
- iv. L.D. Thayer Manufacturing Company, 47 Lagrange Street
- v. Harwood & Quincy Machine Company, 50 Lagrange Street
- vi. Washburn & Moen North Works Cotton Mill, 90 Grove Street
- vii. J.A. Calvin Lofts, 98 Beacon Street
- viii. The Hotel Aurora, 660 Main Street
- ix. Worcester Boys' Club, 2 Ionic Avenue
- x. The Worcester Art Museum (WAM), 50 Salisbury Street



xi. Whitcomb Manufacturing Co. Factory, 134 Gold Street

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 Commission has updated letters of support for all of these properties for Rehabilitation Tax Credits. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed.

D. Request from PAL, Inc. for updated letters of support for Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit allocations for:

- i. Mission Chapel, 205 Summer Street
- ii. Paul B. & Lessie M. Morgan House, 21 Cedar Street
- iii. Worcester Boys' Club, 16 Salisbury Street
- iv. Taylor & Farley Organ Factory, 15–21 Hermon Street

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 Commission has updated letters of support for all of these properties for Rehabilitation Tax Credits. Having gained a unanimous affirmative vote, the motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Request for a determination of effects for work proposed at 90 Lamartine Street.

This company will be reconstructing these properties on this street into residential properties. The company wants the commission to approve the elevation of the building.

Ms. Johnstone clarified that the commission would have to decide whether or not the proposed work would preclude its continued designation as a proposed structure.

Commissioner Taylor mentioned that the project largely improved and that the architecture would be preserved.

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. The Worcester Historical Commission has determined that the proposed work at 90 Lamartine Street consisting of residential conversion according to the plans submitted to the commission would not preclude the continued designation of 90 Lamartine Street as a historic structure.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Chair Long, the Commission voted six (6) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:02 p.m.