

NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS & BRIEFINGS
DATE: OCTOBER 26, 2021
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214, MUNICIPAL BUILDING

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS NAOMI CARNEY, CHAIRPERSON; WILLIAM BRAD MARKEY, VICE CHAIRMAN; IAN ABREU; DEREK BAPTISTE; BRIAN GOMES (7:12); SCOTT LIMA; JOSEPH LOPES

ABSENT: COUNCILLORS DEBORA COELHO; HUGH DUNN; MARIA GIESTA; LINDA MORAD

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Councillor Carney called the Appointments & Briefings Committee Meeting to order and took attendance. The Clerk read a Communication from Councillor Giesta explaining her absence from this meeting. This Communication was received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu. The Clerk announced he received a call from Councillor Dunn stating he was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a PUBLIC HEARING on a COMMUNICATION/DEMOLITION, New Bedford Historical Commission to City Council, re: BUILDING DEMOLITION REVIEW OF 1-3 PINE STREET, (MAP 42, LOT 160) a Circa 1916, 4-5 story masonry industrial building, known as the Cannon Street Power Station – advising that “the Cannon Street Power Station” is a contributing building to the New Bedford Gas and Edison Light Complex National Register District, which derives its historical significance from its association with engineering, architecture and industry, particularly its significance as the chief power generating facility for the City of New Bedford and much of Southeastern Massachusetts during much of the 20th century; the Cannon Street Power Station has been vacant for nearly three decades, has experienced a high level of deferred maintenance and the reuse of the Power Station does not have economic viability as past redevelopment scenarios of the subject site have demonstrated; if the site is not redeveloped it will remain contaminated and underutilized and remain in this condition for the foreseeable future, the Power Station will eventually fall into further disrepair, ultimately requiring demolition “in light of these findings, the New Bedford Historical Commission has determined that the structure known as the Cannon Street Power Station at 1-3 Pine Street is Historically Significant but is not a Preferably Preserved structure” (Ref'd 8/19/2021) (Advertised in The Standard-Times on Tuesday, October 12, 2021) was received and placed on file and the hearing opened by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu. (1)

Anne Louro, Preservation Planner, was present and gave an overview of the Historical Commissions decision that thought the property at 1-2 Pine Street is Historically Significant they have decided that it is not a Preferably Preserved structure. Ms. Louro explained that this property has gone through many proposed redevelopment scenarios and change recommendations throughout the years.

The building in question has remained empty and deteriorating for quite some time, so much to the point that it is not preferably preserved.

Attorney Andrew Saunders gave an overview of the future use of the land. He explained that the property would be used as a staging point for offshore wind development. The developer will need to follow through with the prescribed plan or the property would revert to the City Redevelopment Board. He explained that the Gas Company building property adjacent to the Marriot Hotel will be turned over to the Redevelopment Authority to use as they wish. He further explained that the demolition permit process for the Pine Street location would take anywhere between six-eight months, after that demolition would begin, and the project should be completed by 2023.

The Chair asked if there was anyone present who would like to speak or be recorded in favor of the demolition; there were none. He then asked if there was anyone present who would like to speak or be recorded in opposition of the demolition; there were none. The hearing was closed.

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council to GRANT the DEMOLITION of 1-3 PINE STREET, (MAP 2, LOT 160) the Cannon Street Power Station. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a PUBLIC HEARING on a COMMUNICATION/DEMOLITION, New Bedford Historical Commission, to City Council, re: BUILDING DEMOLITIONREVIEW OF 94 CLARK STREET, (MAP 84, LOT 134) a circa 1911,three story wood-framed residence – Partial demolition: Porches, advising that “the Building is associated with the architectural, cultural and social history of the City, as it is a prime example of a middle-class tenement, the iconic building archetype built to house the immigrant groups who came to New Bedford for employment in the textile industry; the building is architecturally significant as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Colonial Revival style with details such patterned shingles, wide cornices, tapered columns and the use of monumental center porticos capped by a triangular pediment, the porches dominate the front façade and are a defining feature of the building; the City’s Demolition Ordinance promotes the public welfare by making the City a more attractive and desirable place in which to live and work by preserving and protecting significant buildings, structures, streetscaped and neighborhoods, the loss of tenement porches has been widespread and often results in an unattractive, blank building that no longer contributes to a neighborhood, and may assist in the neighborhood’s visual, physical and social decline; if a demolition permit is granted, the Commission has sought that the current small porch windows be replaced with more appropriately sized windows, **“in light of these findings, the New Bedford Historical Commission has determined that the building at 94 Clark Street is Historically Significant and a Preferably Preserved Historic Building or Structure”** (Ref’d 09/23/2021) (Advertised in The Standard-Times on Tuesday, October 12, 2021) was received and placed on file and the hearing opened by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu. (2)

Anne Louro, Preservation Planner, was present and gave an overview of the decision made by the Historical Commission, that the city does not grant the owner of the parcel the authority to demolish the porches on the front of the house at 94 Clark Street. The Commission found that the building is associated with the architectural, cultural, and social history of the city and is a prime example of a middle-class tenement. She went on to explain that a lot of outside developers are buying these houses and removing the front porches, which drastically alters the appearance of the structure. Ms. Louro previously provided the Committee with photos of similar houses in the area with the Commission's report.

Commissioner Danny Romanowicz was present and acknowledged that the porches were structurally sound, though they needed a little work.

The Chair asked if there was anyone present who would like to speak or be recorded in favor of the demolition, there were none. He also asked if there was anyone present who would like to speak or be recorded in opposition of the demolition, there were none.

Councillor Gomes asked if the petitioner was present and was informed by the Clerk that Mr. Lima was not present, but that he had been invited and was informed of the hearing.

On motion by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Lopes, the Committee VOTED: To continue the Public Hearing to November 22, 2021, at 7 PM. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell o the City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of JONATHAN CARVALHO, New Bedford, MA, to the CEMETERY BOARD. Mr. Carvalho will be replacing the late Carol Grimes; this term will expire in April 2024 (Ref'd 09/09/2021) (09/30/2021-tabled) was removed from the table and received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Lima. (3)

Jonathan Carvalho, New Bedford, MA was present to answer questions from the Committee. He explained that when he left his position in the Mayor's office he did offer to serve on a Board and continue his public service. He was particularly interested in the Cemetery Board. He was asked if he had been informed of the issues presenting itself currently on the Board as it related to the placing of articles on headstones throughout the city's cemeteries and he said he was.

On motion by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Lopes, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council APPROVAL of the APPOINTMENT of JONATHAN CARVALHO, New Bedford, MA, to the CEMETERY BOARD. Mr. Carvalho will be replacing the late Carol Grimes; this term will expire in April 2024. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of LEE BLAKE, New Bedford, MA to the BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS, replacing Paula Robinson Deare, who has resigned; this term will expire May 2026. (Ref'd 09/23/2021) (4)

The Clerk announced that the office received a call from Ms. Blake stating she was not feeling well and was unable to attend the meeting.

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Lima, the Committee VOTED: To table this matter at this time. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of JOHN LOBO, New Bedford, MA to the COMMISSION FOR CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES, replacing Viorica Ivone Silva, who has resigned; this term will expire May 2024 (Ref'd 09/23/2021) was received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu. (5)

John Lobo, New Bedford, MA was present to answer questions from the Committee. A motion was immediately made to approve his appointment to the Commission for Citizens with Disabilities.

On motion by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Lopes, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council APPROVAL of the APPOINTMENT of JOHN LOBO, New Bedford, MA to the COMMISSION FOR CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES, replacing Viorica Ivone Silva, who has resigned; this term will expire May 2024. This motion passed on a Roll Call Vote of Yeas 7, Nays 0.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of CHAD FREITAS, New Bedford, MA to the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION, replacing Maria A. Rosario, whose term has expired; this term will expire April 2022 (Ref'd 10/14/2021) was received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu. (6)

Chad Freitas, New Bedford, MA was present to answer questions from the Committee. He explained he has lived in New Bedford for the last fourteen (14) years and that he has been employed by General Dynamics for thirty-two (32) years. He informed the Committee that he has been involved in public service through Mercy Meals and More. He feels that his familiarity with those he currently works with allow him to contribute to the position of which he has been nominated.

On motion by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Lopes, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council APPROVAL of the APPOINTMENT of CHAD FREITAS, New Bedford, MA to the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION, replacing Maria A. Rosario, whose term has expired; this term will expire April 2022. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of DELORIS JOSEPH, New Bedford, MA to the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION, replacing Estella I. Ribeiro, whose term has expired; this term will expire April 2022 (Ref'd 19/14/2021) was received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu. (7)

Deloris Joseph, New Bedford, MA was present to answer questions from the Committee. She informed the Committee that she has lived in New Bedford for the last fourteen (14) years; she has been involved in the Social Justice Organization in the City. She is a Social Worker and believes this experience will provide a resource to the Commission. Her goal is that people should be treated fairly and equitably no matter what walk of life they may come from.

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Lima, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council APPROVAL of the APPOINTMENT of DELORIS JOSEPH, New Bedford, MA to the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION, replacing Estella I. Ribeiro, whose term has expired; this term will expire April 2022. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of MARIA GLORIA DE SA, New Bedford, MA to the LIBRARY TRUSTEES, replacing the late Reverend Kevin Harrington; this term will expire April 2022 (Ref'd 10/14/2021) was received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Markey. (8)

Maria Gloria De Sa, New Bedford, MA was present to answer questions from the Committee. Dr. De Sa gave an overview of her qualifications, she also provided the Committee with an amazing story of her journey to the United States as an immigrant and how important books and libraries have played a major part in her life. She is a graduate of SMU; she received her PhD from Brown University in Immigrant Sociology. She is currently retired but also has worked with the Portuguese American Whalemens portion of the UMASS Dartmouth Library.

On motion by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Lima, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council APPROVAL of the APPOINTMENT of MARIA GLORIA DE SA, New Bedford, MA to the LIBRARY TRUSTEES, replacing the late Reverend Kevin Harrington; this term will expire April 2022. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to the City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of SHAWN OLIVER, New Bedford, MA 02746 as a Constable, and the APPLICATION, were received and placed on file by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Abreu. (9, 9a)

Shawn Oliver, New Bedford, MA was present to answer questions from the Committee. He gave an overview of why he is seeking out the appointment as a Constable. He is returning to the city after living on the Cape but prior to that he lived in the city for thirty (30) years. He is involved in the areas Youth Pop Warner Football League, and the SEYAA Baseball Program. He has been with the Mass Department of Corrections for eight and a half years. He plans to approach the job with dealing with the public with humility and compassion especially with being served with various legal documents.

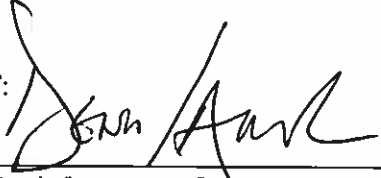
On motion by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Abreu, the Committee VOTED: To recommend to the City Council APPROVAL of the APPOINTMENT of SHAWN OLIVER, as a Constable. This motion passed on a voice vote.

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Councillor Lopes made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Gomes.

This meeting adjourned @ 8:30 p.m.

ATTEST:



Denis Lawrence, Jr.,
Clerk of Committees