



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS & BRIEFINGS
DATE: MARCH 17, 2026
TIME: 7:01 P.M.
PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS NAOMI CARNEY, CHAIR; IAN ABREU;
DEREK BAPTISTE (7:09); SHANE BURGO; BRIAN
GOMES; SHAWN OLIVER; SCOTT PEMBERTON; RYAN
PEREIRA; JAMES ROY

ABSENT: COUNCILLORS LEO CHOQUETTE; JOSEPH LOPES

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Councillor Carney called the Appointments & Briefings Committee meeting to order, took attendance, and explained that the meeting was being recorded and live-streamed. The Clerk read two Communications into the record from Councillors Choquette and Lopes explaining their absences from the meeting. The Communications were received and placed on file by Councillor Oliver and seconded by Councillor Burgo.

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CITIZEN'S INPUT TIME – Not to exceed the first thirty (30) minutes of the meeting.

- 1a. James Dupont, 118 Elm Street - E, Raynham, MA, 02767, speaking on the "Impacts on Local Taxpayers". (Referred – March 04, 2026.)

The Chair recognized Mr. James Dupont.

On motion by Councillor Oliver and seconded by Councillor Burgo, the Committee VOTED: to Receive and Place on File a hard copy of Mr. Dupont's prepared remarks.

Mr. Dupont addressed the Committee, and the matter was concluded.

Citizen's Input Time was concluded.

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COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting the APPOINTMENT of CRISTOBAL JOSE ESCOBAR, New Bedford, MA to the VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD, replacing Christopher Holkamp who has resigned; this term will expire December 2026. (Matter ID #1925) (Referred – December 11, 2025.)

The Chair asked if Mr. Escobar was present. It was determined that he was not.

Councillor Burgo was recognized and requested that the Committee approve the appointment, noting that the board currently lacks a quorum and that the applicant may be unable to attend committee meetings.

Councillor Oliver acknowledged the board's lack of quorum and expressed his willingness to work with applicants; however, he emphasized that nominees should be present for an interview.

On motion by Councillor Oliver and seconded by Councillor Abreu, the Committee VOTED: To table the matter at this time. This motion passed on a roll call vote of Yeas 8, Nays 1. (Councillor Burgo OPPOSED.)

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PETITION, **Ksea Swift and Justin Swift, East Freetown, MA d/b/a SWIFT SALES, 127 West Rodney French Boulevard, New Bedford, MA**, requesting a Waiver of Residency in accordance with Section 15-38 of the City Code, to obtain a **LICENSE TO DEAL IN JUNK, OLD METALS OR ANY OTHER SECONDHAND ARTICLES**. (Matter ID #1797) (Referred – November 13, 2025.) (December 16, 2025 – Remain in Committee) (February 17, 2026 – tabled)

The Chair asked if Ksea and Justin Swift were present, and it was determined that they were not. It was noted that it was the third time the applicants have not been present.

The Clerk was asked whether the office had fulfilled its obligation to notify the applicants of the meeting. The Clerk confirmed that it had and provided the date the notifications were sent to their home and business address.

On motion by Councillor Burgo and seconded by Councillor Pemberton, the Committee VOTED: to recommend that the City Council take “**NO FURTHER ACTION**” on the PETITION, **Ksea Swift and Justin Swift, East Freetown, MA d/b/a SWIFT SALES, 127 West Rodney French Boulevard, New Bedford, MA**, requesting a Waiver of Residency in accordance with Section 15-38 of the City Code, to obtain a **LICENSE TO DEAL IN JUNK, OLD METALS OR ANY OTHER SECONDHAND ARTICLES**.

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The following communication and motion were not read; and both matters remained on the table.

COMMUNICATION, City Clerk/Clerk of the City Council, submitting an Application for a **NEW PRIVATE LIVERY LICENSE**, on behalf of Celestin Wilkend, 1 Warwick Street, New Bedford, MA d/b/a **CRIS TRANSPORTATION**, 1 Warwick Street, New Bedford, MA. (**License to expire – June 30, 2026.**) (Matter ID #0033) (Referred – January 08, 2026.) (February 17, 2026 – tabled.)

WRITTEN MOTION, Councillors Gomes and Oliver, requesting that the Committee on Appointments and Briefings meet with MBTA South Coast Rail officials for the purpose of discussing the safety of the Purchase Street Train corridor; the installation of safety fencing from Minuteman Car Wash, south and the support wall south on Purchase Street, from Penniman Street to the train station; and further, requesting that the Purchase Street support wall have the same façade as the train station. (Matter ID #0116) (Referred – January 25, 2024.) (June 17, 2025 – tabled)

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WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Gomes, requesting, that the Committee on Appointments & Briefings meet with Derek Santos, Executive Director for the New Bedford Economic Development Council, along with Board Members of the New Bedford Business Park, for the purpose of having a discussion on implementing language in the Business Park's governing rules to protect against any future trash and recycling businesses that handle hazardous waste materials from being located in the Business Park; putting this safeguard in place would protect the Business Park from any hazardous waste, trash and other detrimental materials. (Matter ID #1936) (Referred – December 11, 2025.)

Councillor Gomes explained that the purpose of this motion is to ensure that the Business Park does not permit future trash, recycling, or hazardous waste operations to locate there.

The Chair recognized Derek Santos, Executive Director New Bedford Economic Development Council. Mr. Santos provided an overview of the original deed restrictions, explaining that although they were once in place, many have expired over time and are no longer enforceable. He noted that the Business Park is entirely privately owned, and while certain limitations can be applied through existing zoning regulations, the City cannot impose deed restrictions on properties it does not own.

Councillor Pereira sought clarification, asking whether he was correct in understanding that, although some parcels have deed restrictions and others do not, all parcels remain subject to zoning laws. He was informed that this was correct.

On motion by Councillor Gomes and seconded by Councillor Burgo, the Committee VOTED: to recommend that the City Council take **“NO FURTHER ACTION”** on the matter at this time.

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WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Gomes, requesting that the Committee on Appointments and Briefings meet with the Archdiocese of Boston's Planning Office for Urban Affairs to discuss the project timeline and proposed design plan for the former St. Killian's Church property on Ashley Boulevard (Matter ID #0113) and a PROJECT TIMELINE AND DESIGN PLAN, former St. Killian's Church. (Matter ID #0114) (Referred – January 22, 2026.)

The Chair recognized Shaina Korman-Houston, Director of Real Estate, Planning Office for Urban Affairs, Archdiocese of Boston, and William H. Grogan, President, Planning Office for Urban Affairs for the Archdiocese of Boston, both of 1 Post Office Square, Boston, Massachusetts. Ms. Korman-Houston presented the Council with a plan for the redevelopment of the property on which St. Kilian's Church, located at 200–206 Ashley Boulevard in New Bedford, is currently situated.

On motion by Councillor Roy and seconded by Councillor Burgo, the Committee VOTED: to Receive and Place on File the presentation packet.

Ms. Korman-Houston noted that they have been collaborating closely with the City, particularly with Mr. Joshua Amaral, Director of Housing and Community Development. The proposal calls for demolishing the existing church and replacing it with new housing, including townhouses on the current church site and rental apartment units on the adjacent property.

Ms. Korman-Houston further explained that the plan includes 15 three-story townhouses, consisting of 12 two-bedroom units and 3 three-bedroom units. The plan also includes a four-story mid-rise building with 46 rental apartments, consisting of 19 one-bedroom, 22 two-bedroom, and 5 three-bedroom units. Altogether, the development would provide a total of 29 parking spaces.

Townhouse pricing is projected at approximately \$285,000 for the two-bedroom units, targeting households with an average income of \$76,480, and approximately \$320,000 for the three-bedroom units, targeting households with an average income of \$86,140.

The proposed rental housing unit mix is as follows:

1 bed	# of units/Tenant Rent		Max HH Income
30% AMI with PBV	7% of HH income		\$25,110
60% AMI	6%	\$1,183	\$50,220
80% AMI	6%	\$1,610	\$66,960
2 bed	# of units/Tenant Rent		Max HH Income
30% AMI with PBV	6% of HH income		\$32,330
60% AMI	3%	\$1,409	\$64,620
80% AMI	6%	\$1,919	\$86,150
3 bed	# of units/Tenant Rent		Max HH Income
30% AMI with PBV	3% of HH income		\$38,760
60% AMI	1%	\$1,618	\$77,520
80% AMI	1%	\$2,208	\$103,360

The \$38 million project will include contributions from both the State and the City. The developers have completed their due diligence and gathered stakeholder feedback. The next steps include pursuing zoning and permitting in the spring of 2026, completing the funding application process by the end of 2026, and beginning construction later in the year, with homeownership anticipated to start in 2027.

Councillor Gomes expressed his support for the project, noting he was pleased to see it considered for the City, though he expressed regret that the church would need to be demolished. He inquired about project funding and was informed that it would rely on state and City grants. To qualify for the type of loans being sought, the City would likely need to provide a nominal financial contribution, potentially through tax credits or TIFs. The developers clarified that these discussions with the City have not yet occurred.

Councillor Oliver was also pleased with the proposal and asked about homeownership responsibilities, specifically who would maintain the properties. He was told that exterior maintenance would be managed through a homeowners' association (HOA), while townhouse owners would be responsible for the interior ("stud" portion) of their homes. Councillor Oliver inquired about the rental model; and he was told that the Diocese is still finalizing the rental structure and partnership vision, such as how responsibilities will be divided.

Councillor Burgo praised the project but expressed disappointment with the AMI regulations, noting they would limit the number of low-income units. He also asked about the project's expected start date; and the developers replied that once zoning is approved, which they are expecting shortly, the project would be able to move forward.

On motion by Councillor Roy and seconded by Councillor Pemberton, the Committee VOTED: to Table this matter at this time.

Councillor Roy made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councillor Pemberton.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

ATTEST:

Denis Lawrence Jr.
Clerk of Committees