



**JON MITCHELL**  
**MAYOR**

## **CITY OF NEW BEDFORD**

### **HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

133 William Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740  
Telephone: (508) 979.1488

#### **MINUTES**

**April 1, 2019**

**City Hall, Room 314 -133 William Street**

#### ***Members Present:***

Diana Henry, Chair  
Bill King, Vice Chair  
Anne Surma  
Janine da Silva  
Tabitha Harkin  
Alex Jardin-**arrived 6:28**

#### ***Members Absent:***

Bill Barr  
Jennifer white Smith  
James Lopes

#### ***Secretary and City Planning Staff:***

Anne Louro, *Preservation Planner*

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#### **Call to Order:**

D. Henry called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

#### **Roll Call:**

A formal roll call was conducted confirming a quorum of the members present as stated above.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of the March 4, 2019 public meeting were approved.

#### **Public Hearings**

#### **Motion to take New Business out of order.**

Motion moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. King.

**Motion carried.**

#### **New Business:**

#### **Case #2019.05 – 4 & 18 S Water Street (Map 47, Lot 37)**

Certificate of Appropriateness: Sidewalk Café Seating

David Slutz and Michael Warren presented the application, stating that they had two successful summer seasons of outdoor café seating, however the traffic and noise has made them reassess the barrier system and that they would like to use planters. He explained that they would be enlarging the seating area and adding three additional tables, which are the same as the existing. Mr. Slutz described the planters and the use of casters to move them at night. Mr. Warren described the dimensions of the planters to be 30" H X 72" L to be painted black.

**MOTION to open the public hearing.** Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. King.

**Motion carried.**

*Jeff Pontiff was recorded in favor of the petition, and no one spoke in opposition to the petition.*

**MOTION to close the public hearing.** Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. King.

**Motion carried.**

There was no member discussion.

**MOTION to approve Case #2019.05 for 4 & 18 S Water Street (Map 47, Lot 37) as submitted and grant the Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that any future reviews by the Planning or Liquor Boards resulting in any modifications be reviewed by Staff.**

Motion moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. King.

**Motion carried.**

**Case #2019.06-1 Johnny Cake Hill (Map 53, Lots 222)**

Certificate of Appropriateness: Signage

Andrea DeVeau presented the application for signage with A. Louro explaining that the signage was replacing similar signs in the same locations. The signage included a sign on the west wall as well as a blade sign above the Union street door. A sign that previously existed on the east wall had been removed, and although the applicant was not seeking to replace that sign at this time due to cost, the Commission encouraged approval at this time to avoid a separate future submittal and review.

Members discussed the sign material and expressed their concern relative to its durability, reflectiveness and the installation methods which had taken place on the west wall. Members were not pleased with the visibility of the screws and the fact that the aluminum sign was placed over the existing wood sign with visible metal fasteners which were unevenly spaced.

The Chair sought greater sign specifications and stated that the applicant should have received approval prior to having sign made and installed. The applicant and staff explained that the city's DIS approved a sign permit without notifying NBHC Staff or informing the applicant that they were within the local historic district.

**MOTION to open the public hearing.** Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. King.

**Motion carried.**

*There were no public comments offered or recorded in favor of the petition, nor in opposition to the petition.*

Members indicated that they wished to perform a site visit to view the installed sign and determine its appropriateness.

**MOTION to continue Case # 2019.06 to Monday, May 6, 2019.** Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. King.

**Motion carried with (1) abstention.**

**Case #2019.07- 4597 Acushnet Ave (Map 137-23)**

Demolition Request: circa 1922 wood framed structure

A. Louro explained that this demolition request should have been classified as non-historic, however prior to performing a site visit, the item was legally noticed within the newspaper and abutters notified, therefore it was required to remain on the agenda.

A. Louro described the condition of the property and provided her recommendation that the building be found to be neither Historically Significant nor a Preferably Preserved Structure.

**MOTION to send a recommendation to City Council that the structure at 4597 Acushnet Avenue was found to be neither Historically Significant nor a Preferably Preserved Structure.**

Motion moved by J. da Silva and seconded by A. Jardin.

**Motion carried.**

**Old Business:**

**Case #2019.04 – 117 Union Street (Map 53, Lots 40,41,146, 215,216)**

Certificate of Appropriateness: New infill Construction

*Continued from the March 4, 2019 meeting*

Michael Galasso, Director of the New Bedford Development Corporation and Louis Kraft, Associate Architect at Stantec, presented the project. Mr. Galasso thanked members for their previous comments, and they have responded to those and incorporated them into their plan revisions. Mr. Galasso stated his anticipation that the project would receive approval as many of the project's funding sources require local permitting approval.

Mr. Kraft acknowledged the delay in sending the new materials to the Commission and the members' limited timeframe in which to assess those materials. Therefore, Mr. Kraft stated that he would review the presentation with the members which was revised in response to the Commission's previous comments.

Mr. Kraft referenced the Hardiepanels used on the fifth-floor façade of the "east building" and noted the larger panel size. He noted that the Hardie siding on the "west building" utilizes a 6" reveal, as the preferred 8" reveal is not available with a factory finish and would impact maintenance.

Mr. Kraft referenced the brick masonry palette samples and stated that at the Commission's request, they reassessed the color palette of nearby buildings within the District and selected two new brick colors more consistent with Union Street.

Brick detailing was reviewed with Mr. Kraft pointing out the use of a double brick soldier course above the windows and the use of a herringbone pattern in the spandrel panel on the east building and a Flemish bond pattern on the west building to provide shadow and depth to the facades.

Mr. Kraft described the cornice differentiation on the west building which was established by stepping a soldier course out ½" to provide a shadow line. The west building cornice consists of an aluminum composite material with a 12" triple step out.

The building base details were reviewed with Mr. Kraft referencing the dark bronze color aluminum composite storefront surround and the use of a projecting canopy at the entrances. In response to A. Louro, Mr. Kraft stated that the canopies had a six-inch projection. A. Surma referenced historic precedent and asked for a more prominent projecting canopy at the north and south façade entries. Kraft noted the canopy soffit material will be wood to match the wood doors.

In response to J. da Silva, Mr. Kraft noted the use of ¼" mortar joint width specifications and stated that reassembled brick veneer panels were not being used, and that the facades would be composed of full depth course bricks installed in the field.

Storefront awnings were discussed with Mr. Kraft noting the awning projecting 3'-6" and location to signify the retail portion of the ground floor along Union Street to the entrance on N Second Street. Mr. Kraft described the material of proposed awning as a steel tube frame with a corrugated metal soffit. A. Surma stated that she was not satisfied with the modern awning and would prefer a more traditional design. She also noted that the scale of the awning was not in proportion to the storefronts. Mr. Kraft suggested that perhaps the awning could be approved at a later date along with the lighting and signage. There was agreement with that approach.

A Surma pointed out that the N Second Street door was incorrectly placed on the facade and due to the topography would need to be located one storefront bay south of its current location. She also spoke to the potential ability to divide the retail space and the need for the architectural details to allow for that potential division. Mr. Galasso stated that their intent was to keep the retail space as one large space, despite the suggestions received relative to the current downtown retail market conditions supporting smaller scaled retail spaces.

In response to T. Harkin, Mr. Galasso described the ground floor spaces to consist of a tenant lobby space with amenities and a co-working space and an area to wait for transportation and that he has spoken to a potential restaurant/ café operator interested in the Union Street retail space.

A Surma suggested that the N Second Street entrance should be recessed as previously suggested and Mr. Galasso agreed.

Mr. Galasso stated that he felt the design and execution of the project would be an ongoing collaboration with the Commission and that the details would be further developed, and that due to his funding requirements, felt that the Commission should approve the project with conditions; assuring that it would be a "Class A" project.

Based on that comment, A. Surma questioned whether the Commission should consider the first-floor plans as a "work in progress?" T. Harkin stated her concerns that an ongoing design and review would be challenging, unduly occupy staff time, and design details and intent could potentially be lost in the process. She suggested that as many details as possible be initially determined.

Mr. Kraft referenced the streetscape and proposed outdoor café seating and existing Lyndon trees. He noted that there may be design requirements specific to a tenant that may need adjusting at a later date. A. Louro explained that café seating had a separate permitting process and that potential changes to the sidewalk materials would require review and approval through Commission staff, National Park representative and DPI, with the standard practice of making those determinations in the field. She also noted that the Planning Board would want to see the potential sidewalk activation in the site plan, similar to how it was demonstrated in the 3D modelling.

Mr. Kraft reference the Juliette balconies and railings, noting their connections within the jamb and not extending beyond the openings. He also noted that the railings would be custom manufactured, therefore no manufacturer specifications are available, but that it would be the design as presented. He described the railings as coated aluminum in a dark bronze color with ½" round pickets with a 2"x2" top, bottom and mid rails; with mid rail approximately 4" below top rail.

There was discussion relative to the Commission's request for detailed drawings for certain architectural features and the expectations and requirements of the Commission for their review processes. Commission members explained that their standard level of review requires plan drawings beyond the "conceptual" level and that the Commission is accustomed to reviewing construction-ready drawings.

Mr. Kraft referenced the 3D view of the building from Custom House Square and reviewed the rooftop mechanical equipment screening. In response to A. Louro, Mr. Kraft confirmed the typical generator height to be between 10' to 12' in height. Members reviewed the types of rooftop equipment with A. Surma questioning the necessity of screening the various mechanical units in their entirety due to the varying heights. She noted that the use of one large screening unit presents itself as an entire additional building story and encouraged Mr. Kraft to explore different configurations of screening.

Members once again requested that various viewsheds of the rooftop mechanicals be presented and to show the rooftop mechanicals with and without screening in order to provide options for the Commission. It was also requested that the rooftop mechanicals be shown in the elevation drawings. Mr. Galasso noted an increase in the parapet to further screen the rooftop.

Mr. Kraft reviewed the Barkers Lane view, noting the parking space and required handicap striping, utilizing a contrasting brick color and suggesting that brick be used for the surface material.

J. da Silva questioned the use of the parking spot with A. Louro questioning if its requirement was tied to a funding source. Mr. Galasso stated that the handicap parking space would be designated for an electric van. In response to the J. da Silva's question of van ownership, Mr. Galasso hypothesized that one of the residents may own a handicap accessible electric van. A. Louro noted Mr. Galasso's previous statements before the Historical Commission and Planning Board that the electrical vehicle charging would be off-site.

Mr. Kraft reviewed the shadow study, noting the minimal shadows into Custom House Square Park during the fall and winter months.

A Louro questioned the demolition plan and her concerns with the protection of the Moby Dick party wall and foundation. Mr. Kraft stated that he was unsure of the party wall condition and that they have allowed for extra space. A. Louro noted the role of the Commission to ensure the preservation and well-being of buildings and that there were concerns with the existing buildings demolition and the pouring of foundation footings in proximity of the Moby Dick foundation. Mr. Kraft stated a structural engineer would be contracted and would demonstrate shoring and other details, admitting that it would be tricky.

A Louro questioned the raising of the parapet and A. Surma stated that the Commission had repeatedly articulated their desire to keep the height of the fifth floor as low as possible. A. Surma questioned the ability to split the rooftop mechanical screening to accommodate varying heights, instead of a continuous high screen. She stated that the uniform 12' high screening was unnecessary for the low condenser units. She also reiterated her desire to model the rooftop views to better demonstrate which mechanical units require screening and stated that the 3D views have often been narrow and sought broader views from a variety of perspectives. Mr. Kraft acknowledged the shared goal of minimizing the rooftop mechanical screening and suggested that they return at a later date with the information required to adequately demonstrate the visual presentation of the rooftop. D. Henry voiced her concern with returning for the rooftop mechanical screening, as it may not be considered conditional and becomes a hardship.

A Surma noted inconsistencies in the plan notes, seeking corrections and sought dimension and profile details of the cornice.

In response to T. Harkin's questioning the use of a garage door with a transformer located directed in front of it, Mr. Kraft stated the need to bring light into the unit and perhaps frosted glass would be used. T. Harkin also questioned the potential of utilizing an underground vault for the transformer with Mr. Kraft noting cost and clearance challenges. There was discussion regarding the lack of bollards shown near the transformer and the potential requirement of screening in the form of a fence or vegetation.

A Jardin questioned the lack of staff report with A. Louro stating that staff did not receive the materials from the applicant within the requested timeframe and therefore there a staff report, and preliminary order of conditions was not drafted or submitted to the Commission for consideration. A. Jardin stated his favor of the project as well as the efforts and the responsiveness of the team. A. Jardin stated that he also recognized deadlines and was uncomfortable approving a project without a staff report, draft conditions and without staff's due diligence relative to compliance with the District guidelines. Members concurred with A. Jardin.

There was a brief discussion regarding the change in the cornice on the west building with A. Surma once again reiterating the need for detail sections of the cornice. She stated the need for true dimensions, that profile sections were important and that the 3D perspectives did not provide the level of detail required for assessment.

Members once again explained their standards relative to detail requirements and there was discussion regarding the applicant's desire to receive a conditional approval. D. Henry stated the inability of Commission staff to project manage and review the number of conditions. T. Harkin concurred, noting that the overall project required organization, as it is being reviewed by three boards, and the incompleteness makes it difficult for staff to keep track. Members concurred that the applicant could return for approvals for the lighting, signage and awnings.

There was brief discussion relative to an upcoming Planning Board review and the potential for modifications based on that review. In an attempt to avoid overlap with the Planning Board review and the possibility of the Planning Board continuance due to meeting time constraints, as well as a means to facilitate a timelier approval process, a joint meeting of the Planning Board and Historical Commission was suggested.

It was mutually agreed upon that a joint meeting of the Boards on May 6<sup>th</sup> would be beneficial with D. Henry stating the need to receive updated materials in a timely manner for review processes.

**MOTION to open the public hearing.** Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. King.

**Motion carried.**

*There were no public comments offered or recorded in favor of the petition, nor in opposition to the petition.*

**MOTION to close the public hearing.** Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. King.

**Motion carried.**

**MOTION to continue Case # 2019.04 to Monday, May 6, 2019, to be held at the Main Library at 6:00PM as a joint meeting of the Historical Commission and the Planning Board.** Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. King.

**Motion carried.**

**Other:**

There was brief discussion relative to outstanding violations and the Chait asked staff to send letters to those property owners.

A. Louro briefly updated members on the following grants as well as the City's recent RFP for the former Civil Defense Building.

- Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey & Planning Grant Award
  - Waterfront Historic Resources Survey
- Massachusetts Historical Commission Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund Grant Submission
  - Rural Cemetery Gravestone Conservation
- Former Civil Defense Building-109 Hillman Street Request for Proposals

**Adjourn**

**There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by B. King and seconded by J. da Silva. The motion carried.** The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

NEXT MEETING Monday, May 6, 2019

Respectfully submitted,



Anne Louro

Secretary to the Historical Commission

Preservation Planner

Approved: June 3, 2019