



## CITY OF NEW BEDFORD DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

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# STAFF REPORT

NEW BEDFORD HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING

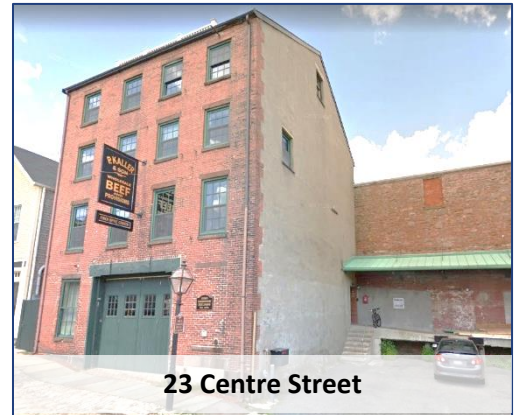
September 8, 2019

### CASE # 2019.23: CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

23 Centre Street (Map 53 Lot 184)

**OWNER:** Marjorie A. Waite "Trustee"  
The Marjorie A Waite Revocable  
23 Centre Street  
New Bedford, MA 02740

**APPLICANT'S AGENT:** Paul Choquette & Co.  
7 Pine Wood Way  
Mattapoisett, MA 02739



23 Centre Street

**OVERVIEW:** The property owner is being pro-active in the building's preventative maintenance by making repairs to the masonry and repointing the brick and stone.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS:** The John Harrison Building at 23 Centre Street was constructed c. 1820 as a commercial warehouse. The south-facing, four-story, side-gable, brick and rubble stone warehouse sits on a granite foundation on the north side of Centre Street. The south elevation is clad in brick, the east elevation is parged, and the north and west elevations are exposed stone. Fenestration consists of six-over-six double-hung sash with brownstone sills and lintels. A one-story, shed-roof addition attached to the north elevation and a two-story, hipped-roof addition attached to the east elevation of the one-story addition open onto Hamilton Street, which serves as a loading dock for the main building protected by a standing-seam metal, shed-roof overhang.

**PROPOSAL:** The applicant is proposing to repoint several sections of the building, including the brick, stone and parged areas.

**STATEMENT OF APPLICABLE GUIDELINES:** *The Bedford Landing District Design Guidelines* state the following relative to this proposal:

**MASONRY:** Repair and routine maintenance should preserve the historic appearance of historic masonry and prevent accelerated deterioration of masonry construction. Many modern techniques and materials used in contemporary masonry work are damaging to the softer materials found in historic brick and cast stone.

**TYPE OF MORTAR:** Repoint with mortar appropriate to the masonry. Mortar containing Portland cement as the primary ingredient is often problematic. Mortar that is harder than the masonry it is binding will eventually cause the masonry to deteriorate. A lime/cement mix is often satisfactory. Analysis of original mortar is recommended and is useful in developing a restoration mortar specification.

**REPAIR:** Deteriorated original materials should be repaired or replaced, where necessary, with new materials that duplicate the old as closely as possible. Replacement bricks should be carefully matched in size, color, and composition to the original. Original masonry and mortar should be retained whenever possible without the application of any surface treatment. Sealants, waterproofing, or water repellent coatings are prohibited unless required to solve a specific technical problem that has been studied and identified by a preservation specialist. In

all cases, the use of sealants is subject to review by the Commission. Sealants and coatings shall be permitted only if they have been proven not to block the masonry's water vapor permeability, or to contribute to its long-term deterioration.

**REPOINTING:** Masonry repointing shall be appropriate in terms of the type, color and aggregate of the mortar to be used and the width and profile of the joint. Old mortar shall be duplicated in composition, color, and texture. Joints should not be widened when cutting out old mortar. New mortar should be kept off the face of masonry. Laboratory analysis of samples of original mortar is recommended to insure that a compatible formula is used in repointing and repair. Deteriorated mortar should be removed by hand raking the joints. Chisels should be selected that are smaller than the masonry joints, and care should be taken not to damage the edges of the brick. Do not use power tools, such as electric saws to remove mortar. They offer limited control and may cut into the masonry and destroy historic fabric. The use of power grinders may be acceptable along horizontal joints; however, only professionals with demonstrated experience should do all work only after thorough pre-qualification of the craftsman and successful execution of test patches. When use of power tools is approved, care should be given to workman fatigue.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The proposed repair and preventative maintenance work is appropriate to the building and will help to preserve the masonry. Paul Choquette has restored and rehabilitated numerous historic structures throughout the City and the District, and is well versed in the requirements related to mortar types and masonry repointing. Staff recommends the approval of the application and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.



**Existing Centre Street Conditions**



**Existing Hamilton Street Conditions**