



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

133 William Street • Room 303 • New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740
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STAFF REPORT

NEW BEDFORD HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING

September 8, 2019

CASE # 2019.22: DEMOLITION REQUEST

2405 Acushnet Avenue (Map 136 Lot 200)

APPLICANT: Farland Corporation, Inc
401 County Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

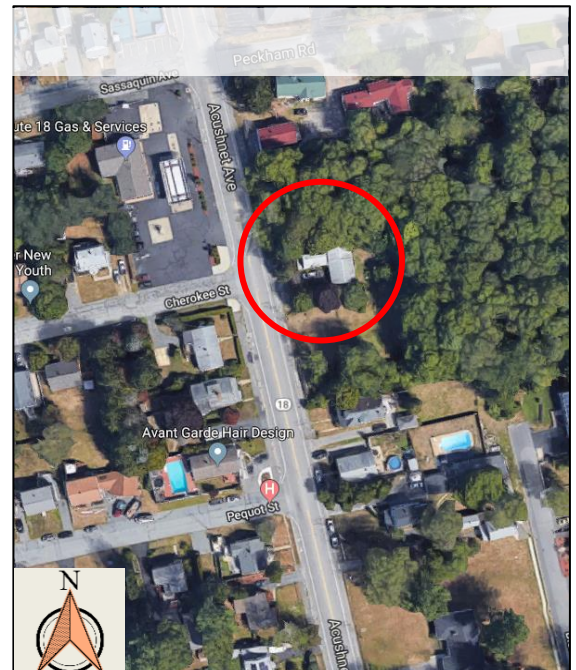
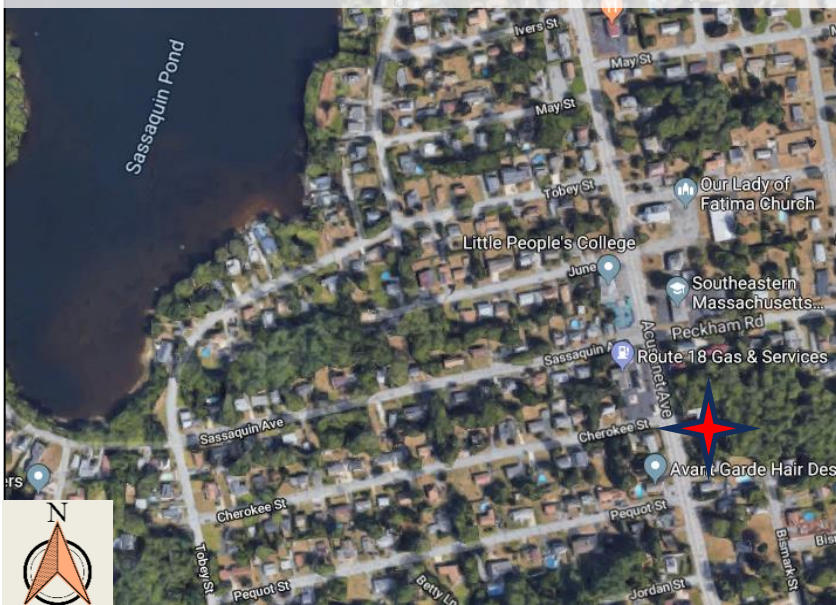
OWNER: Joan & Robert Burgess
4208 Acushnet Avenue
New Bedford, MA 02745



OVERVIEW: According to the application, the property owner is seeking the demolition of a wood-framed circa 1912 Colonial Revival gambrel style single family residence due to a combination of age and neglect, resulting in the structure becoming dilapidated beyond repair. Citing an outdated electrical system, the potential for lead paint presence, and lack of energy efficiency, the applicant seeks the opportunity to demolish this property to erect a similar sized new single-family structure to reside in.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The property is located in the northern section of the city on the east side of Acushnet Avenue, just south of Peckham Road and in proximity of Sassaquin Pond. The neighborhood is zoned for residential use and consists primarily of single-family homes and a few small businesses.

4208 ACUSHNET AVENUE LOCUS MAPS



The property is comprised of seven adjacent parcels of land with the house located on parcel #200. **See Parcel Map.** The land parcels are characterized by a mixture of open grass area, mature specimen trees, dense wooded areas and rock

walls. The house is a two-story wood-framed, front facing gambrel constructed circa 1912 with a full-width one story porch and a double- window roof dormer on the south façade. The house is clad with cedar shingles and has painted wood trim. The windows appear to be one over one, wood double-hung sashes with the addition of aluminum track storm windows.

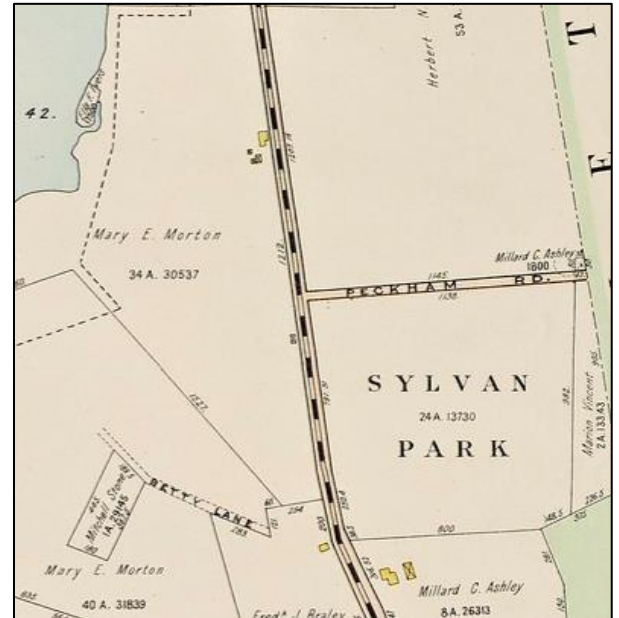
In 1970 a 24' X 40' one and one-half story addition was built on the rear of the original house, more than doubling the square footage of the original house's floor plates. The addition's exterior finishes match the original house. A garage, which was located adjacent and north of the house, was demolished in 1992, and according to building permits, the building's roof was re-shingled with asphalt in 2001.

The building is currently occupied by the Burgess family who purchased the property in 1966. The property has experienced deferred maintenance, with evidence of gutter deterioration leading to water damage affecting the wood building envelope. There are no building code violations or make-safe orders found on record and the building appears to be structurally sound.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: The subject property is located on the east side of what was then referred to as County Rd, or the road that leads to the Freetown Furnace. It was originally part of Dartmouth, then part of Fairhaven, then Acushnet, and eventually New Bedford. This portion of the city was used for farming throughout the 18th and 19th centuries with large tracts of open fields.

In the 1870's Otis T. Sisson built his suburban estate on the northwest corner of Old County Rd (Acushnet Ave) and Braley Road which eventually developed into the 23-acre Sylvan Grove Vineyard. Sylvan Grove grew into a popular destination resort featuring fishing, dancing, bowling, horseback riding and clambakes.

This area retained its rural character throughout the early twentieth century, until streets were laid out and land was subdivided for housing. A 23-acre parcel of land on the east side of Acushnet Avenue, across from Sylvan Grove, was subdivided in 1900 and named Sylvan Park.



Sylvan Park's parcels facing Acushnet Avenue were divided into 20' widths and Bismark Street was contemplated to the rear. The subject property parcels were transferred several times in the first decade of the 20th century to owners with Eastern European names such as Szleger and Kucharski. In 1911 Eustatis Zavas and Nicholas Chagaruly purchased 18 parcels within the development which are part of the subject property. Zavas and Chagaruly most likely constructed the house at this time, as they appear in the 1914 City Directory residing at 4208 Acushnet Avenue and both employed at the Puritan Confectionary Company, located at 1536 Acushnet Avenue, which is currently the site of Café Mimo.

The significance of the Eastern European surnames of those who purchased house lots within the development and built the subject residence is reflective of the city's rapidly expanding immigrant population in the early twentieth century to accommodate the textile industry workforce.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE: The residence was constructed as a Colonial Revival with a front facing gambrel roof and a full width front porch. It is a good representative example of the gambrel type of Colonial Revival, however it is not unique or distinctive in its execution and a contemporary addition was constructed to the rear of the original building.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLANS: The applicant has indicated within the application, and with follow-up inquiries by staff, that a new two-story, single family residence will be constructed in close proximity to the existing building footprint and that the new structure will be code compliant, be clad in vinyl or similar siding, be more energy efficient and compliment the abutting properties.

STATEMENT OF APPLICABLE GUIDELINES: Sec. 2-157. Demolition Delay of Buildings and Structures-Purpose: The purpose of Sections 2-157 through 2-157.9 is preserving and protecting significant buildings and structures within New Bedford, which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, economic, political or social history of the City and limiting the detrimental effect of demolition on the character of the City. Through Sections 2-157 through 2-157.9, owners of Preferably Preserved Historic Buildings and Structures are encouraged to seek out alternative options that will preserve, rehabilitate or restore such buildings, and residents of the City are alerted to impending demolitions of significant buildings.

By preserving and protecting significant buildings, structures, streetscapes and neighborhoods, this Ordinance promotes the public welfare by making the City a more attractive and desirable place in which to live and work. To achieve these purposes, the New Bedford Historical Commission is authorized to advise the City Council with respect to demolition permit applications. The issuance of demolition permits is regulated as provided by this Ordinance.

The provisions of the Demolition Delay Ordinance shall apply only to any building or structure that, in whole or in part, was built seventy-five (75) or more years prior to the date of the application for the demolition permit, and is:

- A building or structure listed or eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or within an area listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or on the State Register of Historic Places;
- A building or structure importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, economic, political or social history of the city, or;
- A building or structure which is historically or architecturally significant in terms of period style, method of building construction or association with a significant architect or builder either by itself or as a part of a group of buildings, or;
- A building or structure located within one hundred fifty (150) feet of a federal, state or local historic district boundary.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The building does not embody distinctive characteristics of its type, yet retains its integrity relative to its location, setting, materials and association with the historic development of the northern part of the city in the early 20th century.

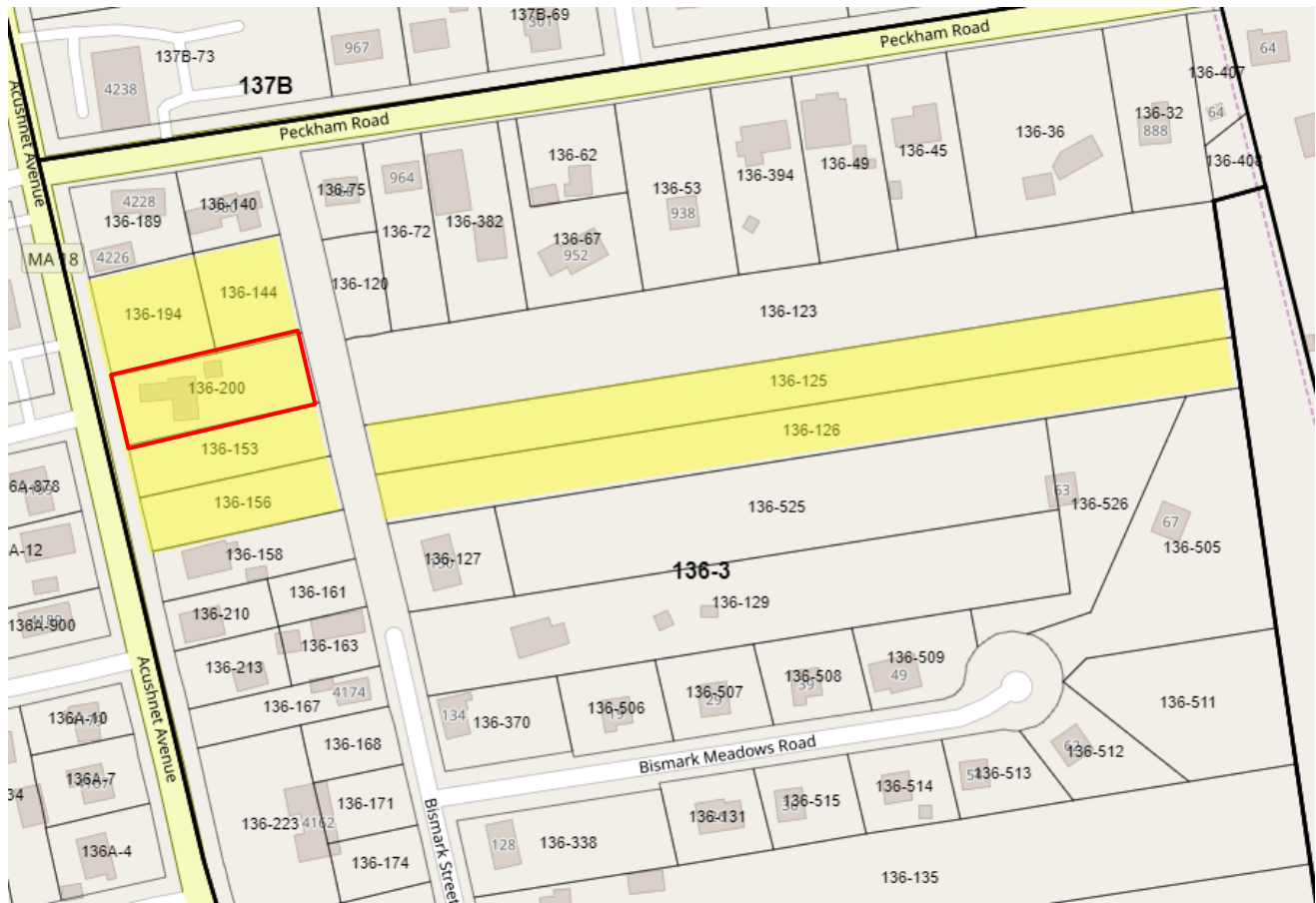
The applicant has stated that a new structure will provide additional space for the property owner's growing family and additionally a new structure will mitigate existing deterioration, outdated mechanical systems, and energy efficiency challenges. The applicant has not stated or demonstrated that the structure is structurally unsound.

A popular phrase attributed to Carl Elefante, Director of Sustainable Design at Quinn Evans Architects in Washington, D.C, is **"the greenest building is the one that is already built."** The preservation and reuse of historic buildings reduces resource and material consumption, puts less waste in landfills, and consumes less energy than demolishing buildings and constructing new ones.

Historic preservation is inherently a sustainable practice and property owners should explore maintenance, repair and restoration prior to considering new construction. Historic buildings can be upgraded with new technologies to maximize energy performance. Historic features such as windows can be repaired and restored for higher efficiency. In addition to saving existing resources and historic character, historic preservation results in environmental, cultural and economic benefits to the community.



4208 Acushnet Avenue southwest façade.



Parcel Map = parcels in common ownership



North façade of building



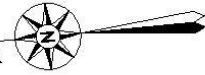
Southwest façade of building where original structure and addition intersect.



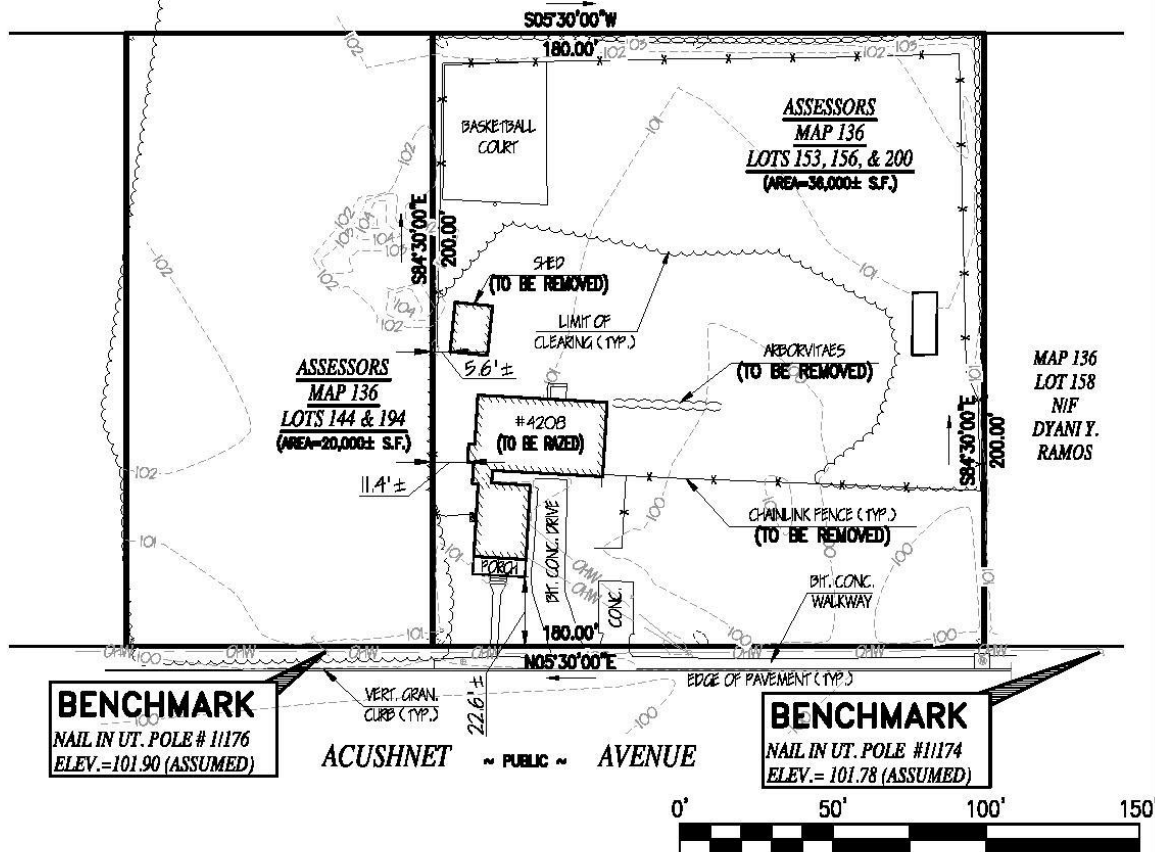
Example of deteriorated exterior envelope.



Rear yard of property.



BISMARK ~ PRIVATE - NOT CONSTRUCTED ~ **STREET**



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DEMOLITION PLAN

4208 ACUSHNET AVE.

ASSESSORS MAP 136 LOT 153, 156 & 200
NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS



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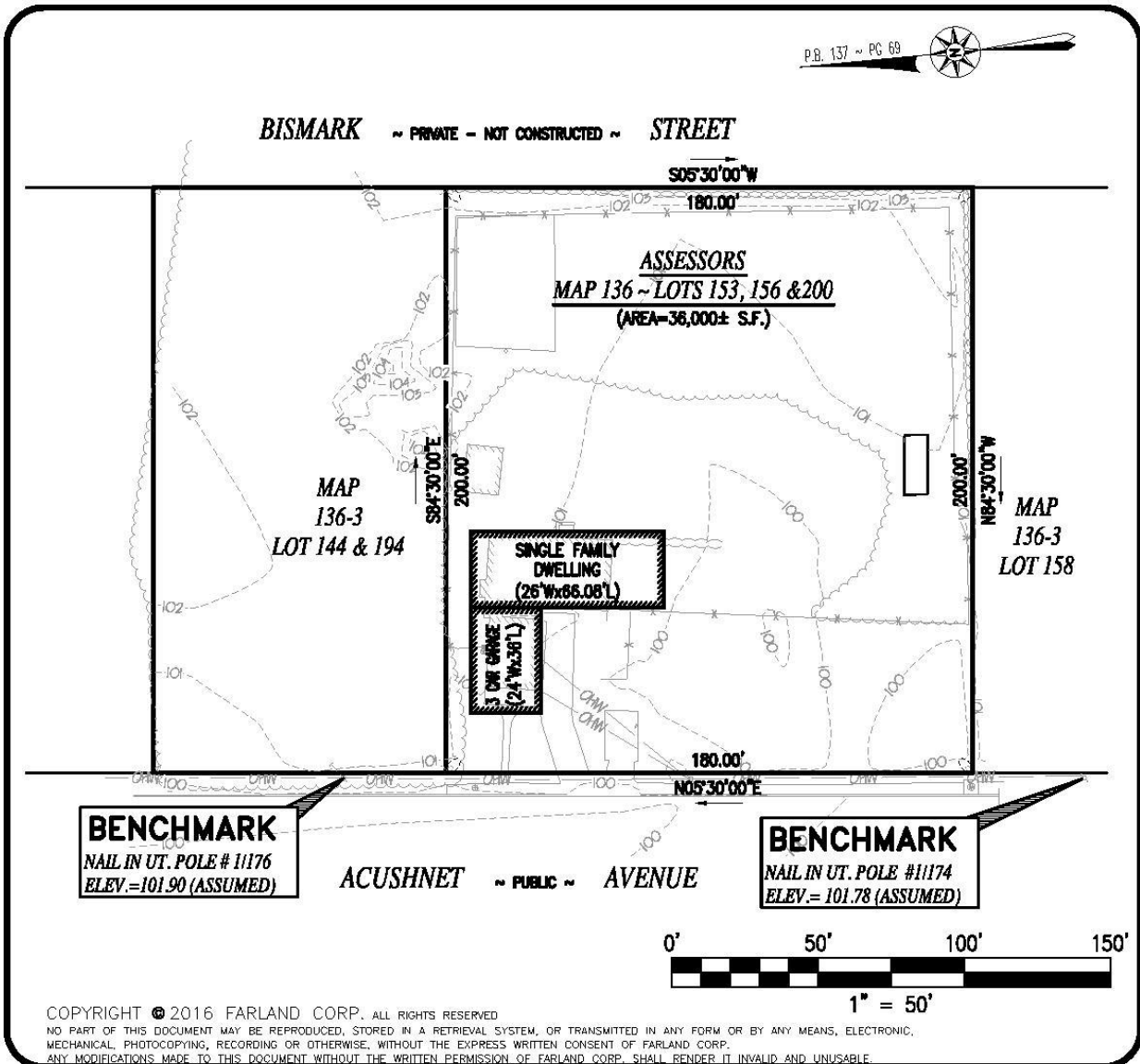
DRAFT

PREPARED FOR:
KEVIN BURGESS
4208 ACUSHNET AVE
NEW BEDFORD, MA 02740

SCALE: 1"=50'

AUGUST 1, 2019

JOB NO: 18-228



<p>PROPOSED PLAN</p> <p>4208 ACUSHNET AVE</p> <p>ASSESSORS MAP 136 LOT 153, 156 & 200</p> <p>NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS</p>		<p>DRAFT</p>
	<p>www.FarlandCorp.com</p> <p>401 COUNTY STREET NEW BEDFORD, MA 02740 P.508.717.3479</p> <p>OFFICES IN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •TAUNTON •MARLBOROUGH •WARWICK, RI 	
<p>PREPARED FOR: KEVIN BURGESS 4208 ACUSHNET AVE NEW BEDFORD, MA 02740</p>		<p>SCALE: 1"=50'</p> <p>AUGUST 5, 2019</p> <p>JOB NO: 18-228</p>