



JONATHAN F. MITCHELL
MAYOR

City of New Bedford

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

133 William Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740
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MINUTES

January 8, 2018

City Hall, Ashley Room, 133 William Street

Members Present:

Diana Henry, Chair
Bill King, Vice Chair
Bill Barr
Janine da Silva
Alex Jardin - arrived: 6:12pm

Members Absent:

James Lopes

Staff:

Gloria McPherson, *City Planner*
Anne Louro, *Secretary & Preservation Planner*

Call to Order:

D. Henry called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM.

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 December 4, 2017 meeting were approved.

Old Business:

J. da Silva asked about the status of 37 Union Street's application which had been continued since November. A. Louro informed members that the applicant had unforeseen delays in the project and withdrew his application without prejudice.

New Business:

Election of Officers

There was brief discussion confirming that the current slate of officers would remain for the upcoming year with all members concurring.

MOTION to retain the current slate of officers consisting of D. Henry as Chair, B. King as Vice Chair and A. Louro as Secretary.

Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. Barr

Motion carried.

Massachusetts Rehabilitation and Tax Credit Support Letters

A. Louro briefed members on the projects seeking NBHC support letters for their state tax credit applications. She stated that the hotel project at 222 Union Street had received their first allocation in the last round and that Manomet Mill #1 was seeking subsequent funding allocations. A. Louro explained that the Wamsutta Cloth and Harness project was an expansion of the Wamsutta Mills and that the Kilburn Mill #2 project was a new project and would be adapted for market rate housing.

J. da Silva asked if G. McPherson, who has been attending the meetings, would be appointed in the membership position as a representative of the City Planning Office. A. Louro stated that when G. McPherson became the City Planner, Jennifer Clarke, the Acting City Planner, had resigned from the Historical Commission, but that G. McPherson had not yet been appointed to fill that vacancy.

MOTION to respectfully request that the Mayor appoint G. McPherson as the member representing the Planning Department to fill that position's vacancy.

Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. King

Motion carried.

Work Session:

A. Louro explained that she and G. McPherson had been reviewing the District's violation and penalty policies based on members' comments from the December meeting, and determined that it would be valuable to discuss and reevaluate those policies and procedures. A. Louro briefly reviewed the last year's initiative at which time language was drafted to amend the District Ordinance to address violation enforcement and penalty. She explained that the ordinance amendment had not been sent to City Council and based on member's conversations with City Councilors; the amendment may not be favorably received. Therefore she and G. McPherson were exploring other avenues of addressing the member's enforcement concerns. She explained that the City Code had a General Penalty and in addition the Commission had a set of By-Laws in which violations and penalties are addressed.

Members discussed the current enforcement policies, the city departments responsible for enforcement, and the former delay in sending communications to property owners in violation of the District's rules. Members voiced concern that letters were either delayed or were not sent as a means of enforcement base on past policy decisions. G. McPherson stated that consistency was important and that an ordinance adoption was not required in order to send violation letters.

The Chair asked that Staff send a violation notice related to signage which had not been approved in March 2017 at 70 N Second Street. Members supported this request.

Violation letters were discussed in greater detail and members agreed upon the procedure of using an initial Advisory Notice providing a property owner 14 days in which to contact the NBHC Secretary, and following up with a Violation Notice providing thirty additional days in which to take action and seek a Certificate of Appropriateness or cure the violation.

Member's reviewed an updated draft of the Commission's Rules and Regulations and briefly discussed the application fee structure, suggesting that the fees were too low. A. Louro stated that she would review other community's fees and return with an advisory.

The topic of outdoor café seating was initiated by J. da Silva seeking clarity as to why the furniture at the Cultivator was still in place. A. Louro explained that the property owner had petitioned the City Council to amend the Café Permit Ordinance to allow year-round seating. Members voiced their displeasure with that information, particularly with a use that blocked a large area of the sidewalk within the District. That led to a

follow-up discussion regarding the development of three types of outdoor seating types which would be allowed within the District. A. Louro indicated that she would follow up on that suggestion.

Adjourn

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B.King. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Documents and Exhibits

- Agenda
- December 4, 2017 Meeting Minutes
- Draft NBHC Rules and Regulations
- Staff Report dated 03.02.16: Ordinance Amendment – Enforcement and Penalty
- Violation Procedure and Violation Letter Examples dated 10.02.15

NEXT MEETING Monday, February 5, 2018

Respectfully submitted,



Anne Louro

Secretary to the Historical Commission

Preservation Planner

Approved: 02.05.18