



JONATHAN F. MITCHELL
MAYOR

City of New Bedford
HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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MINUTES

November 1, 2017

Main Library, 3rd Floor, 613 Pleasant Street

Members Present:

Diana Henry, Chair
Bill King, Vice Chair
Bill Barr
Janine da Silva
Alex Jardin
James Lopes

Members Absent:

Secretary and City Planning Staff:

Anne Louro, *Preservation Planner*

Call to Order:

D. Henry called the meeting to order at 6:09 PM.

Roll Call:

A formal roll call was conducted confirming a quorum of the members present as stated above. The Chair indicated that Alex Jardin would serve in the Primary Architect position.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the September 11, 2017 and October 2, 2017 public meetings were approved.

Continued Public Hearings

Case # 2017.18

37 Union Street (Map 53, Lot 197)

Certificate of Appropriateness: Signage and Exterior Rehabilitation

The Chair indicated that Case # 2017.08 had been continued to the December 4th meeting at the applicant's request.

Public Hearings:

Case #2017.20

24 Centre Street

Certificate of Appropriateness: Site Improvements and Driveway Curb Cut.

Robert Duff, who leases the subject property, presented the proposal to the Commission. He described the extent of the project to include the removal of a granite retaining wall, sidewalk and curb cut alterations and the relocation of the streetlight. He stated that the installation of the driveway would accommodate three to five cars, relieving parking issues on Centre Street. In response to B. Barr's question, Mr. Duff stated that the driveway material would remain as the existing pea stone.

There was discussion regarding the use of a fence, which was not formally included within the application. Staff indicated that a "District" style wood fence is normally suggested with Mr. Duff indicating that the fence would be located in the middle of the two adjacent driveways in order to prevent customers from blocking the neighbor's driveway. The use of a small sign to direct customers to the appropriate driveway was also proposed by Mr. Duff. A. Louro suggested that the Commission may wish to consider having staff work with the applicant to develop appropriate signage in the field. Mr. Duff indicated that he would agree with modifying the current application to include a fence and signage.

A. Louro voiced concern that because the building was moved to the location, the removal of the granite retaining wall adjacent to the building's foundation would reveal a poured concrete foundation. Mr. Duff indicated that he would place plantings in that location, similar to what exists on the west side of the building.

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

Motion carried.

Terry and Eleanor Lewis of 27 Centre Street were present and spoke in favor of the project, commenting on the difficulty of finding available parking on Centre Street.

There were no public comments offered or recorded in opposition to the petition.

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

Motion carried.

MOTION to approve Case #2017.20 and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the amended application to include the erection of a fence and signage with the condition that the applicant work with Staff in the field regarding those additions and that any modification arising from a future Traffic Commission action shall be reviewed by staff to determine whether a modification of the Certificate of Appropriateness is necessitated.

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

Case #2017.21

139 Union Street (Map 53, Lot 144)

Modification to Certificate of Appropriateness: Signage

Case #2017.22

141 Union Street (Map 53 Lot 143)

Modification to Certificate of Appropriateness: Signage

Teri Bernert, Executive Director, WHALE asked to present the two cases as one, explaining it as a single development project encompassing two adjoining properties. The Chair consented to the request and A. Louro indicated that the Commission could hear the cases together, but would be required to vote on each case separately. Ms. Bernert and Kate Fernando from Zebra Visuals presented the sign proposals for the two

properties. They explained that they revised the plans based on the Commission's comments from the October preliminary review of the project. T. Bernert briefly described the timeframe of opening the buildings in December.

T. Bernert reviewed the sign proposals noting that the second floor blade sign at 139 Union Street had been reduced in size and that the signboard lettering would be polished brass instead of gold leaf due to cost. Ms. Bernert stated that the brass lettering font would be uniform on both properties and that the logos would be removed from the directory signage, but would remain on the blade signs. She explained the changes to the Co-Creative blade sign, making it uniform with the other building signage. Ms. Fernando explained the installation of the center Co-Creative sign to be bolted into the Boral paneling and that it was approximately 8" away from the building.

J. da Silva questioned the need of the directory signage at 141 Union Street due to the proximity of the blade signs and questioned whether the directory could be placed inside the door. Ms. Bernert explained that the directories provided floor numbers to visitors. A. Jardin noted that he thought that the directory signs would be smaller than presented. There was discussion regarding the parameters of the pre-determined manufacturer sizes of the slat materials used in the directory sign. Due to the pedestrian orientation it was determined that the directory sign on 141 Union Street could be reduced in size, which would be dictated by the manufacturer scale. A. Jardin asked to review the revised size of the directory sign when received by staff. B. Barr asked about the directory sign over the door at 139 Union Street, with Ms. Bernert indicating that it also would be reduced in size.

J. da Silva questioned the number of blade signs on the Union Street façade and the visual clutter it would create. A. Louro asked if the blade sign at 139 Union Street could be removed since it was not related to a retail use. Ms. Bernert indicated that the lessee strongly wanted a sign presence. A. Louro directed members to a schematic she developed that illustrated the signs on Union Street. Many members indicated that the issue was not the size of the signs, but the number of presented signs. B. King disagreed, feeling that the Commission may be too conservative and recognized the need for businesses to have good signage. A. Louro asked about the relocation of the Co-Creative blade sign away from the corner of the building, with agreement that it should be revised to its original placement. There was consensus regarding the current placement of the People's Pressed blade sign. It was confirmed that the sample of the brass lettering which was presented would be the font used. It was agreed that the brass lettering font was similar to the Co-Creative font, lending consistency to the signage.

The subject of the directory color was discussed which led to discussion of the building colors. There was confusion between the applicant and the Commission regarding the previously approved building paint colors. A. Louro stated that she would check and reaffirm the Puritan Gray color for the clapboards and the Tarrytown Green for the trim.

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. Lopes and seconded by B. Barr.
Motion carried.

Members indicated that all their questions had been addressed within the presentation and that a motion could be entertained. A. Jardin asked if A. Louro would check on the paint colors, which she affirmed.

MOTION to approve Case #2017.21 and grant the Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of four (4) blade signs and a wall graphic amended to reflect the reduced size of the directory sign and the relocation of the Co-Creative blade sign.

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

Motion carried.

MOTION to approve Case #2017.22 and grant the Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of three(3) blade signs and brass lettering within the sign band amended to reflect the reduced size of the directory sign.

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

Motion carried.

New Business:

475 Purchase Street-Preliminary Review of Partial Demolition

A. Louro advised the Board that the project before them required review by three city boards, including the Historical Commission, and that the applicant was seeking comments for consideration in the potential revision of their plans in order to receive affirmative permitting. A. Louro noted the section of the city's demolition ordinance which defines demolition in part as the change or alteration of a roof.

Architect Ricardo Santos and property owner Ben Neves presented plans to the Commission for the partial demolition of a roof and addition of shed dormers in order to accept comments for consideration. Mr. Santos explained that the newly purchased two family structure would be altered to turn the attic into an apartment, making the structure a three family residence. He explained that in its current state, the attic does not have adequate ceiling height and requires the roof adjustment. Mr. Neves noted the addition of a second floor balcony and explained the need to add the third apartment as part of the overall building investment.

Mr. Santos reviewed the shed dormer dimensions, which he stated were approximately set in 30" from the front gable end façade as a means to diminish visibility. He noted that the shed roof form aligned itself with the geometry of the historic building. Mr. Santos also stated that the structure sits on a high foundation and that there are adjacent structures close on either side, both conditions reducing the sightlines of the roof from the street and sidewalk. Mr. Santos described the details of the shed dormer to include roof shingle siding and the alignment of windows.

Mr. Santos noted the replacement of the original elliptical window, the design of the porch columns and addition of a porch balustrade. He also noted improvements to the façade siding which would provide better historical context to the building. B. Barr asked about the height of the balustrade to conform to code. Mr. Santos stated that the portico roof rafters require replacement which would allow the floor of the portico to be lowered and allow for a lower balustrade.

There was discussion regarding the need for the third floor to have three bedrooms, and whether two bedrooms would be financially feasible, as it would allow greater flexibility for the shed dormers to be inset a greater distance from the front façade. Members reviewed the interior layout of the third floor including the stairway and articulated that they did not want to reduce or adversely impact the height of the living space. Further discussion with Mr. Santos and Mr. Neves led to consensus that moving the shed dormer back three or four feet from the front façade was feasible and could reduce the visibility of the shed dormers from the street. Mr. Santos offered that he could provide renderings demonstrating the sightlines of the revised dormers.

J. da Silva asked about the dormer wall's height and pitch with Mr. Santos explaining the need to meet minimum code for height and insulation. B. King suggested that the rear of the shed dormers could extend to the rear gable end, as it would not be visible from the public way.

A. Louro explained that although the applicant advised members regarding the porch and façade changes, those items were not under their purview, as the Commission was only reviewing the project relative to the roof alteration in the framework of the city's demolition code. A. Louro explained the process of demolition review to the applicant, noting that they would come back before the Commission for a formal review and that the Commission would then send a recommendation to the City Council. She noted that if the roof dormers were revised in a manner in which made them less obtrusive from the street, a favorable recommendation from the Historical Commission to the City Council would avoid multiple meetings of the City Council and the potential for a demolition delay.

Mr. Santos asked for the members' opinions regarding the proposed siding for the shed dormer walls. Mr. Santos stated that he felt that the proposed asphalt shingles softened the walls in contrast to horizontal siding. A. Louro directed the members to a photograph of a similar roof shed dormer that Mr. Santos had brought to her attention. That photograph illustrated what horizontal siding would look like in a similar execution. Members felt that horizontal siding was better suited for the shed dormer walls and that the use of asphalt would be a forced aesthetic. Mr. Neves noted that they would most likely simplify the siding on the dormers and confirmed that all of the members' questions and concerns had been covered. The applicant indicated that they would revise the plans and come back before the Commission at the December 4th meeting.

Old Business:

J. da Silva asked if staff could follow up with the Whaling Museum regarding the delayed installation of the HVAC screening.

Other:

A. Louro briefly reviewed the communications received by the Commission and the 2018 meeting calendar. J. da Silva suggested that the elections of Officers be discussed at the December meeting.

Next Meeting Date

Monday, December 4, 2017


Adjourn

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by J. Lopes and seconded by B. Barr. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Documents and Exhibits

- Agenda
- September 11, 2017 and October 2, 2017 Meeting Minutes
- 24 Centre Street Staff Report
- 139 Union Street Staff Report
- 141 Union Street Staff Report
- 475 Purchase Street Preliminary Plans

Respectfully submitted,



Anne Louro

Secretary to the Historical Commission

Preservation Planner

Approved: 12.04.17