

MINUTES



New Bedford Historical Commission

March 6, 2017 – 6:05 PM – **Minutes**
City Hall, 133 William Street, Ashley Room

March 6, 2017

Room 314, City Hall, 133 William Street

Members Present:

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

Secretary and City Planning Staff:

Anne Louro, *Preservation Planner*

Members Absent:

Call to Order:

D. Henry called the meeting to order at 6:05 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 January 9, 2017 public meeting was approved.

Public Hearings:

CASE #2017.02

70 N Second St (Map 53 Lot 96)

Certificate of Appropriateness: New Signage

Stephanie Poyant Moran, of Poyant Signs presented the application, initially describing the location and materials of the ground sign located at the corner of the property at N Second and Elm Streets. She noted that there was once a previous similar sign at this location. She also indicated that the sign was unlit and that it would require a Special Permit from the city's planning board. Ms. Poyant described the sign plaques and their locations. In response to a question from B. King, Ms. Poyant stated that the plaque located on the granite post was fixed in place with four borings. Members expressed their displeasure to the damage and noted that they would never have approved such a plaque on that location due to the destruction of historic fabric.

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.

Members discussed the plaques and A. Louro stated that removal of the granite plaque would reveal four bore holes which would require filling. There was concensus that this plaque was an unnecessary sign, relative to the close proximity of the ground sign, but that reluctantly, it was in the better interest of the granite post to allow it to remain.

Members then discussed the building plaque with J. da Silva noting that the previous interpretive plaques from the New Bedford Preservation Society and the Waterfront Historic Area League noted the building's original owner, date of construction and the relocation of that building to its current site. There was agreement that visitors to the District would be confused by the current wall plaque which had the current owner's name and the year (2015) representative of when the building was rehabilitated. J. Lopes acknowledged the rehabilitation, stating however that almost all of the buildings within the District have experienced significant rehabilitation without the use of plaque recognition. J. Lopes also stated that allowing plaques with contemporary dates, not only provides a false sense of historical development, but potentially sets a bad precedent for other properties within the District.

The Chair recommended that the Commission may wish to consider acting on each sign individually, rather than voting on the entire application. Members indicated that they would vote on each sign individually.

GROUND SIGN:

MOTION to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for Case #2017.02 at 70 Second Street for the previously installed ground sign, as presented, with the condition that any modification arising from a future Planning Board action shall be reviewed by staff to determine whether a modification of the Certificate of Appropriateness is necessitated.

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

Motion passed.

GRANITE POST PLAQUE:

MOTION to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for Case #2017.02 at 70 Second Street for the previously installed plaque, as presented, on the granite post with four intrusions into the granite.

Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by J. Lopes.

Motion passed with D. Henry dissenting.

WALL PLAQUE:

MOTION to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for Case #2017.02 at 70 Second Street for the previously installed wall plaque, as presented, on the west façade of the building.

Motion failed.

There was brief discussion related to communicating with the property owner explaining the reason for the wall plaque denial. Members asked that a letter be sent clarifying that the wall plaque be removed and not be relocated on the exterior of the building, suggesting that the interior lobby was an ideal location. They also suggested explaining that within the interpretation of the District, consistency and historical accuracy was important and that it is not within the District standards to have rehabilitation dates marked on the exterior of buildings, as most District buildings have experienced some form of rehabilitation.

MOTION to direct Historical Commission staff draft a letter for the Chair, addressed to the property owner, indicating the reasons why the wall plaque was not approved, noting that it does not comply with District standards, misrepresents the age of the building, and suggest that the owner consider reinstalling the interpretive plaques previously located on the building's exterior façade.

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

Motion passed.

Case #2017.03
66 N Second Street (Map 53, Lot 258)
Certificate of Appropriateness: Fence Installation

Staff indicated that neither the applicant nor a representative was in attendance to present the application.

MOTION to table Case #2017.03.

Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by J. Lopes.

Case #2017.04 – 72 N Water Street (Map 53, Lot 68)
Certificate of Appropriateness: Drive Through, Rehabilitation and Signage.

Kathryn Duff, architect from Studio 2 Sustain, along with Don Smyth from Bristol County Savings Bank, presented the application and plans associated with the use of the Candleworks site as a new full service bank branch. Ms. Duff initially presented a site plan which showed the proposed location of a two lane drive-through structure to be located on the east line of the property. Ms. Duff noted that the drive through structure was located away from the Candleworks building, to its northeast and due to the site slope, was approximately ten feet below the grade of N Water Street. She indicated that cars would enter through the Rodman Street entry, which required widening the curb cut to meet city standards.

Ms. Duff noted that she had submitted a Project Notification Form to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) and had confirmed that MHC does oversee interior alterations as part of the Preservation Restriction they administer for the property.

Ms. Duff described the proposed changes to the N Water Street entry to entail the installation of glass panes in the upper panels of the existing doors to allow visibility, and the addition of a vertical astragal molding to seal an existing gap between the doors.

Ms. Duff reviewed the details of the drive through structure, indicating that little had changed in its design since the preliminary review in January. She described the drive-through structure materials of cedar beams, red cedar shingles, metal seam roof, cobblestones and slate.

Signage was described, with Ms. Duff indicating the proposed locations along with the color choice of the signage consisting of a dark green background with cream colored lettering. A flat lettered sign sample in the proposed colors was presented, with clarification that the actual signage would be carved, high density urethane foam with routed lettering.

Location of signage was discussed, with J. da Silva asking that the vertical sign proposed for the north façade be adjusted to be more symmetrical in its vertical placement between the windows and building stories. Members agreed with this suggestion. The vinyl roof lettering applied to the drive-through structure roof was described to be the same color green as the building signage and would be scaled accordingly to the roof area.

The replacement windows were discussed, with A. Louro informing the members that the current windows are non-original, with some dating to the 1978 comprehensive rehabilitation, and others dating to the early 2000's. She explained that the remaining 1978 windows, located on the first story, are single-pane, true divide lite windows with narrow muntins, and the later replacement windows are double-pane with a simulated divided lite and spacers. A. Louro noted that MHC has verbally indicated to her that they would like to see the single-pane true divide lite windows retained.

Ms. Duff and Mr. Smyth responded that subsequent to the application submittal, they had changed the window specifications from a *Pella* window to the *Kolbe* “Heritage” series double-pane replacement wood sash with a 5/8” muntin. Ms. Duff explained that the single pane windows were in poor shape, not operable or weatherproof, and that the existing sill would remain and only the sashes would be replaced. J. da Silva stated that the *Pella* window specification had a full screen, noting that only half screens are allowed in the District. Ms. Duff stated that she would specify the half screen with the *Kolbe* window.

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.

The existing ground sign located at the intersection of Elm Street and J.F.K Boulevard was brought up by J. Lopes, asking if there had been any consideration to modifying that sign to better match the drive-through structure and the proposed bank signage. Mr. Smyth stated that they would consider it in the future, however there had been discussion regarding improvements to that gateway location with the potential to relocate some of the objects there to decrease the existing visual clutter, and they would prefer to have that occur before utilizing the existing ground sign. Ms. Duff referred to an image that demonstrated that the ground sign’s location is not clearly visible compared to the proposed wall signs.

A. Louro stated that this project would be reviewed by both the New Bedford Planning Board and MHC, and that members may wish to condition the motion to allow for a Certificate modification by staff if necessitated by the stated upcoming reviews, and if the changes were only moderate in nature. She also noted that the application be amended, with the applicant’s approval, to reflect the change in the window specification. Mr. Smyth acknowledged and agreed to the amendment.

MOTION to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for Case #2017.03 at 72 N Water with an amended application to include the construction of a drive-through structure as specified, the replacement of the existing single pane windows using *Kolbe* replacement sashes, the refurbishment and modification of the existing N Water Street door as specified, drive through, building and directional signage as specified, drive-through lighting as specified, and the widening of the Rodman Street entry, with the condition that any modification arising from a future Planning Board and/or MHC action shall be reviewed by staff to determine whether a modification of the Certificate of Appropriateness is necessitated.

Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by J. Lopes.

Motion passed.

New Business:

CPA Presentation

J. Da Silva, the Community Preservation Committee member representing the Historical Commission, briefed the members regarding the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and the development of the Community Preservation Plan. She explained that within the CPA, there are four categories addressed, including historic preservation. She described the assessment of community preservation needs through the examination of current city plans and reports, and explained that the initial draft needs and priorities related to historic preservation were drawn from the City’s *2010 Preservation Forum Report* and the state’s *Preservation Plan*. She noted that the members were provided with this initial draft historic preservation needs and priorities in order to provide comments, additions or suggest changes to what had been assessed. She suggested that members

review and process the document and that they could provide comments to her within the next week and that she was able to answer questions.

J. Lopes commented that public education was important and should be included. He spoke to neighborhood protections such as local historic districts and acknowledged that even though the city may not be financing these types of actions, they are actions for which there should be discussion and advocacy. Mr. Lopes expanded upon this comment stating that in his experience, city neighborhood groups want to protect and advocate for their neighborhoods, but are unaware of the tools and processes potentially available to them. J. da Silva and A. Louro briefly clarified the difference between the types of regulatory review of properties and the use of form-based guidelines in districts. Mr. Lopes indicated that educational outreach would benefit individuals as well as neighborhood groups and lead to a stronger community. He stated that part of the function of CPA should be to harness the energy of the city's neighborhood groups and to lift a neighborhood by funding a neighborhood project and to inspire change through historic preservation. J. da Silva explained that the CPA projects were primarily bricks and mortar and explained the types of eligible projects, eligible applicants, and the public benefit component of the program. She explained that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) would hold application workshops and conduct public outreach in order for people to understand the prescribed process for awarding CPA funding and that the CPC has recognized the need to reach those communities and organizations which may be ordinarily underrepresented.

J. da Silva explained that the city boards' comments would be incorporated into the initial plan draft and then the public engagement through public meetings would occur to capture the public's comments to incorporate into the final plan. The anticipated timeline of applications and funding awards was briefly discussed as well as the amount of revenue collected.

Amendment to the Code of Ordinances

A. Louro updated members on the proposed ordinance amendment to Chapter 2, Article XI, relating to district violations and penalties. She outlined the process in which staff reviewed the current city ordinance as well as other statewide historic district's methods of establishing penalties related to violations. Members reviewed the Staff Report provided and discussed the preference to have the section addressing violations and penalties placed directly within the city's Historic District Ordinance, rather than within the commission's Rules and Regulations, where it currently exists. She further explained that the current language is broad and only refers back to MGLA c. 40C. She referred to a previous commission meeting at which penalty fees were discussed, as well as an assessment of other communities, which together, determined that a penalty of \$100 per violation per day was appropriate.

Members reviewed the amended language as proposed and A. Louro outlined the city process in which ordinance amendments are adopted through the city council and the appropriateness of the commission to provide a letter of support to accompany the ordinance amendment.

J. Lopes stated that he found the language associated with amending Chapter 17 confusing and incomplete, as he felt that it did not clearly identify or define the offense, and addressed the Bedford-Landing District specifically. He noted that the commission is currently studying the addition of two new local historic districts and that if they are adopted; the penalty language as presented would require future amending to reflect new districts. A. Louro stated that the Solicitor recommended addressing that issue once the new districts were adopted. Members were in agreement that they would prefer to have the language reflect districts in general terms, and not be specific to the Bedford-Landing District.

Other:

A.Louro briefed members on communications, stating that MHC provided a notification of “no adverse effect” related to proposed work at the Sgt. Carney House. She also stated that on behalf of the commission she had provided a Section 106 review of 1851 Purchase Street (Dawson Building) for replacement windows and determined that the project would have “no adverse effect” since the current windows are non-original and are being replaced in-kind. She reviewed a Certificate of Non-Applicability issued for Centre Street for the in-kind replacement of window sashes as well as the classification of the structures at 19 Hathaway Road (Building 19) as non-historic due to their alteration and age, explaining that most of the buildings in the complex were less than 75 years old and not regulated by the demolition ordinance.

The commission reappointments of D. Henry and B. Barr by City Council were noted and J. Lopes asked if there had been any consideration towards recruiting new commission members, as there were several vacancies. He reminded members that Jay Lanagan had expressed interest and A. Louro affirmed that Mr. Lanagan was still interested in serving on the commission as a representative of the Bedford-Landing District.

A. Louro asked if members wished to conduct the annual election of officers. There was brief discussion regarding the potential conflict of D. Henry chairing two city boards, however D. Henry informed members that she was Vice Chair of the Board of Library Trustees, and that the Mayor was aware and supportive of her serving on both boards.

MOTION to nominate the current slate of officers to service for the upcoming year.

Moved by J. Lopes and seconded by J. da Silva

Motion passed.

Adjourn

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by J. Lopes and seconded by J. da Silva. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

NEXT MEETING Monday, April 3, 2017

Respectfully submitted,



Anne Louro
Secretary to the Historical Commission
Preservation Planner
Approved: 05.01.17