



# City of New Bedford

## Department of Planning, Housing & Community Development

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# STAFF REPORT

## NEW BEDFORD HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING March 6, 2017

**LOCATION:** 66 N Second Street (Map 53, Lot 258)

**APPLICANT:** William Whelan

**OWNER:** Oz LLC

**OVERVIEW:** The installation of new fencing exceeds the scope for which it received a Certificate of Appropriateness (#2015.05) in May 2015.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS:** The Abijah Hathaway House was constructed in 1846 at 439 Front Street (south of the District), and moved to its current location and restored in 1979 by WHALE to protect it from demolition. The property underwent a major restoration from 2015–2016 for which it received a Certificate of Appropriateness. A fence was recently installed without a Certificate of Appropriateness.

**PROPOSAL:** The applicant has installed a 6'H, cedar plank fence with a top panel with vertical lattice along the west and north-east perimeter of the property. This work was executed without a Certificate of Appropriateness and is now before the Commission for review.

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

**FENCING:** The few fences/gates and site retaining walls in the District are significant architectural features and should be repaired or replaced whenever possible with new materials that duplicate the original. Cast iron fences/gates shall be preserved. New fences

and site walls should not prevent or restrict views of buildings from a public way. The design should be appropriate in scale, materials, and architectural style to the building, its site and the surrounding properties.

**FOR BOARD MEMBER CONSIDERATION:** The applicant came before the Commission in May 2015 for the comprehensive rehabilitation of the property. Review of the May 4, 2015 public hearing minutes indicates that the initial fence proposal was for a fence to be situated in the rear of the property only, and the fence style



66 N Second Street



Original Proposed Fence Location



New Fence Location

would be similar to that which was approved through Certificate # 2013.20, at the adjacent 70 N Second Street property.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The current style of fence, with the attached vertical lattice top panel, is not sympathetic or compatible to the District. It is also not the style of fence which the applicant initially proposed for the site. The Commission normally advises a vertical plank cedar fence, painted or unpainted, with a simple cap moulding.

In consultation with the property owner, staff recommends that the fence be approved with the condition that the existing top panel with the vertical lattice be eliminated or filled with solid cedar planking.

