



City of New Bedford

Department of Planning, Housing & Community Development

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STAFF COMMENTS

NEW BEDFORD HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING

December 7, 2015

LOCATION: 18 Johnny Cake Hill

APPLICANT: Mount Vernon Group Architects

OVERVIEW: The applicant is seeking a Certificate of Hardship for the exposed ductwork associated with the new construction of the Wattles Jacobs Education Center.

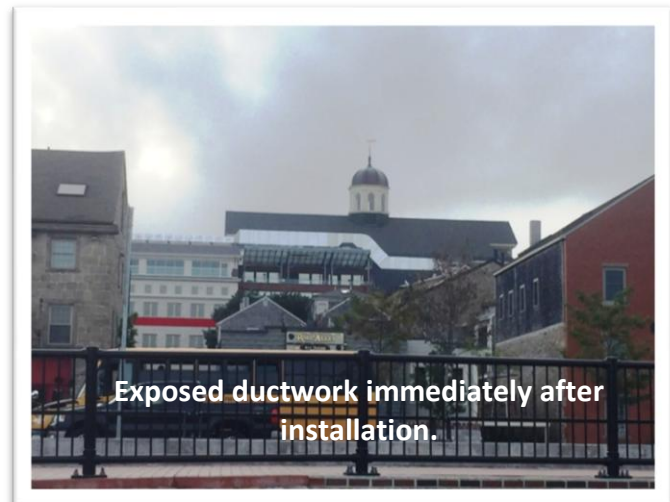
EXISTING CONDITIONS: The dimensions of the HVAC unit for the Wattles Jacobs Education Center were too large for the unit to be located on the roof addition as initially designed, and an alternative plan was developed to have only the HVAC ductwork exposed along the roofline of the Whaling Museum's buildings on North Water Street. The exposed metal ductwork has been covered with a weather resistant black insulation wrap.

PROPOSAL: Mount Vernon Group Architects seeks a Certificate of Hardship based on financial considerations as it relates to the modification of new exposed ductwork. The Whaling Museum has encumbered an additional \$350,000 in construction costs due to the redesign and relocation of the HVAC unit for the Wattles Jacobs Education Center addition.

STATEMENT OF APPLICABLE GUIDELINES: The Bedford Landing District Design Guidelines states the following:
A Certificate of Hardship shall be issued when:

- Owing to conditions especially affecting the building or structure involved, but not affecting the historic district generally, failure to approve an application will involve a substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the applicant and when approval will not cause substantial detriment to the public welfare nor cause substantial derogation from the intent and purposes of this chapter.

FOR BOARD MEMBER CONSIDERATION: Representatives of Mount Vernon Group Architects appeared before the Commission at the November 2, 2015 meeting seeking a modification to the Certificate of Appropriateness issued in January 2014 for the Whaling Museums' Wattles Jacobs Education Center addition located at 18 Johnny Cake Hill. The modification sought was related to the location of ductwork along the roofline of the



Whaling Museum's buildings on North Water Street. At the November meeting the architects provided information on the HVAC size, technical requirements, location, and associated costs to relocate the ductwork. This information prompted the Commission to suggest that the applicant seek a Certificate of Hardship for the ductwork in place of a modification to the original Certificate of Appropriateness.

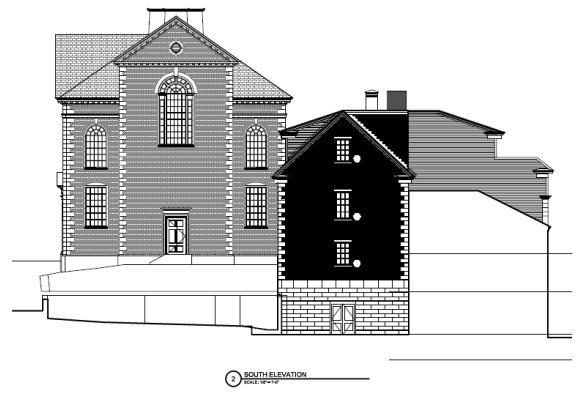
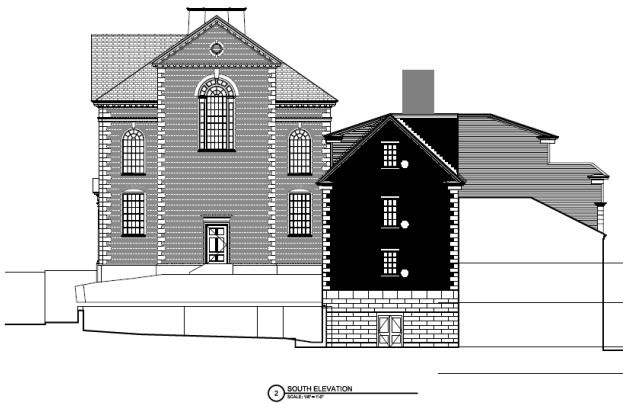
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The ductwork, which initially after installation was exposed metal, has since been wrapped in a black insulation. The dark color wrapping has lessened the visual impact of the ductwork location along the roofline. The applicant has demonstrated a financial hardship for the modification of the HVAC and the exposed ductwork. For these stated reasons, Staff recommends granting a Certificate of Hardship.

MOUNT VERNON GROUP DRAWINGS: ROOFTOP HVAC LOCATIONS



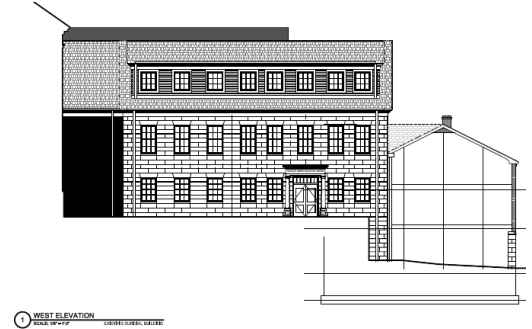
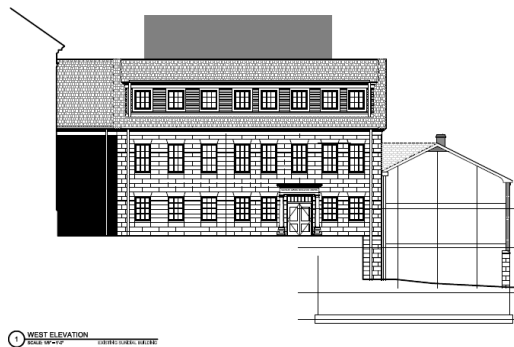
East Façade with original designed HVAC rooftop location.

East Façade with relocated HVAC unit (non-visible) and ductwork.



South Façade with original designed HVAC rooftop location.

South Façade with relocated HVAC unit (non-visible) and ductwork.



West Façade with original designed HVAC rooftop location.

West Façade with relocated HVAC unit (non-visible) and ductwork.