



**JON MITCHELL**  
**MAYOR**

**CITY OF NEW BEDFORD**  
**Community Preservation Committee**  
133 William Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740  
Telephone: (508) 979.1488

**MINUTES**  
**January 19, 2021**  
**REMOTE MEETING**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**PRESENT:**

Janine da Silva  
Melissa Chester-Letendre  
Christopher Amaral  
Ross Nunes

Arthur Glassman  
Paula Robinson-Deare  
Peter Blanchard

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**ABSENT:**

Tim Walsh

**STAFF:** Jessica Bailey, *CPA Coordinator*

---

**Call to Order**

Chair J. da Silva called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**Call the Roll**

A formal roll call was conducted confirming members present and absent as stated above.

**Brief Introduction to CPA and the CPC**

J. Bailey gave a brief presentation describing the Community Preservation Act, the FY21 application process, and funds available for FY21.

**Public Presentations**

***Abolition Row Park Phase II***

Mary Rapoza, Director of NB Parks Recreation and Beaches, presented the application which would fund Phase II development of Abolition Row Park.

In response to R. Nunes, M. Rapoza stated when the NB Historical Society approached her about designing the park, they explored a program at Harvard University landscape architect program, Community Organized Gardens (COG), which provides pro-bono design work for community organizations. Lee Blake and Mary spoke with Harvard which resulted in two landscape architects donating their design services – Heather Heimark of HighMark Design and Barbara Connelly of Connelly Garden Design. It made sense to continue to with them as they had been so highly involved in the process.

In response to P. Blanchard, M. Rapoza stated the PARC21 grant was received, this application is for the match. The project would be complete by June 2022.

In response to A Glassman, M. Rapoza stated the 30% match for the PARC grant is the amount requested from the CPA funds. The match is a requirement for the grant.

In response to P. Robinson-Deare, M. Rapoza stated construction will move forward during the pandemic. The RFP was issued for the Phase I construction and the vendor contract is currently being signed with a pre-construction meeting scheduled for February 8<sup>th</sup>. Construction will begin as soon as weather breaks in the spring. Need to follow Phase I immediately with Phase II because they will not be able to open the park until Phase II is complete. The interpretation at the site is in partnership with the New Bedford Historical Society which was very involved in the archeological dig at the site. The interpretive walls can be changed easily providing flexibility to the story telling like a changing exhibit. It will be a City park which will be maintained by the NB Historical Society. A memorandum of agreement will be in place between the City and NB Historical Society. All the plants for the park are being donated by a major, national grower which will use it as a demonstration garden for their publicity. They will also assist with maintenance.

In response to P. Robinson-Deare, M. Rapoza stated the \$180,000 MCC grant is for Phase I construction. The funding for Frederick Douglass statue are separate from Phase I construction. Entire budget is estimated at \$750,000. All funds have been raised except for the funds being asked for with this CPA application.

#### *Public Comments*

Lee Blake, President of New Bedford Historical Society, stated the Society is working to publish the results of the archeological dig. There will also be a Black Spaces Matters exhibit from CVPA will be online and incorporates the homes from the site. She spoke in support of the project of which the Society is a co-applicant. The Society also is working on fundraising for the project, having received a \$180,000 grant from the Mass Cultural Council for Phase I. Phase I groundbreaking is potentially March/April, weather dependent.

#### **Brooklawn Park Green Infrastructure Demonstration Garden Design**

Mary Rapoza, Director of NB Parks Recreation and Beaches, presented the application which would fund the creation of design and construction drawings for the creation of the garden.

In response to P. Robinson-Deare, M. Rapoza stated this funding is for the design of the wetland and the creation of the construction documents so the project can go out to bid – Phase I. Phase II would be the construction of the engineered wetlands which is a stormwater management system resulting in a beautiful garden. Phase I would be done within a year which would lead to the Phase II funding and construction at the earliest Spring 2022.

In response to P. Blanchard, M. Rapoza stated the landscape architect is not local; the firm was hired by the Department of City Planning through an RFP process.

In response to R. Nunes, M. Rapoza stated the quote difference also concerns her. She is not sure of why the difference but moving forward, they would interview both firms and call references. Until funds are awarded, the department will not be reaching out to the firms as she does not want to have them spend time on an unfunded project.

In response to A Glassman, M. Rapoza stated she will work with DPI to identify what quote is more accurate prior to the CPC reviewing the projects.

### *Public Comments*

Maria Giesta, Ward 2 City Councillor, spoke in support of the project. She stated she knows the area being addressed and it does have flooding issues. She thanked the CPC for their work.

### ***Buttonwood Brook South Bridget Construction***

J. Bailey stated the application had been withdrawn by the Friends of Buttonwood Park and the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Beaches. A formal letter notifying the CPC will be submitted by the co-applicants.

In response to R. Nunes, J. Bailey stated the City's prioritization of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Beaches was included with the application binder each CPC member received. J. daSilva stated it is the front page of the binder, R. Nunes confirmed he received it.

### ***Congdon-Lucas House Interior Design and Construction Drawings***

Mary Rapoza, Director of NB Parks Recreation and Beaches, presented the application which would fund the creation of design and construction drawings for the interior renovation for the adaptive re-use of the property.

In response to P. Robinson-Deare, M. Rapoza stated this phase will include a public process to determine the re-use purpose. If funding is received, the drawings would be completed within the next year which would enable the next step – determining funding and the issuance of an RFP for the construction.

In response to R. Nunes, M. Rapoza stated the Hazelwood Master Plan was complete and they did not have one for Brooklawn when CPA funding began. She understands the concern about CPA funding difference between the parks. She applies for many infrastructure grants each year for the city projects. They do try to spread the grant funding across all parks from all sources which explains the CPA priorities. Hazelwood is not eligible for other funding other parks are eligible for so that plays into the CPA asks for projects. This ask is for the full funding for this phase.

In response to P. Robinson-Deare, M. Rapoza stated the Friends of Hazelwood Park has raised funds, \$180,000 in donations for the bowling green. That funding moved that project along quickly and determined the ask for the project.

In response to C. Amaral, M. Rapoza stated the structure is sound and the exterior is buttoned up. While it is not an immediate need, the public has indicated they would like to have the building opened again and in use. This application would fund the first step in the project.

### *Public Comments*

There were no public comments offered or recorded in support of the application, nor in opposition to application.

### ***Riverside Park Habitat Restoration and Landscape Improvements Demonstration Project***

Eric Andrade and Maura Ramsey of Groundworks presented the application which would fund the creation of the restoration and demonstration project.

In response to R. Nunes, M. Ramsey stated the CPA application is focused on the riverbank restoration project. Adjacent to that site, they have invested in the urban farm site. While separate, these projects are in tandem. The funding listed in the application is for both projects.

In response to P. Robinson-Deare, M. Rapoza stated the CPA funds requested are for just the north bank restoration and installation of the osprey nests. There is \$30,000 funding from EPA which will be used for this project.

In response to M. Chester-Letendre, M. Ramsey stated of the amounts listed in the budget application \$30,000 was awarded and \$40,000 grant is pending. The CPA funds requested are not a match for another grant.

In response to J. daSilva, M. Ramsey stated they would be able to move forward with a smaller defined area if they receive less than the requested amount.

J. Bailey clarified the adjacent area M. Ramsey referred to is the urban gardens which has been fenced. They have funding to build out the space. M. Ramsey confirmed that was the area she referenced.

#### *Public Comments*

Maria Giesta, Ward 2 City Councillor, spoke in support of the project which is in Ward 2. She thanked M. Ramsey and M. Rapoza for the great work at the park. Riverside Park is the heart of that part of Ward 2. Any funding would be very much appreciated.

Cathy (last name unknown) spoke in support of the project. Due to technical issues, her full statement was not able to be heard. J. Bailey asked her to submit her statement via email and provided the email address.

#### **Verdean Veterans Memorial Hall**

Erik Andrade, Verdean Veterans Memorial Hall, presented the application which would fund an envelope assessment, fire suppression system, the construction of handicap accessible bathrooms, and handicap access to the second floor.

In response to P. Blanchard, E. Andrade stated the space is usable, but the hall has to have a fire marshal on site during events in order to use the space. The installation of a fire suppression system would eliminate the need for the marshal, provide protection for the building, and reduce their insurance expense. The accessibility issue would allow members to easily access the second floor which was used for major life event celebrations.

In response to P. Robinson-Deare, E. Andrade stated the priorities would be the envelope assessment, fire suppression system, handicap accessibility – bathrooms and second floor access. He has been submitting all details as he has received each quote. J. Bailey stated she has received and forwarded to the CPC. J. daSilva asked for J. Bailey to compile all the information for each application received after the initial submission. J. Bailey stated she would compile information for the CPC. She also stated applicants have been reporting difficulties in obtaining quotes from vendors due to the pandemic.

#### *Public Comments*

Mary Anne Rogers, President of the Cape Verdean Veterans Auxiliary and longtime supporter of the Hall and Cape Verdean Parade, spoke in support of the project.

Charles Perry, Jr. spoke in support of the project, the hall and the services. The hall has hosted numerous important events. The building needs to be restored as it was initially a church and now the home of the Verdean Vets. He has been a player and a coach for the organization. He also thanked the CPC for their work.

Lynea Gilreath spoke in support of the project. As a young activist in the community, she feels it is important to restore the building for both the historic context and the bringing of the community together for the future.

Maria Giesta, Ward 2 City Councillor, spoke in support of the project. She thanked E. Andrade for a great presentation. She is also a member of the Women's Cape Verdean Social Club that meets at the hall so she has seen firsthand how important the building is to the community. She urged anything that could be done to restore the building be done so asked for a yes for this project. The Cape Verdean community is very important to New

Bedford and the hall has a lot of history and importance to both the Cape Verdean community and the community at large.

Iva Brito spoke in support of the project. The Cape Verdean Vets has been fundamental to her and many others as a place of fellowship and a place to unite. She has seen other buildings lost and she feels it is important to protect and restore this building.

Diane Gomes spoke in support of the project. She is the Chair of the Cape Verdean Recognition Committee. She is also a member of the Cape Verdean Women's Social Club and is a veteran. She has been involved with the Vets Hall since childhood. As a veteran, it is the only place that she can join since she is not a war veteran, the only place she can be with her brothers and sisters in the military. She stated E. Andrade did a great job. This building has touched many families as it is a place of gathering. She asked the CPC to support this project in any way possible.

Derek Baptiste, Ward 4 City Councillor, spoke in support of the project. He is in full support of this application. The hall has been a pillar in the community. It keeps the authenticity of the community. The history of the hall needs to be shared with the youth in the community, so they understand. He asked the CPC to strongly consider giving a grant to this project.

Ricardo Rosa spoke in support of the project. As a child, he attended many events at the Hall with his family. It is not just about New Bedford as he grew up in Brockton, the hall was a beacon for the entire state and for the Cape Verdean diaspora. He thanked E. Andrade for his advocacy of this project.

Dina Reis Abreu spoke in support of the project.

Samuel Ackah, neighbor to the hall, spoke in support of the project. The hall has played a major part of his life as a second/third generation Cape Verdean. The hall allows him to stay connected to his roots.

Gail Fortes, New Bedford resident, spoke in support of the project. Her grandparents were very involved at the hall with many life events taking place there. It is a beacon in the community. She thanked E. Andrade for his presentation.

Sharon Tetrault, New Bedford resident, spoke in support of the project. The diversity of the community is beautiful and it is an important part of the community.

Brandon Cabral, lifelong New Bedford resident, spoke in support of the project. He has met with E. Andrade about the project. He believes the hall is important to the City's future and to Black identity. It is sometimes hard to trace back your roots but if Cape Verdean, it is possible to do so. The hall has served the community in the past and for the future, the hall could host classes, music, artists, and food to help fund the future. The building's loss would be a huge loss to the City.

Yvonne Drayton, New Bedford resident, spoke in support of the project with a focus of the money on the building assessment. In addition to the 75 years owned by the Vets, it was also the Eastern Star Temple at which she had her dance recitals as a child. It is a valuable piece of the community and it needs to be evaluated for a progression of the work with multi year funding and a long range plan.

Leona Fisher spoke in support of the project as she was born and raised in the Cape Verdean Hall. She would love to see the building be brought back to its former glory. She thanked B. Cabral for his ideas and E. Andrade for his presentation.

Lee Blake spoke in support of Black historic spaces and the project. The 75 year history and memories need to be revitalized with the restoration of the building. The Cape Verdean parade is one of the largest parades in the United States that focuses on Cape Verdean culture. The New Bedford Historical Society works with both the Hall and the Cape Verdean Association.

Naomi Carney, At-Large City Councillor, spoke in support of the project. The hall has been in the community and is a part of her family memories. It needs to be restored and this is the first step in the restoration. She is 100% in support of the project.

### ***Strand Theater***

Jan Baptist, Vice President of the Cape Verdean Association of New Bedford, presented the application which would fund the exterior restoration of the Strand Theater.

In response to P. Robinson-Deare, J. Baptist stated the building is useable and safe but is not being used currently due to the pandemic. The funds requested are for the front façade which is the second stage; the third stage is the interior restoration. Most of the tax credits will go towards the interior phase. The CVANB has hired a grant writer to help find funding for programming in collaboration with various cultural organizations. They would be able to do some of the exterior restoration if less CPA funding is received. WHALE is the technical advisor and Studio2Sustain is the architect overseeing the project. This phase could be done in two stages if needed.

In response to C. Amaral, J. Baptist stated the original exterior façade is covered by the stucco and laminate. The project is eligible for tax credits as most of the original exterior façade is still underneath the stucco. The removal of the stucco and laminate would uncover it and allow restoration.

In response to P. Robinson-Deare, J. Baptist stated the exterior is brick, metal, trim – the original exterior façade would be restored.

### ***Public Comments***

Maria Giesta, Ward 2 City Councillor, spoke in support of the project close to her ward. She thanked the CVANB for restoring this important building.

Gail Fortes, board member of the Cape Verdean Association of New Bedford, spoke in support of the project. There is no type of community center in the North End so the project would provide a beautiful space for the community. It would be a people of color owned and operated organization and the ability to offer programs and services to the residents of the North End.

Mary Ann Rogers spoke in support of the project and thanked the association for all their work.

Raquel Dias, President of Cape Verdean Association of New Bedford, spoke in support of the project. The building is beautiful, and the project is progressing.

Dina Reis Abreu, board member of Cape Verdean Association of New Bedford, spoke in support of the project. The opening of the building will bring a voice, teaching the culture and helping those in the community with support services.

Naomi Carney, At-Large City Councillor, spoke in support of the project. The completion would allow the CVANB to show the Cape Verdean culture.

Leona Fisher spoke in support of the project.

### **Island Park**

Jan Baptist, Vice President of the Cape Verdean Association of New Bedford, presented the application which would fund the creation of Island Park.

In response to R. Nunes, J. Baptist stated the priority the Board made was Island Park over the Strand application. Island Park can be completed and could be used for programming. In addition, the completion would be good to show funders.

### **Public Comments**

Darlene Spencer, board member of Cape Verdean Association of New Bedford, spoke in support of the project. She spoke from her role as a social worker. The area surrounding the park has many three tenements with many high risk families; the park would provide an opportunity for the community. The response to the mural has been positive.

Maria Giesta, Ward 2 City Councillor, spoke in support of the project. She thanked the Association for purchasing the project and maintaining the area. The mural is amazing as well. She highly supports this project and hopes the CPC does as well.

Ian Abreu submitted a letter dated December 29, 2020 stating his support for all the project applications. J. Bailey read the letter into the record stating the letter was for all projects presented over the three meetings.

Naomi Carney, At-Large City Councillor, spoke in support of the project. Island Park would be perfect in the North End and she likes the plan the board has for the park.

Gail Fortes spoke in support of the project. The neighborhood has a lot of need and having the lot cleaned up is so important.

Dina Reis Abreu spoke in support of the project. Beautifying the neighborhoods are so important. She thanked the CPC for having them present.

### **Sgt William H. Carney House**

*Prior to the presentation, Janine daSilva recused herself due to her role on the board. Ross Nunes served as Chair.*

Yvonne Drayton, Martha Briggs Educational Club board member, presented the application which would fund the installation of a new roof and the rehabilitation of the bump out supports.

In response to P. Blanchard, Y. Drayton stated the contractor is RAM SEMA, the same contractor that did the previously CPA funded exterior painting and restoration. The contractor is local.

In response to R. Nunes, Y. Drayton stated the supports estimate is \$6,000 and the roof estimate is \$20,000. She stated she could not say which was more important. She knows the roof is at least 40 years old. The contractor advised these two items be addressed to complete the full exterior envelope restoration.

In response to C. Amaral, Y. Drayton stated the home was built in 1843. The 23 windows are all different sizes with different trim due to the use of whatever was on hand.

### *Public Comment*

Lee Blake, member of the Martha Briggs Educational Club and President of the New Bedford Historical Society, spoke in support of the project. The property is significant for numerous reasons. It is a National Historic Site. The house is an Underground Railroad site as Sgt. Carney and his family came to New Bedford via the Underground Railroad. It is also on the Millennium Trail established under President Clinton. The National Park Service has provided funding on various occasions due to the house being a Black Historic Space. There are few Black Historic Spaces in New Bedford that have been maintained.

Dana Rebeiro spoke in support of the project. She knows the vast history of New Bedford is well known across the state and country. Knowing our history is so important so any opportunity we have to remind people of the contributions of others.

Mary Ann Rogers, member of the Martha Briggs Educational Club, spoke in support of the project. The members have taken great care of the home to date.

Lindsay Carter-Monteiro, President of the Martha Briggs Educational Club, spoke in support of the project. The organization is made up of women of color that has existed for 100 years. One of their main objectives is to maintain the home of Sgt. Carney. She hopes the CPC can help the club continue their work. She thanked Y. Drayton for her work.

Leona Fisher spoke in support of the project and hopes CPA will support it as well.

Gail Oliveira, Recording Secretary of the Martha Briggs Educational Club, spoke in support of the project. Many do not know of Sgt. Carney and when she shares his story with others, they are intrigued. Anything we can do to continue sharing this is important.

Maria Giesta, Ward 2 City Councillor, spoke in support of the project. She thanked the CPC again. She seconds everything D. Rebeiro said in her comment. She says this is a great project that should be funded.

Naomi Carney, At-Large City Councillor, spoke in support of the project. This is a very historic and cultural place we hold dear, a gem in our city. She is in full support of this project.

Gail Fortes, Executive Director of YWCA SEMA, spoke in support of the project. The YWCA is a community partner of Martha Briggs and they stand in support of this project. She thanked the Club for keeping up the maintenance of the house.

*After the presentations and public comments, J. daSilva rejoined the meeting and returned to her role as Chair.*

### **New Business**

No new business at this time.

### **Any other business that may properly come before the Committee**

No other business at this time.

**Next Meeting Date:** January 26, 2021 - REMOTE MEETING

### **Adjourn**



There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by R. Nunes and seconded by A. Glassman.

The motion carried 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

**Documents and Exhibits**

- Agenda
- Application Presentations

Respectfully submitted,



Jessica Bailey  
CPA Coordinator

*Approved January 26, 2021*