



**CITY OF NEW BEDFORD**  
**Community Preservation Committee**  
133 William Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740  
Telephone: (508) 979-1488

**JON MITCHELL**  
**MAYOR**

**MINUTES**  
**January 28, 2025**  
**REMOTE MEETING**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**PRESENT:**

Janine da Silva	Arthur Glassman
Melissa Chester-Letendre	Diane Berube
Leona Fisher	Christopher Amaral
Jody Seivert	Peter Blanchard

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**ABSENT:**

None

**STAFF:** Jessica Bailey, *CPA Manager*

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**Call to Order**

Chair J. da Silva called the meeting to order at 6:00 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 FY25 application process, and funds available for FY25 awards. All project applications are available online for public review.

**New Business**

**Approval of January 23, 2025 minutes**

**MOTION to approve January 23, 2025 minutes**

Moved by D. Berube and seconded by C. Amaral

**Motion carried 8-0**

## **Public Presentations**

### ***Boys and Girls Club Shade Structure***

Robert Mendes, Executive Director, presented the application which would fund the purchase and installation of a shade structure, providing ADA accessibility.

In response to J. Seivert, R. Mendes stated the structure will be a steel roof to cover the concrete pad which will join the ADA ramp currently in place. The walkway to the pad will provide all with access to the area.

In response to P. Blanchard, R. Mendes stated it was difficult to obtain bids. Past CPA projects have been completed on time and on budget. They plan to utilize local contractors and will be working to obtain additional bids. The structure will be utilized during inclement weather, increasing their capacity, enabling the club to collaborate with other nonprofits, and for hosting outdoor classes.

In response to A. Glassman, R. Mendes stated the club has made a commitment to raise funds for the project to show "skin in the game". Private funding and special events will be done to raise the funds.

In response to C. Amaral, R. Mendes stated the area should be able to accommodate 50 children at a time. The space will be flexible to allow for lunches, classes, and a shady area for those outside.

In response to M. Chester-Letendre, R. Mendes stated the trees have been trimmed back from the building which reduced the shade. The trees may be removed to make the lower area accessible for the members.

In response to J. daSilva, R. Mendes stated the benches will be replaced since those pictured are older. The shade structure will cover the entire area pictured. It is adjacent to the playground and basketball courts.

### ***Public Comments***

Kathryn Duff, New Bedford resident, spoke in favor of the project.

### ***Capitol Theater Proscenium Restoration***

Corinn Williams, Executive Director, presented the application which would fund the proscenium restoration.

In response to J. Seivert, C. Williams stated the project budget was prepared by Studio2Sustain which was submitted with the application. Plaster restoration totals \$130,000 alone; detail is not very ornate so can be replicated. Costs were cut for this portion. Kathryn Duff stated it is a glass fiber reconstruction using molds created from the original pieces. This is a less expensive alternative to plaster reconstruction. C. Williams stated this portion costs \$250,000 and if less funding awarded, they would need to pursue other funding to fill the gap.

In response to P. Blanchard, K. Duff stated the proscenium is ornamentation over the stage structure. The project is receiving state and federal historic tax credits so it has aggressive historic rehabilitation requirements. Part of the requirement is the reconstruction of the proscenium. The funding would be for the structure and the glass fiber work. The entire proscenium must be recreated.

In response to M. Chester-Letendre, C. Williams stated they must comply and meet the standards in order to receive the tax credits. C. Williams stated the roof repair grant has been completed; the bid documents for the next phase utilizing CPA funding will be posted tomorrow.

In response to C. Amaral, C. Williams stated this project is needed to enable CEDC to unlock other funding sources.

In response to J. daSilva, C. Williams stated the project has received federal and state tax credits is \$6.4 million. As construction costs have increased, the project has been able to request additional tax credits to help with the increased costs. The increase in the budget is due to construction materials, supply costs, similar to what other construction projects have seen in the city. K. Duff stated the costs have risen since 2019. The site work at Capitol was more extensive than anticipated. The replacement of sewer and storm lines into the site from Dean Street was more extensive. The project is a public bid project so must be Davis Bacon compliant, requiring prevailing wage, which adds cost to construction. COVID also delayed the project, so building was deteriorating during that time impacting costs.

#### *Public Comments*

Maria Giesta, Ward 3 City Councillor, spoke in favor of the project.

Deidre Healy, CEDC Board President, spoke in favor of the project.

Gloria da Sa, CEDC Board Member and New Bedford resident, spoke in favor of the project.

Linda Morad, Councillor at large, requested the applicant provide an updated budget of funds received if the project is approved by the CPC for an award.

#### **193-197 Union Street**

Lauren Jezienicki, President of One Circle LLC, presented the application which would fund the construction of a new 45-unit apartment building with 9 income restricted units.

In response to M. Chester-Letendre. L. Jezienicki stated parking will be at Zeiterion Garage. Conversations with city proposed 6 or 12 month parking passes. There will be 9 affordable units – 80% to 120% AMI is the current proposal – for workforce housing.

In response to A. Glassman, L. Jezienicki stated the funding would be for historical context and incorporating art. This is a funding piece that is important but project could do with less.

In response to P. Blanchard, L. Jezienicki stated current contractor is D.F. Pray which completed National Club project. They held a job fair at the site last summer to tap into local workers and subcontractor market to boost local talent and labor involved in local projects.

In response to J. daSilva, L. Jezienicki stated the breakdown is studios 11%, 1 bedroom 44%, 2 bedrooms 44% average size is 700 sq feet. The workforce mix would be same as the market rate units. The project tried be mindful of the downtown with the exterior design.

#### *Public Comments*

Paul Pawlowski, New Bedford resident, spoke in favor of the project.

#### **New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center Archives Phase III**

Laura Orleans, Executive Director, presented the application which would fund the third phase of the archive project.

In response to M. Chester-Letendre, L. Orleans stated the public can access the collection on the Center's website.

In response to J. daSilva, L. Orleans stated the collection is self contained with some redundancy as some of the oral history collection is contained in the NOAA Voices database; the Library of Congress; and the physical archive

at the Center. Connor Gaudet, Center Archivist, stated Digital Commonwealth may be a consideration to get materials out further.

#### *Public Comments*

Kathryn Duff, New Bedford resident, wrote in the chat in favor of the project.

Molly Graham, NOAA Voices Program Manager, spoke in favor of the project.

Maria Giesta, Ward 3 Councillor, spoke in favor of the project.

Martha Mayer, Center volunteer, spoke in favor of the project.

Ryan Sylvia, Greater New Bedford Vocational Technical High School teacher, spoke in favor of the project.

Gloria de Sa, New Bedford resident, spoke in favor of the project.

Ruth and Bill Blount, New Bedford residents, spoke in favor of the project.

#### ***John Emerson Portrait Restoration***

Arthur Motta, Manager Communications & Public Affairs for NBPS, presented the application which would fund the restoration and preservation of the John Emerson portrait, the first principal of New Bedford High School.

In response to P. Blanchard, A. Motta stated the portrait will be hung in Ward 3 at New Bedford High School. There is a bronze tablet from the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the high school's founding which was lost that he would like to recreate.

In response to A. Glassman, A. Motta stated he consulted with the Library's Art Curator. The portrait can be restored and will look as it was before the damage. He plans to have a nameplate added to recognize CPA funding for the work. The two firms he has approached are experts and have been used for other CPA funded projects.

In response to J. Seivert, A. Motta stated there is no other funding available as there is no line item in the public-school budget. The only CPA cycle which would allow the portrait to be completed by 2027 is this cycle. The restoration would be 8 to 12 months.

In response to C. Amaral, A. Motta stated the location at the high school auditorium would protect the project and the portrait will have a non-glare polymer sheet to protect it. There are plans to incorporate the history into the curriculum if funded.

#### *Public Comments*

Kathryn Duff, New Bedford resident, spoke in favor of the project.

#### ***Milton Silvia Collection Digitization Phase III***

Jay Avila, Associate Publisher, and Joseph Thomas, Publisher, presented the application which would fund the Milton Silvia Collection Digitization Phase III.

In response to J. Seivert, J. Thomas stated the \$36,000 in-kind contribution is staff, intern, and volunteer hours.

In response to P. Blanchard, J. Thomas stated the students from UMass are interns who want to learn about the publishing industry. The interns support the work by doing research, reviewing microfilm and newspapers at the New Bedford Free Public Library.

In response to L. Fisher, J. Thomas stated there may be a future ask. The goal is to capture the history of New Bedford and these additional pieces (12,000 negatives, slides, and prints from 1940-1960s) will help fill in the timeline as some of these items are from before Mr. Silvia's time with *The Standard Times*.

*Public Comments*

Gloria de Sa, Spinner Publications Board Member and New Bedford resident, spoke in favor of the project.  
Kathryn Duff, New Bedford resident, spoke in favor of the project.

**105 Ashley Boulevard Redevelopment**

Audley Bodden, owner and developer, and Andrew Haywood, RND Consultants, presented the application which would fund the rehabilitation of 105 Ashley Boulevard, creating 9 affordable housing units.

In response to A. Glassman, A. Bodden stated the structure of the building is intact. The rear garage and left section will be demolished. Salvaging the building lowers the cost of construction allowing for more affordability for renters.

In response to L. Fisher, A. Bodden stated the building is larger than it appears as the front face is small. With the addition, the two floors will be approximately 12,000 each. There will be 5 two bedrooms and 4 three bedrooms, ranging from 850 sq ft to 1,400 sq ft. The design was to provide larger units to have family size space. The new build addition will be less than 20% of the size.

In response to M. Chester-Letendre, A. Bodden stated he is hoping to have the building completed by the end of 2026 but early 2027 is possible depending upon the construction and unexpected delays. He did not believe he would return for another grant for this project. He is trying to obtain more quotes from New Bedford/local contractors that combine experience and affordability.

In response to P. Blanchard, A. Bodden stated he would dig deep if funding was not awarded. He has a good relationship with Mass Development, Mass Housing, and Bank 5 financing in place. He is focused on trying to keep the costs low and the CPA funds would help with that goal. He is continuing to look for funding to keep it affordable.

*Public Comments*

Linda Morad, Councillor at Large, requested the applicant provide an updated budget of funds received if the project is approved by the CPC for an award.

**Northern Scenic Greenway**

Paul Pawlowski, South Coast Bikeway Alliance, Inc., presented the application which would fund a partial match of the Mass Trails grant application to fund the complete engineering studies, permitting, and cost estimates.

In response to A. Glassman, P. Pawlowski stated Dartmouth and Westport CPC's have awarded their match funds to the project. New Bedford is the final ask and, if awarded, would fully fund the match along with the SCBA funds.

In response to M. Chester-Letendre, P. Pawloski stated the route has off road option. The north/south cross over is at Old Plainville from Mt. Pleasant which is an off road section.

In response to J. daSilva, the entire bikeway is just under 10 miles with 2.2 miles within New Bedford.

*Public Comments*

Alana Jaworski, New Bedford resident and South Coast Bikeway Alliance volunteer, spoke in favor of the project.  
Sandra Medeiros, President of South Coast Bikeway Alliance, spoke in favor of the project.  
Ian Legge spoke in favor of the project.  
Mark Parsons, New Bedford resident, spoke in favor of the project.

### **Rodman House Column Repair**

Kara Anderson and Sean McDonnell, Architectural Heritage Foundation, presented the application which would fund the restoration of the five columns at the William R. Rodman House.

In response to M. Chester-Letendre, S. McDonnell stated the request is for the restoration of the 5 columns. The sixth column is being completely replaced with other funding. K. Anderson stated they were able to salvage portions of the capital for templates for the recreation of the sixth column.

In response to A. Glassman, S. McDonnell stated it is difficult to split the \$483,000 by five columns as each has unique needs that will impact the funds needed for each specific column restoration.

In response to P. Blanchard, S. McDonnell stated the roof leak that impacted the sixth column has been corrected. There are no other issues currently. It is a high maintenance building. There are two owners of the building – 80% is owned by AHF, a nonprofit organization, and 20% is owned by Paul and Dixon Insurance, a for-profit organization.

In response to J. Seivert, S. McDonnell stated the property is currently for sale. Work on the sixth column will be completed. The new owner would receive the CPA funding to complete the restoration of the five columns, building on the work done to date on the sixth column. The preservation restriction requires US Secretary of the Interior Standards be followed when the work is done. The building is vacant and is costing AHF money; they cannot do any additional work due to the cost. The building is attractive to a specific buyer that has the goal to restore it to its former glory; AHF has the expectation the next owner will do the restoration. The building is for sale at \$650,000 and the work is \$483,000. The columns are part of why the building is spectacular; the work is almost the same amount of the value. The property adds to County Street and the CPC could use CPA funding to make sure it is done right.

In response to J. daSilva, S. McDonnell confirmed it has a preservation restriction held by Massachusetts Historical Commission which will ensure the work is done correctly. K. Anderson stated there is also an endowment that is tied to the preservation restriction which will transfer to the new owner. The realtor is being very clear about the preservation restriction on the property and the work to be done, and how it needs to be signed off by New Bedford Historical Commission.

J. daSilva stated the grant agreement if awarded would be between the CPC and AHF, not the future owner. S. McDonnell stated AHF has committed to prospective buyers the completion of the sixth column but have not and will not commit to doing work on the five remaining columns. If AHF fails to sell the building, they will do the work. If they sell the building, they will not do the work. K. Anderson asked if an assignment of the award could go to the new owner. S. McDonnell stated the agreement could include the scope of work and that it is done properly and consistently with a claw back provision. J. daSilva stated the CPC has never utilized a claw back and it is not commonplace; this is using public funds for a private sale with the public benefit to be determined. S. McDonnell stated the public benefit is the restoration of this building built in 1833 and establishes the tone and vigor of the City. The funds could only be used on the specific scope. AHF asked for the funds now because the value of the building is the columns which is the portion the public sees. He feels the best way to ensure the quality of the work that was described in the application is to have public funds to oversee the work, so it gets done correctly. AHF is in the midst of restoring the column at a quality of work and care that they hope the next owner will follow.

On behalf of the CPC, J. Bailey stated the CPC does not dispute that this is a historically significant building in the city which is greatly needed and should be restored as historically accurate as possible. The question is AHF is requesting funds for a project AHF does not intend to execute, asking the CPC to pass along CPA funds to a yet

to be identified third-party. The MHC and New Bedford Historical Commission has oversight. The next owner is under no obligation to perform the work with the funds awarded. S. McDonnell stated he is pushing back on the lack of appetite to award the funds on these terms. He stated they are presenting the opportunity to fund the project which is a piece of the fabric of New Bedford. J. daSilva stated the CPC would be open to having an application from the future owner once the property was transferred.

*Public Comments*

Paul Pawlowski, New Bedford resident, spoke in favor of the project.

Linda Morad, Councillor at Large, spoke in opposition to the project.

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

J. Bailey stated the CPC scoring spreadsheets are due by Thursday, January 30, 2025.

**Next Meeting Date:** January 30, 2025 FY25 CPA Application Review meeting - REMOTE MEETING

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by M. Chester-Letendre and seconded by J. Seivert. The motion carried 8-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

**Documents and Exhibits**

- Agenda
- Application Presentations
- January 23, 2025 minutes

Respectfully submitted,



Jessica Bailey  
CPA Manager

*Approved February 5, 2025*