



City of New Bedford  
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

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## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

### **MAYOR MITCHELL ANNOUNCES FORM BASED ZONING INITIATIVE TO GUIDE NEW COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN NEW BEDFORD**

**New Bedford, Massachusetts** –Mayor Jon Mitchell announced today the “New Bedford New Design” initiative aimed at developing form-based zoning to guide new community development. This broad effort, coordinated through the Department of Planning, Housing and Community Development centers around a public process called a “charette” July 21<sup>st</sup> – July 27<sup>th</sup> that will bring people together to explore and develop a new kind of zoning in three specific areas of the city: the Acushnet Avenue International Marketplace in the north end, the Downtown and Goulart Square in the city’s south end.

Mayor Mitchell said, “Form Based Zoning is a way for communities like New Bedford to retain the look and feel of our neighborhoods and preserve what we love about where we live. Form Based Zoning will also encourage investment in our city because it will give clarity to developers so that they know what to expect when they get here.”

Traditional zoning, such as the kind New Bedford currently has, is a common practice of urban planning where everyday uses are separated from each other and where land uses of the same type are grouped together. Form-based zoning contrasts with this as a fairly new and innovative means by which a city like New Bedford can shape its future development to achieve a specific design form as well as a mix of uses based on what the community wants. By writing and hopefully adopting some new zoning codes that follow this form-based approach, the Department of Planning, Housing and Community Development hopes to provide the important tools needed to ensure specific standards that will address the relationship between public and private spaces, particularly the design of streets and open spaces while preserving the fabric and character of our commercial districts.

Developing this new kind of form-based zoning is a community effort and it relies on public input throughout the process. To this end, the City will host a charette that will offer many opportunities for the community—residents and businesses, alike—to become involved and engaged this summer. Everyone is invited to be a part of this process!

Opening sessions will be held in each of the three target areas as follows: Acushnet Avenue on Tuesday, July 21<sup>st</sup> at the Global Charter Learning School at 190 Ashley Boulevard; Goulart Square on Wednesday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> at St. Martin’s Church at 136 Rivet Street, and Downtown on

Thursday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Bristol Building 768 Purchase Street. Each opening session runs from 6.30pm – 9.00pm and light refreshments will be served. The City has secured the professional assistance of Brovitz Community Planning and Design to coordinate this planning initiative.

In addition to these opening sessions, a draft review of the material developed to date will be presented Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am- 10:30 am at the Bristol Building (768 Purchase Street) and a closing presentation will recap everything on Monday, July 27<sup>th</sup> from 6.30pm – 8.30pm at the Buttonwood Zoo, 425 Hawthorn Street.

If you're interested in voicing your opinions but can't make one of these meetings, stop by the Charette Open Studio at the Bristol Building location downtown all week Tuesday, July 21<sup>st</sup> through Monday, July 27<sup>th</sup>. If the lights are on, the studio is open and all are encouraged to stop in and check out what's happening.

Patrick Sullivan, Director of the City's Department of Planning, Housing and Community Development notes, "This is a great opportunity for the public to be a meaningful part of a design event that will affect how the City regulates future development and share its voice in the process. Hearing from many different people will enrich the final product and help the City guide the very best development for years to come."

For more information please contact the DPHCD Division of Planning at 508.979.1488 or check out the project on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/plan.new.bedford](http://www.facebook.com/plan.new.bedford).

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