



JONATHAN F. MITCHELL
MAYOR

City of New Bedford

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

133 William Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740

Telephone: (508) 979.1488

MINUTES

January 7, 2019

City Hall, Room 314, 133 William Street

Members Present:

Bill Barr
Tabitha Harkin, *City Planner*
Alex Jardin
James Lopes
Anna Surma

Secretary:

Anne Louro, *Preservation Planner*

Members Absent:

Diana Henry, Chair
Bill King, Vice Chair
Janine da Silva-furlough

Call to Order:

A. Louro called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.

Roll Call:

A formal roll call was conducted confirming a quorum of the members present as stated above. Due to the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Secretary Anne Louro chaired the meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the December 10, 2018 public meeting were approved.

Public Hearings:

Case #2019.01 – 18 Johnny Cake Hill (Map 53, Lot 161)

Certificate of Appropriateness: Signage

Tina Malott, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, New Bedford Whaling Museum presented the application for signage at various locations within the Museum campus. Members noted the thoroughness of the application and had no questions for the applicant.

MOTION to open the public hearing. Moved by B. Barr and seconded by A. Jardin.

Motion carried.

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

MOTION to close the public hearing. Moved A. Jardin and seconded by B. Barr.

Motion carried.

There was no member discussion.

MOTION to approve Case #2019.01 for 18 Johnny Cake Hill (Map 53, Lot 161) as presented and grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage with the condition that that the signage bolts be mounted within the masonry mortar.

Motion moved by B. Barr and seconded by A. Jardin.

Motion carried.

Old Business:

899 Pleasant Street Partial Demolition Update

A. Louro explained that since the September 10, 2018 meeting, when the subject property was initially discussed, the contractor had provided mock-ups for corner boards and window trim surrounds. She stated that herself, D. Henry and A. Surma had reviewed the mock-ups on site and she also had provided members with specifications and images for review. A. Louro noted that the bracket specifications were also provided, however a sample was not available. Based on the reviewed mock-ups, A. Louro advised members that she felt them to be acceptable.

Attorney Christopher Saunders, representing the property owner, was present and stated that he agreed with A. Louro's recommendations and that the property would comply with the recommended replication.

There was discussion relative to the brackets with B. Barr specifying that they be paired, with A. Surma noting the need to be flexible with the number of brackets in order to make allowances for the architectural requirements of the current structure. Attorney Saunders agreed, and stated that the contractor would work with Staff to determine bracket locations prior to installation.

Members briefly discussed the historic wrought iron fence, with A. Louro informing members that it was mostly destroyed, beyond repair and that it was not under the Commission's purview to determine its replacement.

J. Lopes questioned whether acceptance of the replication materials would waive any rights the City may have in the future relative to the property. Attorney Saunders stated that the Commission's recommendations would need to be followed by the property owner, along with other city permitting authority conditions, in order to receive an Occupancy Permit.

MOTION to accept the replication specifications for the Humphrey House as presented; including the provided mock-ups, with the condition that the brackets be paired and match the original locations, with the exact number of brackets being determined by the architectural requirements of the current building.

Motion moved by A. Surma and seconded by B. Barr.

Motion carried.

Union & N Second Street Infill Project Preliminary Review

Michael Galasso, Executive Director, New Bedford Development Corp. and Tamara Roy, Principal Architect, Stantec, presented a revised conceptual form of the infill project at the northwest corner of Union and N Second Streets, to include the rehabilitation of the Moby Dick Building.

Ms. Roy advised members that this was the second time the proposal was before the Commission for an informal review, and based on comments from the initial December 10, 2018 meeting, certain revisions had been made. Ms. Roy presented a three dimensional visual of the building which she noted addressed previous comments related to the storey heights along Union Street, storefront rhythms, façade colorings, and Barker Lane viewsheds.

Ms. Roy reviewed the building's elements, describing the changes and details; explaining that due to cost-saving measures the use of a cement-fiber board on certain façades was being considered and provided a sample of the proposed material.

There was brief discussion relative to providing a parking space on the Barker's Lane side of the property, along with areas for mechanicals and trash. A. Louro questioned the location of rooftop mechanicals, with Ms. Roy stating that specific location had not yet been determined, as rooftop solar panels are also being considered. In response to A. Louro's question regarding the need for exterior wall protrusions for HVAC vents, Ms. Roy stated that it had not yet been determined. A. Louro explained that based on past experience; the Commission takes great care and consideration relative to the siting of a building's mechanical features.

A. Surma commented on the northern portion of Union Street storefront, noting its lack of bandings, with Ms. Roy agreeing with its weak design and need to be strengthened and provide more character to that portion of the storefront. A. Surma noted the importance of providing depth and shadow and for the quality of design to align itself with the vocabulary of the existing architecture. Ms. Roy noted the difficulty of achieving that depth due to the materials and assured that the windows would be set back and the use of brick patterning to achieve shadow. A. Surma also asked that the cornice project more and noted the new fifth floor west corner setback along Union Street, but expressed her disappointment that it wasn't set back as far as the east corner.

In response to B. Barr's questions regarding the type of windows, material and mullion pattern, Ms. Roy stated that the windows had not yet been determined. She also stated that the brick blocking below the windows most likely would have a herringbone pattern. B. Barr questioned the color changes in materials; particularly the fifth floor; and expressed his desire to keep all the façade materials brick, recognizing the cost factor. B. Barr also noted the plainness of the western portion of the Union Street storefront and the need to highlight the entrance door.

Ms. Roy stated that they had eliminated a two bedroom unit on the southeast corner of the fifth floor to accommodate a setback and a common space roof deck; however A. Surma corrected her, noting that the setback and common space existed in the first iteration of design presented to the Commission. A. Surma stated that she would like to see a similar setback on the northeast corner. Mr. Galasso noted the need to retain the two bedroom unit as part of the market demand and would prefer not to use it, as it generates a larger income.

A. Surma stated that she felt the color change on the fifth floor helped to articulate the change, but expressed the need to set back the fifth floor by two feet so that it was not flush to the lower story, as it would allow the fifth floor to appear smaller. She also stated a protruding cornice on top of the fourth floor would help as well. There was discussion regarding the benefit of darker colors to help sections of buildings to recede and A. Surma reiterated her desire to see the fifth floor set back two feet and add a protruding cornice. A. Surma also questioned the overall height of the fifth floor and the flush section at the northeast corner.

A. Louro suggested that the storefront sizes may be too large and consideration should be provided to divide the exterior storefronts and add another entrance to potentially allow for smaller retail units which have proven more successful in the downtown. Ms. Roy agreed that another door would allow another retail unit and break up the visual plain of the storefront.

A. Jardin stated that he preferred the initial differentiation of materials between the first story storefront and the upper stories which were now all brick. There was consensus that the brick grounded the building and provided improved pedestrian interest. He also stated his appreciation for the design accommodations that were made based on the previous review comments.

A. Surma questioned the first story blank wall along Barker's Lane with Mr. Galasso stating that he thought the door may be moved around the corner to the west façade and that they were exploring the possibility of a

basement which would accommodate the building mechanicals and provide storage space. A. Surma sought increased banding to separate the first story from the upper stories.

In response to T. Harkin, Ms. Roy stated that they would be employing a lighting consultant to explore exterior building lighting.

There was brief discussion regarding the possibility of adding another story to the top of the Moby Dick Building, either stepped back on Union Street or along Barker's Lane, which in exchange could allow for the elimination of the two bedroom unit and the addition of a stepped back fifth floor on the north façade. Both Ms. Roy and Mr. Galasso stated that this would be unlikely due to dimensional and cost considerations.

There was discussion regarding the proposed live/work space on the first storey of the rear of the Moby Dick building and potential ability to allow open doors to the sidewalk. A. Louro noted the Health Department's past policy to not allow open fenestration for restaurants and perhaps that policy had changed. She also noted the need for a ZBA variance to allow for a residential unit on the ground floor.

Mr. Galasso and Ms. Roy pointed out the value and desirability of retaining the fifth floor northeast two bedroom corner unit; with A. Surma reiterating her request that the architects explore the possibility of setting back that corner unit to minimize the massing of the building along the east and north facades. They noted that they would try to explore that possibility.

There was discussion relative to the storefronts and the need to provide enhanced detailing and ornamentation, as they currently read as blank expanses of glass. Ms. Roy indicated that they were looking at buildings near their offices in Boston for inspiration and would use that study to provide storefront enhancement to the design.

Ms. Roy had some façade material samples that members briefly reviewed; indicating that the corrugated material proposed for the fifth story was too modern and did not align itself with the traditional design of the building. A. Surma inquired what materials would be used for the trim and cornice, with Ms. Roy confirming that cast stone or metal is being considered.

A. Surma stated the need for the design of the building to be rich and sustainable, worthy to stand for two hundred years; referencing the sensitive addition to the historic Fairhaven High School. She stated her preference that the building utilize the vocabulary of nearby buildings relative to the massing, proportions of windows and cornices and that all elements should be compatible and not rely on certain decorative elements, such as overworked brick patterning. A. Surma noted her aversion to bright colors on windows as a design statement and her preference for a dark window color.

There was discussion relative to the Commission's requirements for a full application submission with A. Louro noting the type of specifications needed for review would include information on mechanical and venting locations as well as lighting, windows, siding, balcony, etc manufacturer cut sheets and material samples.

A. Louro also noted the absence of the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park representative to the Commission, who has been unable to review the proposal due to the mandatory federal furlough. She expressed her hope that the member would be available at the next meeting to review the proposal.

New Business:

Election of Officers

Due to the absence of the current Chair and Vice-Chair, the matter was tabled until the February meeting.

Adjourn

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by B. King and seconded by A. Jardin. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

NEXT MEETING Monday, February 4, 2019

Respectfully submitted,



Anne Louro

Secretary to the Historical Commission

Preservation Planner

Approved: 02.04.19