

April 28, 2015

Diana Henry, Chairman
New Bedford Historical Commission
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

STATEMENT OF REASON FOR PROPOSED DEMOLITION
And
NARRATIVE OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

**Re: NOTICE OF CLASSIFICATION DETERMINATION FOR DEMOLITION REQUEST
33 Emery Street...demolition circa 1920 two-story brick masonry school building**

Dear Ms. Henry:

In accordance with your letter of March 6, 2015, the project team offers the following information to support the demolition of the subject property.

Background:

The city of New Bedford has embarked on an extensive study to develop a 400 student elementary school to serve the south end. The school will be partially funded by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The study is the result of the emergency closure of the John Hannigan elementary school in May 2006, due to a partial ceiling collapse and other identified structural issues. Since that time the school has remained closed and received no maintenance.

MSBA site study:

The project team identified 11 possible sites for a new elementary school; sites included both city owned and private property. The sites were primarily evaluated based on size (ability to accommodate the project), environmental concerns, and location within the existing school district (centrality for students). Of the eleven sites two were chosen primarily based on their location to the school catchment area and previous development as a school and/or community buildings.

The two final sites were 33 Emery Street (Hannigan Elementary School) and 890 Brock Avenue (location of the abandoned St. Anne Parish). The team studied the sites and proposed alternative buildings for each site and developed preliminary construction costs.

The MSBA requires that as part of any study for a new school that the Teams consider at least one proposed alternative that includes the renovation and addition to the existing school building. This effort is aimed at the reuse of existing structures to preserve community resources and potentially heritage.

33 Emery St existing conditions:

The existing structure is comprised of load bearing masonry walls, concrete floor structure and wood framed roof structure. The structure is placed in the middle of the site and surrounded on all sides by asphalt pavement. The existing building was taken out of service as an active school building due to the unforeseen collapse of a portion of the ceiling in the auditorium in May of 2006. As a result, the building has been sitting vacant for nearly nine years, allowing accelerated decay to both the masonry structure of the building as well as the interior condition due to water infiltration, lack of heat and use, along with vandalism (interior).

The exterior of the building is showing significant deterioration to the brick and stone masonry walls particularly at window and door openings where the brick is supported by steel lintels that have extensive damage from exposure. Repair and/or replacement of both the steel lintel along with much of the surrounding brickwork on either side of the opening will be required. In several areas the cracking of the horizontal mortar joints continues along a pathway spanning multiple window/door openings in succession. There is further evidence of deterioration to much of the decorative/structural masonry stonework above entrances and along the roof line from exposure to moisture as well as decay over nearly a century of service.

The interior of the building suffers from a lack of heat and use, vandalism and moisture. This is most pronounced at the gym/cafeteria ceiling that had collapsed requiring total replacement. All other second floor ceilings may also be at risk for collapse due to exposure to similar conditions. As is consistent for a building of this age, all interior mechanical, plumbing, electrical, fire protection, communication and food service systems will require full replacement as the original systems are obsolete or missing. The building did not have a sprinkler system, and much of the original plumbing has been stripped out by vandals.

Initial reports and subsequent reports also show that reuse of the building will require additional structural upgrades if alterations to the existing structural system exceed 5% of the current configuration. That is to say that if a design of alterations and additions alters the existing structural components greater than what is allowed by the code it will require full structural upgrade to meet current code. Such an upgrade would likely cause the project to become economically infeasible as the cost of upgrades would be far greater than new construction.

Results of Schematic Design and recommendations:

The project team looked at 5 design options as required by the MSBA -outlined below as 2 existing, and 3 new construction options:

- Base repair of the existing structure, which is basic repair and modification to make the building handicap accessible and repair the existing building with little or no modifications.
- Existing Building renovations and additions. The design must meet the stated educational program for 400 students.
- 3 New construction options including:

- New construction on 890 Brock Ave site (St. Anne Parish)
- New construction on the Hannigan site. Study of both two and three story options
- New construction on the Hannigan site including land acquisition of the 4 properties to the east and west of the site providing the full block for development

At the conclusion of this process, the project team recommended a design scheme which recommends the demolition of the existing school and construction of a new three story school. This proposal makes the most use of the very limited site by placing the structure along the northern edge of the site leaving open space to the south to serve as playground. The estimated cost of this proposed construction is approximately \$31,036,000. (see attachments – Scheme 4A)

The design team also completed a schematic layout and construction budget for the reuse of the existing structure with additions. Due to the placement of the existing structure in the middle of the site the proposed additions would consume the East and West yards leaving narrow yards to the South and North for playgrounds. The reuse of the existing building also created some inefficiency in the use of space resulting in a building which is about 12% larger than a new building. However, the scheme is further compromised as nearly 7,000 square feet of the program is in the existing basement and many of the existing classrooms are smaller than the MSBA standard. In addition, this option would require the closure of Freeman Street to provide meaningful outdoor play area. The estimated cost of the additions and renovations is approximately \$35,778,000. (see attachments - Scheme 3A).

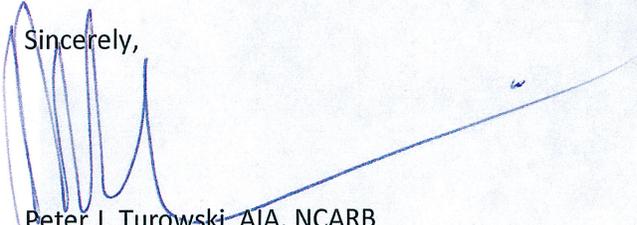
The study concluded that the reuse of the existing school did not provide an equal educational facility to new construction, reuse of the structure did not allow adequate outdoor play and educational space, and the reuse of the existing structure would have an initial cost greater than new construction.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR THE PROPERTY:

The subject property known as 33 Emery Street, John Hannigan Elementary School will be redeveloped for the same purpose; 400 student elementary school presumably of the same name.

Please let us know if you require any further information to assist you in your evaluation. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Peter J. Turowski, AIA, NCARB
President

cc: Richard Marks, Owners Project Manager
Bruce J Oliveira, Chair of Building Committee

Enc.: attachments

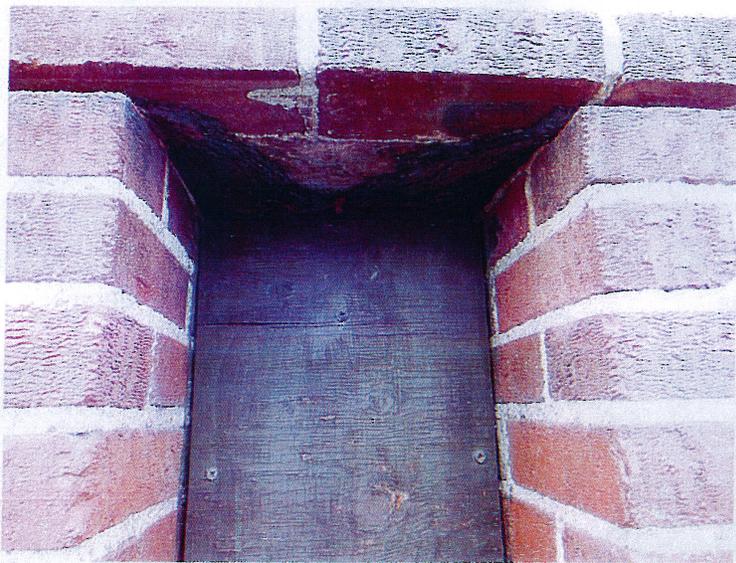
REPRESENTATIVE PHOTOS OF EXISTING BUILDING



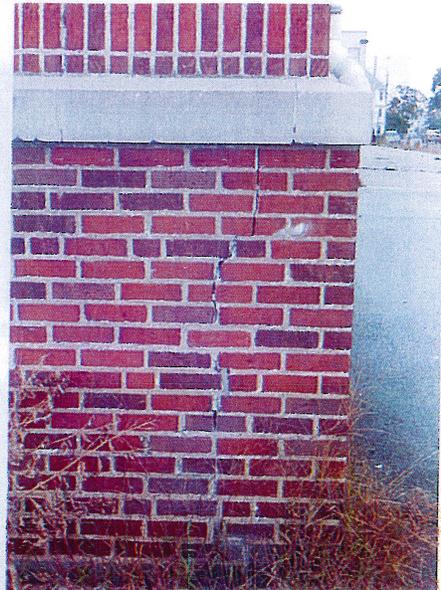
Exterior View from Northeast



Exterior View from Southwest



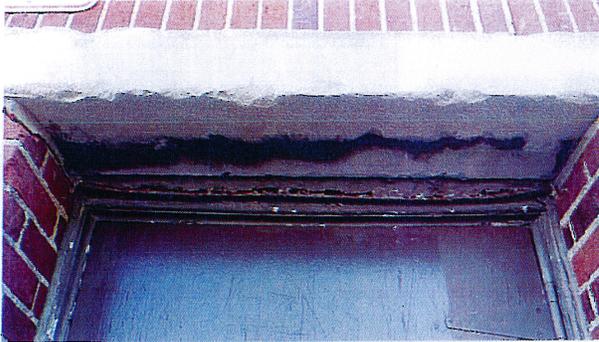
Deteriorated Steel Lintel at Brick Opening



Masonry Settlement Cracks



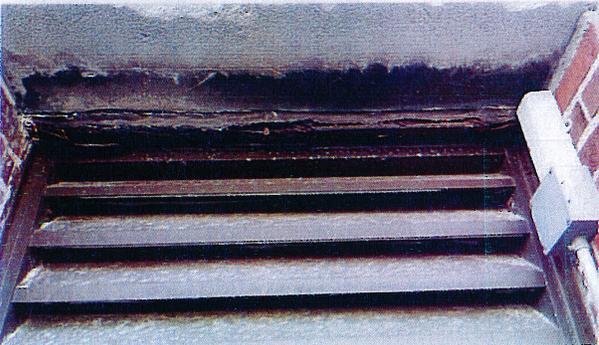
Stone Masonry Deterioration



Deteriorated Lintel at Brick Opening



Stone Masonry Cracking and Settlement



Deteriorated Lintel at Brick Opening



Stone Masonry Cracking and Settlement



Stone Masonry Deterioration



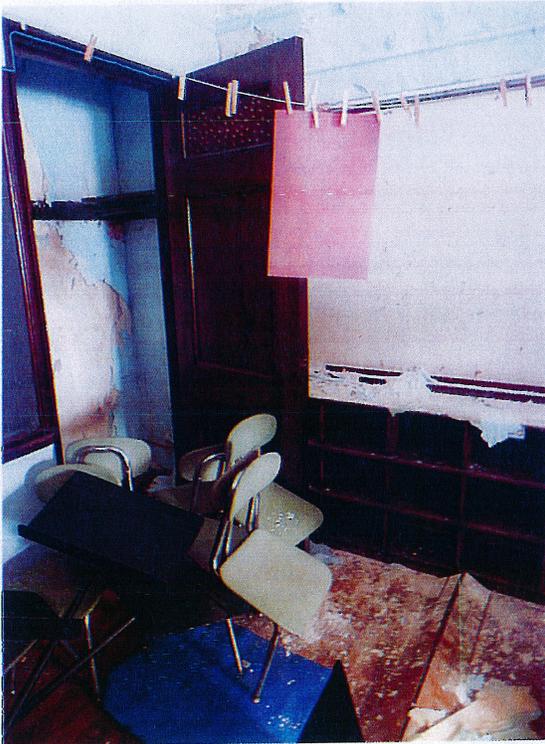
Masonry Cracking



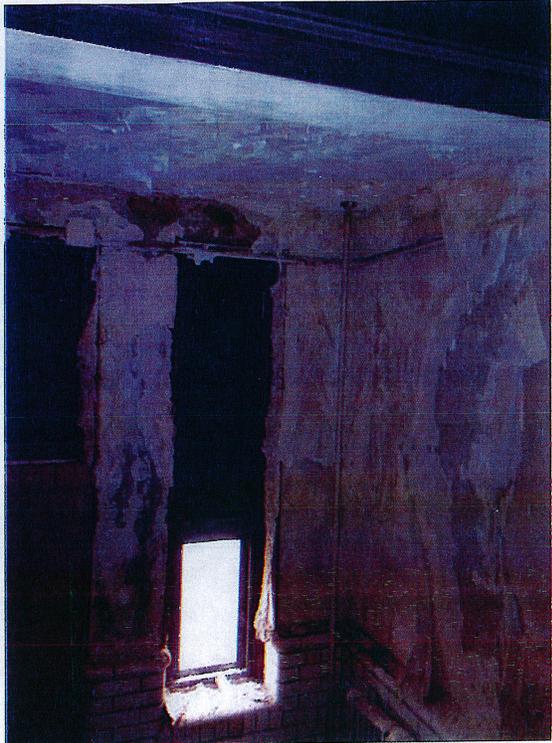
Interior Condition



Interior Condition



Interior Condition



Interior Condition



Interior Condition