



New Bedford Historical Commission

June 1, 2015 – 6:00 PM - **Minutes**

Ashley Room, City Hall, 133 William Street New Bedford, MA

Members Present:

Diana Henry, Chairman
Bill King, Vice Chairman
Bill Barr
James Lopes
Jill Maclean
Corey Pacheco

Secretary:

Anne Louro

Members Absent:

Janine da Silva
Keri Cox

1. Call to Order:

D. Henry called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., confirming a quorum. The Chair indicated that B. Barr would serve in the primary Historical Organization position held by the absent K. Cox.

2. Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of the 05.04.15 meeting as written was moved by B. King and seconded by J. Maclean. All voted in favor and the motion passed. The reading of the minutes was waived.

3. PUBLIC HEARING:

Demolition of Hannigan School @33 Emery Street.

Peter Turowski of T2 Architects presented the demolition plan. He indicated that his firm had been working with the City on the feasibility plan for a new Hannigan School which is MSBA funded. The process included looking at seven different potential sites for a new school location in the South End to provide a larger outdoor recreation area, but decided to stay on the current site, which would not require additional acquisition costs. The firm then looked at renovation or the construction of an addition to the current building, but due to costs, building efficiencies, and building siting, these were not feasible options. The building has also deteriorated due to deferred maintenance since it was closed. Therefore a new building was designed to be more flexible for the end use and opened up the site for play area. B. Barr asked for plans and elevations to determine the aesthetic. Mr. Turowski made note that the scale of the building is in reference to the neighborhood and that there are only preliminary materials, such as brick and metals, selected at this time. The plans call for the salvage some of the granite and cast pieces of the original building to be used on the new building and site.

A motion to open the public hearing was moved by B. Barr and seconded by J. Maclean. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Public comments in favor:

- Richard Martin asked if the building was definitely going to be a school. He referenced an older plan that was discussed at a public meeting approximately ten years ago. It was clarified that it was the same site, but a different plan, as those were conceptual plans.

- ❖ Councilor Joe Lopes also clarified the intent of the older plans and indicated that he was part of a committee which chose the architect. He felt that the architect was the best for the neighborhood and that its design and programming allowed for it to be a community center as well as a school.
- ❖ Kerry Kennedy, Principal of Hannigan School spoke to the history of the school, its diverse neighborhood and the need for the school to be dual purpose, as a learning and family center, with hopes to be open on weekend with multi-purpose spaces that is fully accessible and designed for the 21st century with a library and multi-media center.

Public comments recorded in favor:

- ❖ Bruce Oliveira
 - ❖ Andrea Polek
 - ❖ Paulos Xanthopoulos
- Regina Halek

Public comments not in favor:

- ❖ Isa A. M. Najjar lives across the street from the school and attended the school as a child. He questioned the number of children and how the number of 400 students was determined. He also felt that the school was architecturally significant and mentioned that other city historic schools have been adapted for other uses, such as housing. He expressed disappointment that there were no architectural plans available for viewing.

Public comments recorded not in favor: None.

A motion to suspend the public hearing was moved by J. Maclean and seconded by B. King. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Turowski then took the floor to answer the questions that arose during the public hearing. He noted that the 400 student count was determined by the City and MSBA based on a formula based on demographics and other city data. Councilor Gomes also stated that the Hannigan School district boundary was shifting slightly to the north to relieve current overcrowding at the Gomes School. B. Barr asked what the former Hannigan school population was. Councilor Lopes stated that it was 200 students, and he also restated that the ability to take student from the Gomes School was a determining factor in retaining the Hannigan site for a new school and not adapting the school building for another use, such as housing. Mr. Turowski did not have the architectural concept plans for display, as there was a miscommunication between his staff and the NBHC Secretary, with the belief that the NBHC only determined the significance of the current building and would have no comment on the proposed building. Mr. Turowski also stated that he is required to notify MHC of the proposed demolition and that he received written notice back from MHC with a statement of “no adverse effect.”

B. Barr asked about the cost difference of \$4 million to preserve and retain the building as part of the \$30 Million total project cost. Councilor Lopes stated that the \$4 million would not be reimbursable through the MSBA and that the City would have to bond that portion of the project. B. Barr made note of the deferred maintenance of the building and its affect on the overall rehabilitation costs. Councilor Lopes concurred with that statement.

A motion to close the public hearing was moved by J. Maclean and seconded by C. Pacheco. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

A motion to recommend to the City Council finding 33 Emery Street to be historically significant, but not a preferably preserved historic building or structure was moved by J. Maclean and seconded by J. Lopes. With no discussion a roll call was taken:

J. Lopes	yes
J. Maclean	yes
C. Pacheco	no

B. Barr **no**
B. King **yes**
The motion passed three to two.

4. Old Business:

- *Review of Commission By-Laws*
Discussion focused on the fee schedule for the NBHC which would be included in the new Rules & Regulations. A. Louro explained the NBHC advertising costs for each type of application and the average number of applications and yearly advertizing costs. Discussion amongst members led to the proposed fee schedule of \$75.00 for a Certificate of Approval, \$25 for a Certificate of Non-Applicability, and \$200 for demolition and new construction.

5. New Business:

- The Chair asked if the Seaport Artwalk came before the Commission for approval and it was determined after member discussion, that for consistency, they would require a public hearing with a waiving of the fee. A. Louro stated that she would reach out to Dagny Ashley regarding an application for the art work.
- The Chair asked about the status of 70 North Second Street and A. Louro indicated that she had spoken to the property owner and that a mock-up of the granite posts was being developed.
- J. Lopes inquired about the status of the Port Society project and when they will come before the NBHC for approval. A. Louro stated that she would reach out to the project leaders to encourage them to seek their approvals soon; as they have been before the Commission prior on an informal basis.
- There was brief discussion regarding Form Based Code Zoning and the NBHC's participation in the public meetings.

6. Communications: *None*

7. Date of Next Meeting: The next regular commission meeting was scheduled for 07.13.15.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by B. King and seconded by J. Maclean. All voted in favor and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Louro
Secretary to the commission
Approved: 07.13.15