



New Bedford Historical Commission

February 3, 2014 – 6:00 PM - **Minutes**

Room 314, City Hall, 133 William Street, New Bedford, MA

****View Agenda****

Members Present:

Diana Henry, Chairman
Bill King, Vice Chair
Keri Cox James Lopes Anne Louro
Jill Maclean

Members Absent:

Bill Barr
Corey Pacheco

Secretary:

Janine da Silva

1. Call to order:

B. King called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m., confirming a quorum. The Vice Chair indicated that A. Louro would serve in the vacant NPS position. At 6:25, the Chair entered the meeting and appointed J. Lopes to serve in the Architect position.

2. Approval of minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of the 01.06.14 meeting was moved by J.

Maclean and seconded by A. Louro. A vote was taken and motion passed 3-0 with one recusal.

3. Public Hearings:

60 North Water Street...new signage

Diana FitzGerald Meldon presented the application for three (3) "No Parking" signs. The signs had been placed on the building six years ago and then removed. The applicant re-installed the signs on notification that Rodman Street had become a private way.

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

Public comments in favor: None.

Public comments recorded in favor: None.

Public comments not in favor: None

Public comments recorded not in favor: None.

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

A. Louro commented that while the NBHC does not review sign content, it does review how signs are applied to buildings and the impact to historic fabric. While one sign was attached through mortar joints, the other signs were drilled into the granite block and will leave holes in the granite. The drill holes need to be filled with appropriate material to prevent any freeze/thaw damage to the granite.

A motion that the application for new signage at 60 North Water Street be denied and that the signs be removed with the drill holes filled in with an appropriate material to defer water infiltration and halt any shaling and cracking of the granite; and that NBHC staff work with the applicant to find a more appropriate location for the signage in this application was moved by A. Louro and seconded by J.

Maclean. The motion was withdrawn prior to the vote.

A motion to continue discussion of the application to the 03.03.14 meeting with the condition that the signs be removed and that the signs be removed with the drill holes filled in with an appropriate material to defer water infiltration and halt any shaling and cracking of the granite; and that NBHC staff work with the applicant to find a more appropriate location for the signage in this application was moved by A. Louro and seconded by J. Maclean. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 4-0.

J. Maclean – yes

A. Louro – yes

K. Cox – yes

B. King – yes

The Chair, Diana Henry and NBHC alternate, James Lopes entered the meeting. The Chair appointed J. Lopes to serve in the Architect position.

Rodman Street Plaza...landscape enhancements

Laurel Racine, Acting Superintendent of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park presented the application for construction of a new seating area at the end of Rodman Street. Applicant is working with the City of New Bedford, Buzzards Bay Coalition, Andrew Rockett, Rockett Real Estate and Utile to design a suitable plaza using materials found within the local historic district. L. Racine spoke on the timeline for the project, with an anticipated start date of March 1, 2014 and completion by May 31, 2014. The project scope is smaller than initially planned by the applicants.

A motion to open the public hearing was moved by B. King and seconded by K. Cox. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Public comments in favor: The NBHC Secretary submitted favorable comments on behalf of Derek Santos, NB Economic Development Council, 1213 Purchase Street, New Bedford.

Public comments recorded in favor: None.

Public comments not in favor: None

Public comments recorded not in favor: None

A motion to approve the application and grant the Certificate of Appropriateness for the Rodman Street Plaza as presented was moved by B. King and seconded by J. Lopes. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

K. Cox – yes

J. Lopes – yes

A. Louro – abstain

J. Maclean – abstain

B. King – yes

177 Cove Street...demolition request

A. Louro presented the application on behalf of Michael Panagakos, Faunce Corner Road, Dartmouth for the demolition of 177 Cove Street plus two garages. One garage was constructed circa 1915 and the second garage is less than 75 years old. The 1915 garage is very altered, while the second is not within the NBHC purview. **A motion to amend the application to sever consideration of the garage from the main structure was moved by J. Maclean, the motion failed without a second.**

A. Louro presented the application, stating that 177 Cove Street was built in 1915 as a maternity hospital. The building is significant for its style and grand entry, but has been altered over the years with the replacement of the original siding and removal of the balconies. Overall the building retains its grandeur, size, and massing. The applicant plans to redevelop the site with a commercial structure. Currently the building is leased as a shelter/halfway house and was a funeral home until approximately 10 years ago.

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

Public comments in favor: Joseph Lopes, 75 Dudley Street, New Bedford, City Council

President spoke in favor stating that the building is a public nuisance and was previously vacant before its current use. The area is now a commercial district and the present owner is not responsible for the property. Spoke in favor of Mr. Panagakos as the proposed developer.

Public comments recorded in favor: None.

Public comments not in favor: Jessica DaCosta, 608 South Second Street, New Bedford stated that she wants to save historical structures, and that this building was unofficially the first hospital in New Bedford prior to Saint Luke's. The structure was beautiful as a funeral home. House of Hope is a problem for the neighborhood and should move out. A Panagakos developed building would look like other areas in New Bedford, the building could be used for other purposes. In favor of keeping the building.

Silvina DeFrias, 604 South Second Street, New Bedford stated she wants the house to remain standing, in opposition to the current tenants.

Maria Botelho, 604 South Second Street, New Bedford stated that she is opposed to buildings erected by Michael Panagakos, he builds properties but they remain vacant for years and are eyesores. Not sufficient parking in his developments.

Public comments recorded not in favor: None

A motion to close the public hearing was moved by J. Lopes and seconded by J. Maclean. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously. A motion that the New Bedford Historical Commission makes a recommendation to the New Bedford City Council finding 177 Cove Street historically significant and preferably preserved was moved by J. Maclean and seconded by B. King. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

K. Cox – yes

J. Lopes – yes

A. Louro – yes

J. Maclean – yes

B. King – yes

4. New Business:

New Bedford Port Society

Joe Booth, JMBA + Architects presented the material on behalf of the New Bedford Port Society (NBPS). The NBPS proposes to open a Fishermen's Museum within the Mariner's Home. This proposal will preserve both the Mariner's Home and Seamen's Bethel while repurposing the Mariner's Home and providing access to both buildings. Fred Toomey, President, NBPS also spoke on the buildings' proposed use. Teri Bernert, WHALE spoke on the timeline of the project. WHALE is preparing the Tax Credit application for April 2014 and the MA Cultural Council application is due in March 2014. A charrette with the fishing community will take place on 2/4/14. The NBPS and WHALE are working with the Working Waterfront folks on youth programs.

J. Lopes asked a question on the possibility of residential use near collections and the impact of the new addition on Johnny Cake Hill.

MHC Workshops

NBHC staff reported on the availability of having Chris Skelly of MHC presenting historic preservation workshops in New Bedford. NBHC staff will contact him regarding the NBHC hosting workshops in 2014.

30 North Centre Street

B. King asked about the installation of a whaling family insignia flag off the deck at 30 Centre Street. The flag is seasonal and will be hung in between the window boxes from April to October. NBHC staff will send B. King the application materials.

Chapter 40C Guidelines update

A. Louro polled NBHC members on their availability for a special meeting to review the revised district guidelines with Chris Skelly of MHC and the consultant. Chris Skelly is available 2/6, 2/10 and 2/12. A. Louro will inquire about the possibility of meeting on 2/20.

City Council meetings

The Chair commented on NBHC attendance at City Council meetings. Attendance is only required if needed at Appointments & Briefings meetings because City Councilors may have questions. Public meetings of the City Council do not necessitate NBHC attendance because the public is not allowed to ask questions or speak.

No additional New Business was discussed and no motions were made at this time.

5. Old Business:

18 Johnny Cake Hill – Board of Health

NBHC staff updated members on the violation situation. NBHC staff contacted NB Whaling Museum staff with concerns about the 12/31/13 complaint about cooking in front of the Seamen's Bethel. NB Whaling Museum staff agreed to speak to the caterer about the situation.

63 Union Street

NBHC staff had forwarded the 1997 Certificate of Appropriateness to NBHC members in advance of the discussion. B. King suggested the replacement of the shutters and balustrade be tied into the construction of the new addition and that will also be an enhancement to the NB Whaling Museum complex. NBHC members recommended that the replacement of the shutters and balustrade be incorporated into the new construction. NBHC members also had concerns for the tree currently located in Cuffe Park and whether it will remain during the construction.

Mechanics Lane

The Chair asked the City Planner for the update on the question of Mechanics Lane and the local historic district. No update was available.

98 Front Street

B. King inquired about a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage at 98 Front Street. NBHC staff will contact the property owner, Horace Fields.

No additional Old Business was discussed and no motions were made at this time.

6. Communications

A. Louro read a communication from the MHC stating that the National Register nomination for the Griffin Street Cemetery has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and signed by the SHPO.

7. The next regular commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 3, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. at 33 William Street, New Bedford.

8. There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by B. King and seconded by K. Cox. All voted in favor and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.