



New Bedford Historical Commission

May 5, 2014 – 6:03 PM - **Minutes**
33 William Street, New Bedford, MA

Members Present:

Diana Henry, Chairman
Bill King, Vice Chair
Bill Barr
Keri Cox
James Lopes
Anne Louro
Corey Pacheco

Members Absent:

Jill Maclean

Secretary:

Janine da Silva

1. Call to order:
D. Henry called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m., confirming a quorum. The Chair indicated that J. Lopes would serve in the City of New Bedford Planner position and B. Barr would serve in the National Park Service position.
2. Approval of minutes:
A motion to approve the minutes of the 04.07.14 meeting was moved by K. Cox and seconded by J. Lopes. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.
3. Public Hearings:
94 Front Street...new signage and outdoor decking
Applicant at a conflicting meeting and not in attendance.
Motion to table the application until the special meeting was moved by B. Barr and seconded by B. King. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

98 Front Street...new signage
Laurie Botelho, applicant, presented the application for new signage at 98 Front Street. Gerald Vinci, 453 Cottage Street, New Bedford presented application for two signs on building. The applicant is proposing a carved sign "The Landing" and a surface mounted sign. No information on sign dimensions, but flexibility is possible. Mr. Vinci would design and carve the sign but installation would be done by Signature Signs. One sign on second floor on Front Street (23" by 144"). The second sign would be placed on north side on McCullough Building sign post (17" by 192"). An alternate location would be over the door and be 10 inches by 12 inches. The colors are navy & white or black & goldtone.
A motion to open the public hearing was moved by B. King and seconded by C. Pacheco. 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 B. King and seconded by B. Barr. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

A. Louro asked solicitor, Kreg Espinola about the city's sign ordinance and the number of signs that are possible on a building. Members discussed the number and location of the signs. Since these signs were not included on the original application, NBHC members agreed to hold a special meeting once the applicant submits plans, specs and renderings of the proposed signs.

A motion to approve the application and grant the Certificate of Appropriateness for the OPEN sign as presented with any modification of the mounting bracket and flagpole to be worked out with NBHC staff in the field was moved by B. King and seconded by K. Cox. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

C. Pacheco – yes

J. Lopes – yes

K. Cox - yes

B. Barr – yes

B. King – yes

District-wide planters

Mary Rapoza, 129 Clinton Street, Director of NB Parks, Recreation & Beaches and Steve Gonsalves, 3 Hermitage Road, Marion presented the application. They sit on the New Bedford Beautification committee and have been charged by the Mayor's office to beautify downtown district, bring plant material to intersections and make the intersections more colorful. Metal planters on the corners and hanging planters at Custom House Square, planters will have water reservoirs. Existing cement planters will be removed from downtown.

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

A motion to approve the application and grant the Certificate of Appropriateness with NBHC staff working with the applicant in the field to finalize planter locations was moved by B. Barr and seconded by B. King. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 4-0, with 1 recusal.

C. Pacheco – yes

J. Lopes – recusal

K. Cox - yes

B. Barr – yes

B. King – yes

48 North Water Street...exterior rehabilitation

A motion to remove the application for the exterior rehabilitation for 48 North Water Street from the table was moved by K. Cox and seconded by C. Pacheco. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Attorney Philip Beauregard, representing the applicant spoke on the application. Attorney Beauregard noted the email response from Paul Holtz of the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Attorney Beauregard also submitted a letter from architect Kit Wise indicating the building could be considered Federal-Greek Revival transitional architecture.

Motion to table the application until the special meeting was moved by B. Barr and seconded by J. Lopes. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

C. Pacheco – yes

J. Lopes – yes

K. Cox – yes

B. Barr – yes

B. King – yes

Demolition Request

2992 Acushnet Avenue

Marc Deshaies, Perry, Hicks, Deshaies & Mello, LLP, 388 County Street presented for the applicant, Mr. Constant. Applicant would like to demolish the structure. The applicant would like to build a single-level handicapped accessible structure for an elderly parent. Property has been owned by the family for twenty years.

A motion to open the public hearing was moved by B. King and seconded by J. Lopes. 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:

Jean DeCoffe, 122 North Street, Mattapoisett, MA. Grandparents owned property and considers the Spooner family is one of the founding families of the area. Because of this the property should remain standing. It would be an injustice to demolish a property from the 1700s.

Bonnie Waite, 112 Peckham Road, Acushnet, MA. Asked for details on the demolition and the new home. Is there any organization in New Bedford willing to acquire the building and bring it up to code?

Roland Field, 19 Ellis Road, Acushnet, MA Great grandson of Roswell Spooner. Family helped build New Bedford and this is one of his last legacies in New Bedford. Believes it is historically valuable to the city.

Mark Fuller, 45 Alfred Street, New Bedford, MA President of the New Bedford Preservation Society. This house became more obvious to the streetscape when the Walgreens was built.

Everything about the building indicates its historic significance, center chimney, windows, entry, and granite foundation. No reason why house couldn't have addition built that is handicapped accessible. Doesn't seem cost effective to demolish house and rebuild a new house. This house is probably one of the few that dates back to the late 1700s. The New Bedford Preservation Society cannot support the demolition of the property.

Public comments recorded not in favor: None.

A motion to close the public hearing was moved by J. Lopes and seconded by B. King. All

voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

A. Louro spoke on the date of the building. Her research indicates that the building probably built circa 1830. In 1836, there was mention of the building on the property. Property originally located in Fairhaven/Acushnet. This building meets criteria for a finding of historical significance. The circumstances of the property owner do not fall under the NBHC purview. Lacks paint, loss of original windows and roof needs repair; the building does need rehabilitation.

A motion that the NBHC make a recommendation to the New Bedford City Council finding 2992 Acushnet Avenue historically significant and preferably preserved was moved by C. Pacheco and seconded by J. Lopes. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

C. Pacheco – yes

J. Lopes – yes

K. Cox – yes

B. Barr – yes

B. King – yes

4026 Acushnet Avenue

A. Louro presented the application for the demolition of 4026 Acushnet Avenue. The property was owned by the Tobey family, one of the first families who settled in Old Dartmouth. In 1838, property was sold to William Spooner. This is a Cape style farmhouse, constructed circa 1823. Applicant already subdivided the parcel to make a buildable parcel. Building on rubble/granite foundation, no structural issues; retains much of its original historic fabric. This part of New Bedford still retains much of its rural character, even though the area has greatly changed over the past 10 years.

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: None.

Public comments recorded in favor: None.

Public comments not in favor:

Mark Fuller, 45 Alfred Street, New Bedford President New Bedford Preservation Society. Same comments apply to this building as previous structure. In a more prominent location, there is a great deal of historical fabric left on the property. Why build a fake “Colonial” when the original is present. The New Bedford Preservation Society does not support the demolition of the structure and finds it historically significant.

Joanne Beatriz, 4052 Acushnet Avenue, New Bedford has a new house born in 1920. As a neighbor to the house, she can’t bear the thought of the loss of that property to the neighborhood.

Betsy Cliff, 3968 Acushnet Avenue, New Bedford has looked at that house all her life, the house is significant, it’s a shame that there is a development going into the area that takes away the neighborhood character.

Steve Kocur, 1 Wood Cart Drive, Dartmouth, MA & 4034 Acushnet Avenue, New Bedford. His wife’s family owned the property and is distraught about the possible loss of the structure. The building is significant to the family and significant to the neighborhood.

The Chair read a letter from Elaine Rhicard, Tucson, AZ into the record, describing the history of the structure and her relationship with the building.

Public comments recorded not in favor: None.

A motion to close the public hearing was moved by J. Lopes and seconded by K. Cox. All

voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

A motion that the NBHC make a recommendation to the New Bedford City Council finding 4026 Acushnet Avenue historically significant and preferably preserved was moved by C. Pacheco and seconded by B. Barr. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

C. Pacheco – yes

J. Lopes – yes

K. Cox – yes

B. Barr – yes

B. King – yes

4. New Business:

Haskell Park

A. Louro received a communication from Kelley Whitmore of Trustees of Reservations pertaining to the Conservation Restriction on Haskell Park. There is a concern about placing a Preservation Restriction on the building as required by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, but MHC agreed to a beefed up Conservation Restriction. Any changes to the historic structure will trigger review by the Historical Commission. A. Louro will have final language at the next NBHC meeting.

St. Martin's Church

City of New Bedford has ViewPermit program that allows city departments to evaluate permits. Vinyl siding and window replacements have been approved by DPI staff and A. Louro has become aware of this situation and ordinarily has conversations with property owners. Church put in application to vinyl side a Tudor style addition. A. Louro asked NBHC to send letter to DPI requesting that vinyl siding and window replacement applications for buildings over 75 years be flagged and sent to A. Louro for review.

A motion to send Danny Romanowicz a communication requesting that the above applications be flagged was moved by B. Barr and seconded by B. King. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

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

5. Old Business:

Chapter 40 C Guidelines

Discussion will be moved to the June meeting.

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

6. Communications

7. The next regular commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 2, 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 J. Lopes and seconded by B. Barr. All voted in favor and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.