



New Bedford Historical Commission

July 10, 2017 – 6:01 PM – **Minutes**
City Hall, 133 William Street, Ashley Room

MINUTES

July 10, 2017

Ashley Room, City Hall, 133 William Street

Members Present:

Diana Henry, Chair
Bill King, Vice Chair
Bill Barr
Janine da Silva
James Lopes

Secretary and City Planning Staff:

Anne Louro, *Preservation Planner*

Members Absent:

Call to Order:

D. Henry called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Roll Call:

A formal roll call was conducted confirming a quorum of the members present as stated above.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the June 5, 2017 public meeting were approved.

Public Hearing:

CASE #2017.12

15 Hamilton Street (Map 79 Lot 1)

Demolition Request: Portion of circa 1891 brick mill structure.

Steve Giosa with Sitec Engineering represented the applicant, Paul Bishons, with the application for the partial demolition request. He explained that the applicant had previously come before the Commission for the demolition of the boiler room and chimney which was granted. Mr. Giosa presented plans which oriented members to the site and to the portion of the mill seeking demolition. He stated that the demolition was needed in order to accommodate a tenant within the main Mill #1 structure which required improvements to the site's parking conditions. Mr. Giosa stated that the applicant's goal is to preserve the main building and that the demolition of the unused portion of Mill #2 would allow the applicant to continue the upgrades and renovations to the main Mill #1 and satisfy the parking needs of the mill's tenants.

The Chair asked if members had any questions for the applicant with members acknowledging that they had none.

MOTION to open the public hearing. Moved by B. King and seconded by J. da Silva.

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 by J. da Silva, and seconded by B. King.

Motion carried.

There was brief discussion amongst members regarding the lack of significance related to the building and the ability to classify the mill as not historically significant despite its age. J. da Silva noted the architectural alterations which negatively affect the mill's significance.

MOTION to send a recommendation to City Council finding the portion of Mill Building #2, located at 92 Kilburn Street (Map 79, Lot 1) to be neither a historically significant nor a preferably preserved building.

Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. Barr.

Motion passed 4 - 0.

Case #2017.13 – 899 Pleasant Street (Map 58, Lot 302)

Demolition Request: Circa 1876 carriage house

Michael Josefek with Architectural Consulting Group (ACG) presented the application for the demolition of a circa 1876 carriage house. ACG is the listed applicant for the project, and Mr. Josefek stated that he was representing the property owner, Southeastern New England Dental Group and its principle, Dr. Mofteh El-Ghadi. Mr. Josefek provided to members his background working for the city and with historic preservation projects. Mr. Josefek then stated that the project at 899 Pleasant Street initially was to be a "tear-down" and redevelopment of the site with a single story building. Upon further consideration, the property owner determined that he would prefer to reuse the existing main building for his dental facility. Mr. Josefek presented plans which oriented members to the buildings on the site, explaining that the existing carriage house has been utilized as a garage over the last twenty to thirty years.

Mr. Josefek stated that when he began meeting with the city's Permitting Task Force he initially explored the process of subdividing the lots into two separate lots and moving the carriage house to a separate lot from the main house and to share parking. However during the permitting process it was determined that due to the enlargement of the main building with the use of a two storey addition, adequate parking could not be provided. He stated that they attempted to relocate the carriage house on the site, claiming however that during Site Plan Review the Planning Board stated "that there was no room for it", therefore requiring the need for its demolition.

Mr. Josefek described the construction methods and current condition of the building, stating that he did not believe that it was historically significant or worth saving. He noted that for the project to move forward, the carriage house needed to be removed.

The Chair asked if members had any questions for the applicant at which time B. Barr sought clarification regarding the relationship between the square footage of buildings and parking requirements. Mr. Josefek explained that the Planning Board required so many parking spaces combined with the existing location of the carriage house blocking traffic circulation. B. Barr asked if it was possible to have two parking lots with Mr. Josefek responding that it was not possible because there was no available space, and that the entire site needed to be used for parking. B. Barr asked about the possibility of reducing the size of the proposed addition to reduce the number of required parking spaces, with Mr. Josefek stating that a reduction would hinder the owner's business operation.

J. da Silva asked about the existing grassy areas with Mr. Josefek stating that they initially considered moving the carriage house to that location on the site, but that the Planning Board's parking requirements necessitated that they use that area for paved parking. J. da Silva asked if he had sought through the Planning Board a Special Permit to allow a reduction in parking. Mr.

Josefek stated that he did not think that the Planning Board would approve such a request because it may cause parking along the streets. J. da Silva stated that as a former member of the Planning Board she felt that the Planning Board would consider the request in a favorable manner.

There was brief discussion regarding the Site Plan review process with Mr. Josefek once again stating that the initial intent was to relocate the carriage house, however the Planning Board's parking requirements necessitated its removal.

MOTION to open the public hearing. Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by J. Lopes.

Motion carried.

Dr. Mofteh El-Ghadi, the property owner addressed the Commission and explained that originally he did not wish to retain the main historic structure; however once he visited the property he reconsidered. Working with the architect, the original design for expansion consisted of a one storey addition to the building which was scrapped due to design considerations. A two storey addition was then proposed which he felt provided symmetry to the original building and was more aesthetically pleasing.

J. da Silva asked Dr. El-Ghadi about the need for a two storey building addition, if initially a one storey building was proposed. Dr. El-Ghadi explained the operations and needs of his dental practice to be on the first floor, the desire for future expansion possibilities and that the second floor would be used to lease as professional office space. There was brief discussion regarding the size of the building addition and whether there was a possibility to reduce its size. Commission members recognized that the main structure and addition were not under their purview, but was relevant to the discussion due to the fact that the addition's square footage was the reason for the number of parking spaces, and therefore the need for the carriage house demolition.

Mr. Carl Simmons spoke in opposition to the proposed demolition noting that the property was in a gateway location and that the carriage house provided a visual aesthetic to the historic neighborhood and due to its age was part of New Bedford's collective history. Mr. Simmons stated that he thought the building addition was too large and not sympathetic to the original historic structure. Mr. Simmons urged the applicant and property owner to consider reducing the size of the addition in order to affect the parking needs and to pursue a waiver for parking before the Planning Board.

The Chair accepted into the record a letter from the New Bedford Preservation Society and an email from John Landry, both in opposition to the proposed demolition. The Chair read both communications aloud.

MOTION to accept and place on file the two communications. Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by J. Lopes.

Motion carried.

MOTION to close the public hearing. Moved by J. da Silva, and seconded by B. King.

Motion carried.

Members discussed the matter with J. da Silva noting the carriage house's survival through many changes and losses in or near that location, as well as the sound condition of the structure. She also questioned the Planning Board's request to have the carriage house removed; stating that as a former Board member, she recognized that type of request would not be within their purview. There was discussion regarding the applicant's initial plan to relocate the carriage house on the site and how that changed. A. Louro explained the city's permitting process, indicating that the applicant met with the city's permitting task force in late 2016 with the plan to relocate the carriage house and subsequently submitted plans to both the ZBA and Planning Board in March 2017 reflecting that intention. She explained that the applicant revised the plan at the May 2017 Planning Board meeting in response to the parking requirements.

J. Lopes questioned the relocation of the carriage house, expressing concern for the loss of historical context and whether or not the owner would have an obligation to maintain the structure if moved. A. Louro stated that the possibility existed that if the carriage house was relocated without a viable use, the property owner would not have an incentive to maintain the building and it could deteriorate unused.

B. Barr recognized the positive reuse of the site and the substantial investment which the property owner was committing to the city. He also questioned the viability of relocating the carriage house if the property owner did not intend to use or maintain the structure.

MOTION to send a recommendation to City Council finding the carriage house located at 899 Pleasant Street (Map 58, Lot 302) to be a historically significant and a preferably preserved structure. Moved by J. da Silva and seconded by B. Barr.
Motion passed 4 - 1.

Old Business:

There was no old business to discuss.

Other:

A. Louro briefly explained the communications received by the NBHC and updated members on the proposed historic district ordinance related to violations and fees.

Adjourn

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was moved by B. King and seconded by B. Barr. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7: 09 p.m.

NEXT MEETING Monday, August 7, 2017

Respectfully submitted,



Anne Louro
Secretary to the Historical Commission
Preservation Planner

Approved: 08.07.17