



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

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STAFF REPORT

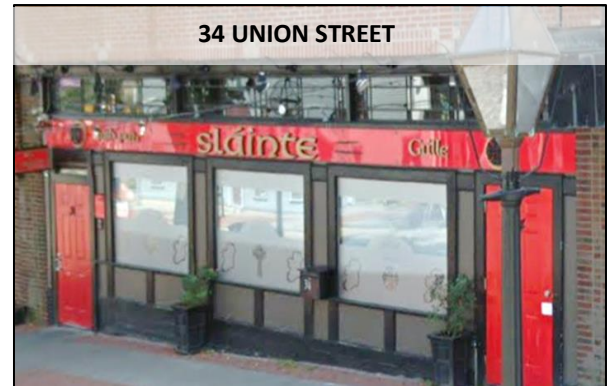
NEW BEDFORD HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING

April 6, 2020

CASE #2020.05: **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**
34 Union Street (Map 47, Lot 39)

APPLICANT: Adam Katz
7 Studley St
Fairhaven, MA 02719

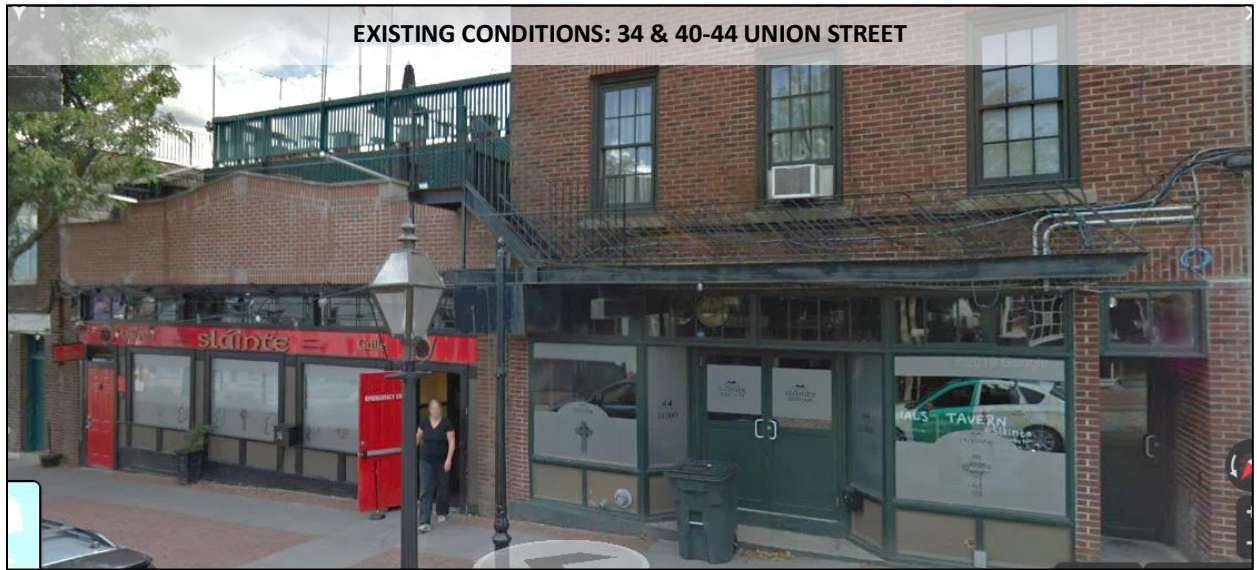
OWNER: Barry Flynn
76 Dudley Street
New Bedford, MA 02740



OVERVIEW: The storefronts at 34 Union Street and 40-44 Union Street are being leased to a new tenant who plans to operate a restaurant/bar/arcade. The applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage and general rehabilitation to include repairs, in-kind replacement of materials, installation of new entry doors and paint.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The Edward T. Caswell Building at 34 Union Street was constructed as a commercial building in 1925. The one-and-one-half-story brick building sits on a poured concrete foundation in the middle of a row of brick commercial buildings on the south side of Union Street. The street elevation consists of a wide storefront with three large plate-glass windows divided by vertical panels and topped by a horizontal signboard and decorative glass transom panels. A slightly gabled parapet with decorative brickwork is at the top of the elevation, beneath a roof deck surrounded by a balustrade. Access to the building is via six-panel metal doors at the east and west ends of the north elevation. The east door is topped with a single-pane glass transom. Signage lettering and symbols exist in the storefront signboard and there is a small blade sign above the east entry door. Gooseneck lighting exists above the transom windows and vinyl applique is applied to the plate glass windows.

- **PROPOSAL:** The applicant is seeking to rehabilitate the storefront by installing new signage lettering in the signboard area of the storefront and replacing the existing blade sign. The storefront's wood trim and gooseneck lighting will be repaired, and new entry doors installed. The applicant plans on removing the existing window film. The following Scope of Work is proposed:
- Signage: The applicant's sign manufacturer initially submitted the plan for a large three dimensional sign to be installed on the building's decorative parapet, along with wording describing the business activities to be placed within the signboard. Staff advised both the applicant and his agent that the proposed signage was not to scale for the building and was not appropriate to the building or the District, and suggested an alternative proposal be submitted. That alternative proposal has not been submitted.
- Doors: The applicant proposes two (2) full glass aluminum doors in the color black to replace the existing paneled doors which were installed in 2002.
- Wood Trim & Paint: The applicant proposes to repair the storefront trim work with in-kind materials, retain the #34 Union St. storefront's black color and to paint the storefront at #40-44 Union Street from its current green trim to black and to paint the wood balustrade on the roof deck black.

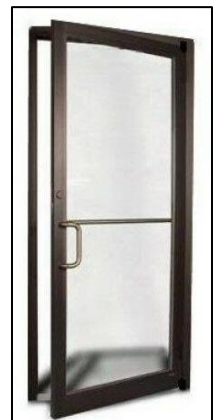


EXISTING CONDITIONS: 34 & 40-44 UNION STREET



EXISTING 34 UNION STREET STOREFRONT

Door Specifications: The applicant is proposing the replacement of the existing solid paneled doors (non-original) with a full glass black aluminum door. The applicant has submitted a stock image of the door type but has not submitted a manufacturer model or specification cut sheet for consideration.



STATEMENT OF APPLICABLE GUIDELINES:

The Bedford Landing District Design Guidelines state the following relative to this proposal:

STOREFRONTS: Retain and preserve the variety of storefronts that contribute to the overall historic character, form, and vitality of the district's commercial buildings including their functional and decorative features and details. Repair or replace damaged elements with in-kind materials, matching details and finish.

If a storefront is completely missing, replace it with a new feature that is based upon historical research and physical evidence of the original or is a new design compatible in scale, material, and detail with the historic character of the building and district. An attempt to create a false history for a building by adding inappropriate elements such as an ornate doorway, stained glass, or other historically inaccurate features is not recommended.

DOORS: Existing doors and door openings, including architecturally significant surround details such as transoms and sidelights, should be repaired, not replaced. If doors that are not original or architecturally significant are to be replaced, the replacement door, including design and material of the surround details and other decorative trim should be appropriate to the style and use of the building.

PAINT: The primary purpose of paint is to prevent moisture penetration, and paint is one of the least expensive ways to maintain a building's historic fabric. Paint color also helps give the building its identity, and a good color scheme accents a building's architectural features. Paint color, appropriate for the structure's age and architectural style, is recommended.

SIGNAGE: Signs should complement the architecture or site where they are placed as well as make a positive contribution to the District. The overall goal is to create signage which complements the architecture without creating visual clutter and which reflects the historic use of signage in the District.

NUMBER OF SIGNS

Each store shall be limited to two signs: one on the building façade, and one blade sign. However, storefronts with two street elevations may treat each elevation as a separate storefront for purposes of determining signage numbers.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- All signs shall be installed in such a manner as to ensure that the installation does not create damage or loss of historic fabric and that the installation is temporary or reversible.
- The size and shape of the sign should be proportionate with the scale of the structure.
- Sign materials should be chosen to complement the property that the sign identifies.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Door: The proposed replacement door type has thin rails and stiles. It was common for early twentieth century storefronts to have full or partial glass panel doors; however, they were constructed of wood with wide rails and stiles. The Commission has approved aluminum or metal doors within the District when non-original doors are replaced. A recent example are the doors at the Co-Creative Center which have a 10" bottom rail. *Additionally, the 10" bottom rail adheres to ADA requirements.*

The Commission may wish to provide Staff with the authorization to work with the applicant to source an appropriate black aluminum door and allow this portion of the storefront rehabilitation to progress.

Paint: Black is an appropriate storefront color, however the raised vertical and bulhead panels provides the opportunity for color contrast which currently exists. The Commission may wish to discuss options with the applicant.

Signage: Staff recommends the Commission continue the case until a full signage proposal is submitted.

