



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

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STAFF REPORT

NEW BEDFORD HISTORICAL COMMISSION MEETING

May 2, 2022

CASE # 2022.04: CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

89 N Water St (Map 53 Lot 102)

OWNER:

Anna Matveeva, Trustee
89 North Water Street Trust
89 N Water Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

APPLICANT:

Christopher T. Saunders
700 Pleasant Street
New Bedford, MA 02740



89 N Water Street Rehabilitation

OVERVIEW: The applicant is rehabilitating the interior and exterior of the current vacant building into eighteen (18) condominium residential units and modifying the parking lot, driveways and adjacent sidewalks.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The 1884 Sowle Building is a four-story, L-shaped, brick commercial building which is currently vacant. The flat roof is surrounded by a corbelled brick cornice. The north elevation, facing onto Elm Street, is topped by a parapet with a stone inset that reads "1884." Two vertical runs of loading doors filled with paired three-light wood doors, one in the north elevation of the rear portion of the building and one in the south portion of the west elevation, remain from the building's former use as a warehouse. The building is accessed through multiple doors in the north, west, and east elevations, primarily filled with modern plate-glass and metal doors. Fenestration consists of four-over-twelve, eight-over-eight, twelve-over-twelve, and three-over-three double-hung sash with brick sills and arched brick lintels. An asphalt-paved parking area fills the angle of the building's L-shape.

PROPOSAL: The applicant proposes to renovate the interior to accommodate eighteen (18) residential units. This will include the installation of an elevator. The exterior rehabilitation includes the restoration of existing wood window sashes and existing wood paneled and glazed loading doors. Existing modern entry doors will be replaced with appropriate matching paneled doors and new window openings will be either established or reestablished with new double hung sash windows. NOTE: The existing windows are double hung wood sashes with true divided lites which are not original to the building. The exterior brick will be repointed where warranted and painted to match the existing red color. No new exterior lighting will be added, and existing lighting will be refurbished.

The existing parking lot will be reconfigured to remove the drive entry and curb cut along Elm Street and move the existing drive entry along N Water Street northward to align with the center of the parking lot. The applicant has consulted with DPI to relocate the existing crosswalk northward to the Elm and N Water Street intersection and all appropriate sidewalk and street materials will be utilized.- under DPI's supervision. A partial landscape buffer exists along the Elm Street edge of the parking lot, and the applicant has proposed to extend the landscape buffer west to fill in the closed off Elm Street entry. A single handicap parking space and trash/mechanical screening will be located on the south side of the building within the courtyard accessed from Bethel Street. A new fence and gate, acting as the screening, and may be used for access to a building entry, has not been specified.

Window manufacturer specifications have not been provided. Door manufacturer specifications or shop drawings have not been provided. Elevator over-run height has not been provided. Rooftop HVAC specifications have not been provided. Current gutters and downspouts are white aluminum, and the applicant has indicated that the downspouts would be replaced, but no specifications have been provided.

RELATED PERMITTING:

- Zoning Board of Appeals – Special Permit for parking reduction granted March 18, 2021 and request for a one-year extension granted March 17, 2022
- Planning Board – Site Plan Review granted April 13, 2022 with conditions relative to landscape buffer and historic public realm materials.
- Traffic Commission – closing curb cut and adjustment
- DPI – oversight of relocating crosswalk, curb cuts and public realm materials appropriate to the Historic District.

STATEMENT OF APPLICABLE GUIDELINES: *The Bedford -Landing District Design Guidelines* state the following relative to this proposal:

WINDOWS

In many historic buildings, the window sash, frame, and surround are a major character defining feature of the building. It is important to retain the original window details, such as the size of the opening, type of sash, sills, lintels, and decorative moldings. Windows in the district are typically double-hung. The exceptions are large storefront display windows and awning basement or gable windows.

WINDOW REPLACEMENT

If replacement is necessary, new windows shall match the existing window pattern, proportions and scale, and be in character with the building's style. • All parts of the replacement windows (such as exterior molding and/or casing, exterior frame, and exterior sash members) should match the original or existing historic windows. • The muntin thickness and profile should closely match those of the original. Muntins, whether structural or applied, must have an exterior three-dimensional profile and a width appropriate to the building's style. New windows with interior applied or removable muntin bars are not acceptable. • Glass should be clear, not tinted or frosted and have minimal reflectivity. Low-e glass should appear as standard clear glass and not be visually apparent. • Wood replacement sashes are preferred. Aluminum clad exteriors are acceptable, provided the profile reasonably matches the existing window muntins.

DOORS

Existing doors and door openings, including architecturally significant surround details such as transoms and sidelights, should be repaired, not replaced. Replacement of original or historically significant doors shall match the existing in material, size, design and location. 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.

GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS

The most common system used in the District is an exterior drainage system, which includes gutters and downspouts, made of wood or metal, and flashing. Gutters are installed along the cornice level of pitched-roof buildings to conduct water to the downspouts. Metal gutters come in a variety of shapes within the District, including half-round or formed ogee, and typically are made of galvanized metal, copper, lead-coated copper or aluminum. Half-round gutters with round downspouts are a common style on many buildings. A few of the properties retain their original built-in drainage systems, in which lined gutters are built into the cornice, making the system less visible than external gutter systems. The elements of historic drainage systems contribute to the character of the building, and careful consideration should be given to choosing the same or similar materials when undertaking any repair to the drainage system.

MODERN EQUIPMENT

Modern equipment includes utilities and other equipment outside a building, such as air conditioning (central and window units), antennas, satellite dishes, utility meters, plumbing and mechanical vents, fire alarms, solar collectors and their

associated means of attachment. Modern equipment should, in general, be located to minimize visibility from a public way. Visible elements should be designed or use colors to blend the equipment into its surroundings and/or be screened by an appropriately designed and scaled fence or plant material.

DRIVEWAYS AND PARKING LOTS

Off-street parking lots tend to break the rhythm and consistency of a streetscape, and they should therefore be placed at the rear (or side) of a building or lot whenever possible and should be screened from view. The design and materials for parking lots must be approved by the Commission prior to construction. The District has a standard painted wood fence that is used in these circumstances.

STAFF REVIEW:

The table below outlines the proposed site changes and highlights items for discussion and the Board's consideration.

WINDOWS	The existing windows are not original to the building, but are appropriate replacements, being full divided lite, double hung wood sashes, painted off white. These windows are not being replaced; however, several new window openings will be adjacent to the existing windows, therefore matching the molding profiles, muntins, sash breaks, and glazing of the new windows to the existing windows will be extremely important. Window manufacturer specifications have not been submitted and the Board may wish to continue the case until specifications and a window mock-up are provided for review and comparison.
DOORS	Two existing entrances and a staircase on the east façade within the parking lot will be removed and replaced with windows. Existing entrances on the north façades will also be replaced with windows. A modern aluminum door on the Bethel Street first floor façade will be replaced with a reproduction of the existing loading doors. No specifications or shop drawings have been submitted for this door.
GUTTERS & DOWNSPOUTS	Current gutters and downspouts are white aluminum, and the applicant has indicated that the downspouts would be replaced, but no specifications have been provided.
MODERN EQUIPMENT	An elevator is proposed for the southwest corner of the building and may be minimally visible from the public way, and the applicant has indicated that they would paint the overrun to match the building. A height of the elevator over run has not been submitted. The applicant has indicated that the HVAC units will be located on the roof, however the submitted roof plan does not indicate as such.
LIGHTING	No new lighting is being proposed, however the Board may wish to discuss the possible replacement of the inappropriate LED wall-packs with exposed conduit located on the east façade in the parking lot.
PARKING LOT	- Plans indicate that existing landscaping within the public way along the north edge of the parking lot is to remain and additional shrubs to be added along the proposed closed curb cut. The applicant has stated they would improve and maintain the landscaping, which is within the public way. - Fencing is proposed north of the parking area behind the shrub row based on earlier feedback from the Historical Commission. No screening is proposed along the east edge of the parking lot on N Water Street. The Board may wish to discuss fencing/screening and parking as described above with the applicant.
ARCHITECTURAL PLANS	The submitted plans have several inaccuracies of window/door placements. The Board may wish to condition that Construction Documents be provided to the NBHC prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

SITE PHOTOS



North facade



West facade



North and east facade



East facade



North facade



East facade



Handicap Parking Area - Screening



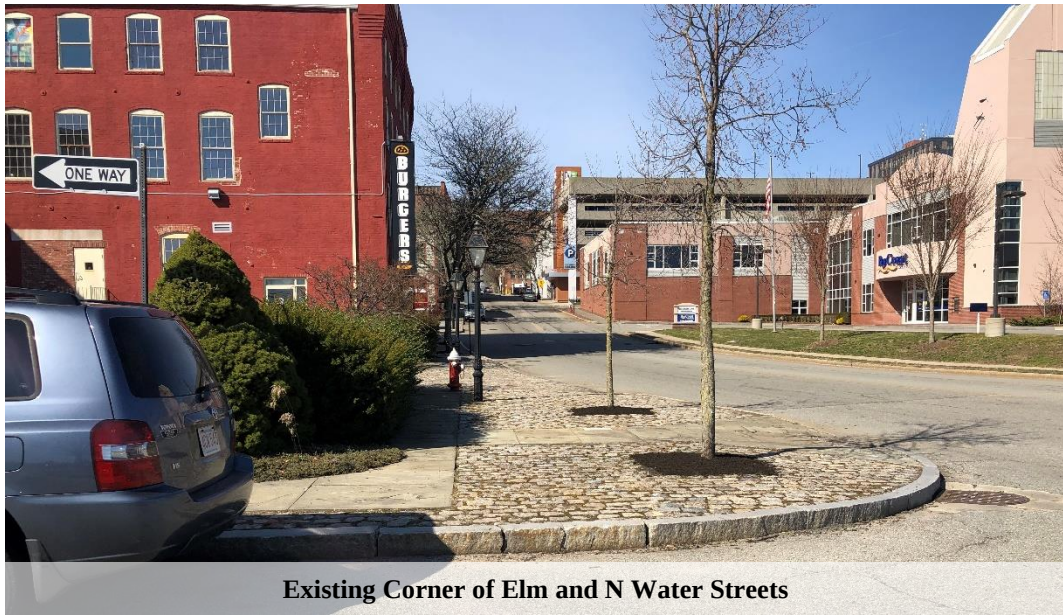
Handicap Parking Area - Screening



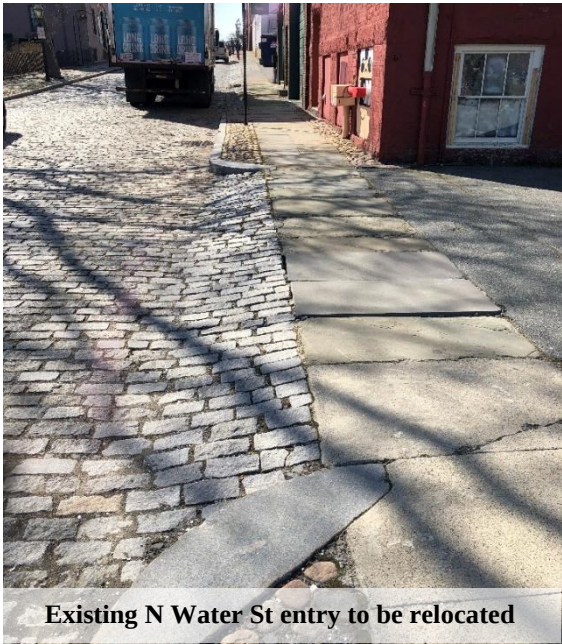
Existing Elm Street entry proposed to be closed



Existing Elm Street sidewalk



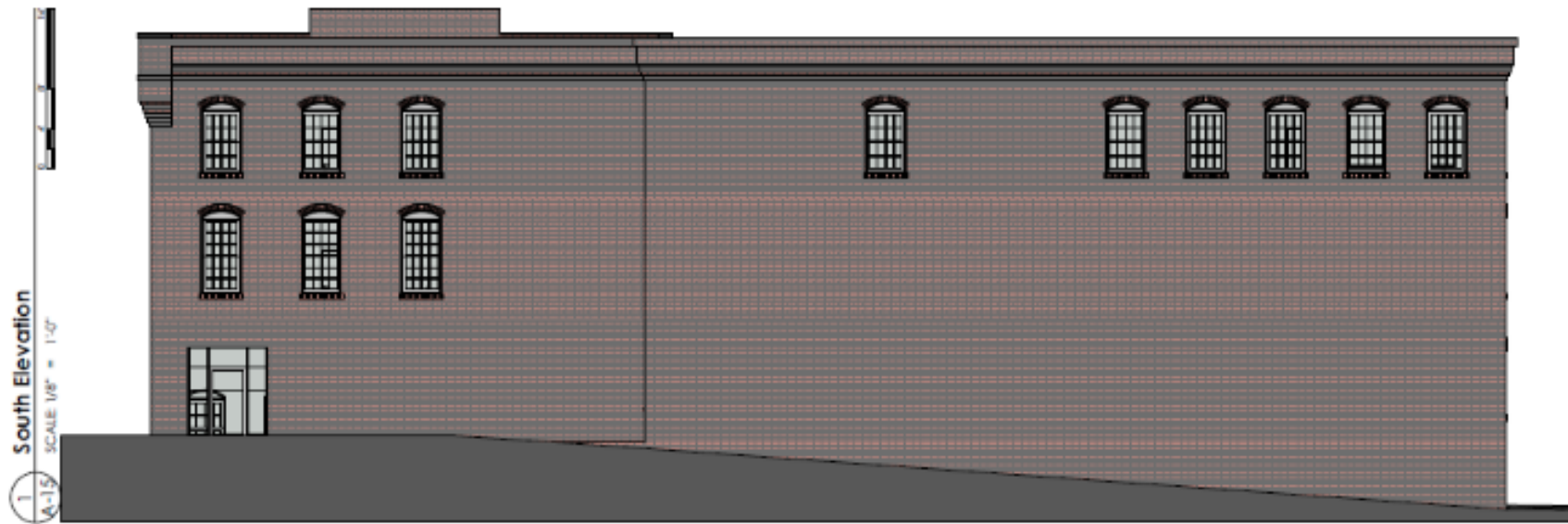
Existing Corner of Elm and N Water Streets



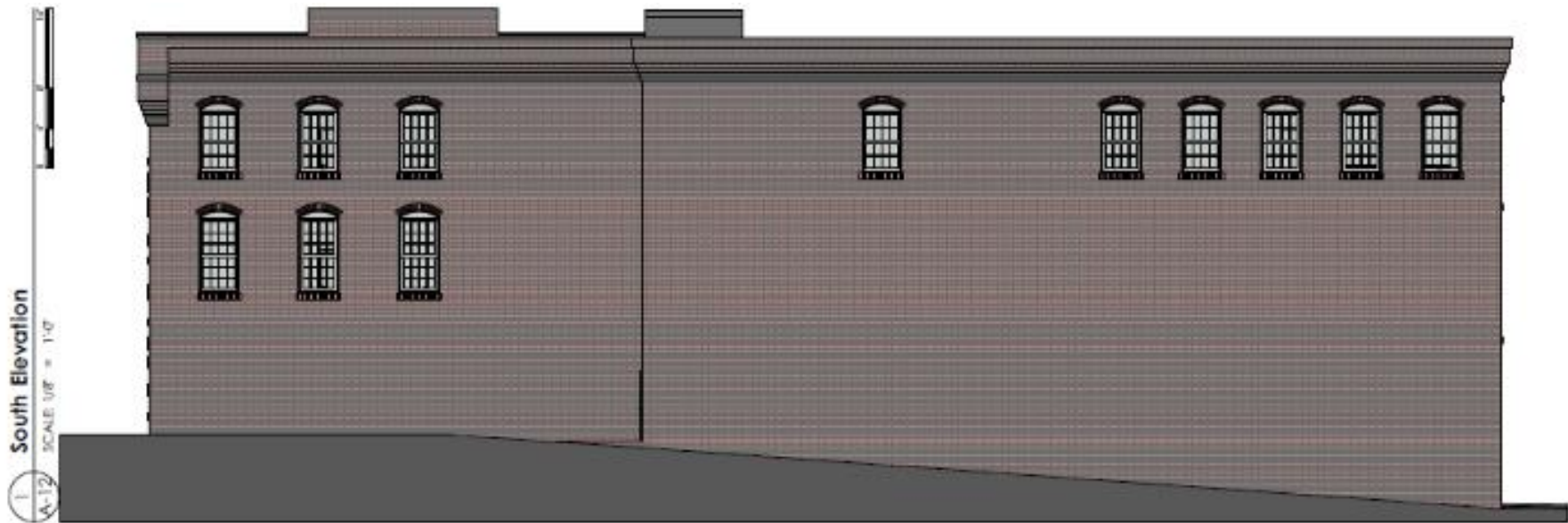
Existing N Water St entry to be relocated



Parking Lot visibility from corner of Elm and N Water Streets



EXISTING



PROPOSED



EXISTING



PROPOSED



EXISTING



PROPOSED



EXISTING



PROPOSED