



*City of New Bedford*  
**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

**JONATHAN F. MITCHELL**  
**MAYOR**

September 6, 2018

City Council President Linda Morad, and  
Honorable Members of the City Council  
133 William Street  
New Bedford, MA 02740

**RE: City Council Reconsideration CPA Project: Acushnet Sawmill New Bedford Expansion**

Dear Council President Linda Morad and Honorable Members of the City Council:

Please accept this letter as the CPA's request for reconsideration for the Acushnet Sawmill Expansion Project. The Buzzards Bay Coalition, Inc., the proponent of the Acushnet Sawmill Expansion Project, has indicated their desire to have the project reconsidered by the City Council relative to its reduced funding allocation from \$370,000 to \$202,500 at the City Council meeting on August 16, 2018.

The New Bedford City Ordinance, **Chapter 2, Article XXIV, Community Preservation Committee, Sec. 2-243 (e) Operations**, allows the opportunity for reconsideration relative to CPA projects rejected or reduced by the City Council. Please see following section for the above referenced ordinance.

***Sec. 2-243 (e) OPERATIONS: Opportunity for Reconsideration.** In the event that the Committee initially proposes that a project be funded by the Community Preservation Act and that the initial proposal is rejected or reduced by the City Council, the Committee shall be given one (1) opportunity to respond to such actions by the City Council and/or to adjust the scope and terms of any proposed project prior to a final decision by the city council as to the allocation of Community Preservation Act funds for the given year.*

Please see the attached amended CPC Funding Recommendation and a letter from Mark Rasmussen, President, Buzzards Bay Coalition, Inc. The CPC respectfully requests your support for this request for reconsideration. I am at your disposal to answer any questions related to this matter.

Sincerely,

Janine da Silva  
Chair

**ATTACHMENTS:** CPC Funding Recommendation  
Buzzards Bay Coalition Letter  
Acushnet Saw Mill New Bedford Expansion CPA Application



**JONATHAN F. MITCHELL**  
**MAYOR**

*City of New Bedford*  
**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**  
133 William Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740  
Telephone: (508) 979.1488

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**  
**FY18 FUNDING RECOMMENDATION**

Date: September 6, 2018  
To: The Honorable City Council

<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>	<b>Acushnet Sawmill – New Bedford Expansion and Community Garden</b>				
<b>PROJECT LOCATION:</b>	<b>Corner of Mill Road and Jireh Street, New Bedford</b>				
<b>APPLICANT /ORGANIZATION:</b>	<b>Buzzards Bay Coalition (BBC)</b>				
<b>FUNDING AMOUNT:</b>	<b>\$167,500</b>	<b>CPA CATEGORY:</b>	<b>Open Space</b>	<b>City Ward:</b>	<b>4</b>

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Buzzards Bay Coalition will acquire 1.63 acres of land in New Bedford across from the main entrance of the Acushnet Sawmill park property. The land will be used to expand parking and improve public safety/accessibility for all visitors and expand public uses by creating a community garden adjacent to the parking lot.

**RECOMMENDED FUNDING**

On May 8, 2018 by a vote of 8-0, with one abstention, the Community Preservation Committee recommended appropriating \$296,341 from the Open Space/Recreation Reserve and \$73,659 from the Unrestricted Fund Budget for the Acushnet Sawmill -New Bedford Expansion & Community Garden project for a grant to the Buzzards Bay Coalition in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Community Preservation Grant Agreement and for the overall purposes summarized in this document.

**ALIGNMENT WITH FY18 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN**

Supports the preservation of City open space and enhances access to public areas while providing opportunities for passive recreation/environmental education, expanding open space and protecting a strategic tract adjacent to a highly valued existing protected open space. The project expands recreational opportunities, creates more passive green spaces, enhances access to the water for underserved populations and enhances the aesthetic experience of the City's greenspace.

**MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

Improved access by land acquisition, parking area expansion, removal of invasive plants and construction of perimeter wall for visitor safety. Garden use will be tracked and the success for Grow Education will be demonstrated through families and students of the Jireh Swift School consuming garden food; families, students and teachers understanding the connection between their health and food; teachers incorporating the garden into their curriculum; with the garden resulting in a collaboration between the neighbors, teachers, students and families for gardening, teaching and learning.

## FUNDING CONDITIONS

- The Grantee agrees to execute and record a perpetual Conservation Restriction on the CPA funded property which will be approved by the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.
- Other conditions as deemed necessary and defined within the Grant Agreement with the City.

## PROJECT BUDGET

FUNDING SOURCES		EXPENSES				
		STUDY	SOFT COSTS*	ACQUISITION	CONSTRUCTION**	TOTAL
1	NEW BEDFORD CPA	\$	\$14,000	\$335,000	\$21,000	\$370,000
2		\$	\$	\$	\$55,000	\$55,000
3		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
4		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
5		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS		\$	\$14,000	\$335,000	\$76,000	\$425,000

\* Soft costs include design, professional services, permitting fees, closing costs, legal, etc.

\*\* Construction refers to new construction, rehabilitation, preservation, restoration work, and/or accessibility related expenses.

The full proposal is available at: <http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/planning/cpc-fy18-submitted-applications/>





August 9, 2018

New Bedford City Council - Committee on Finance  
Joseph Lopes, Finance Chair & Honorable Members of the City Council  
133 William Street  
New Bedford, MA 02740

**RE: CPA PROJECT: Acushnet Sawmill New Bedford Expansion & Community Garden**

Dear Committee Chair Lopes,

I am writing to ask for your reconsideration of the recent vote taken by the Committee on Finance with regard to Community Preservation Act funding for expansion of the Acushnet Sawmill into the City of New Bedford.

The Finance Committee vote to reduce the funding of the land purchase by half to \$167,500 threatens our ability to complete the project. We are unaware of any additional grant or private funding sources that will cover this shortfall. Therefore, the Committee's vote makes it very likely that this property is developed into 6 houselots and the opportunity for New Bedford to gain its own 'Front Door' into the Acushnet Sawmill park will be lost forever.

I cannot believe that that was the intent of most members of the Committee when they voted. The Sawmill is a heavily-used public open space that is enjoyed by hundreds of people each week (and often each day) seeking to connect with the free-flowing Acushnet River, abundant wildlife and quiet trails and canoe launch. Most users are residents of nearby New Bedford neighborhoods.

[Note that the full vote of the Finance Committee was for \$202,500 which included: \$167,500 for the land purchase, \$12,250 for project costs, and \$22,750 for site improvements.]

I want to specifically address the issues that were raised at the July 19<sup>th</sup> Finance Committee meeting.

**Parking Component**

- A primary driver for additional parking space is to **safely accommodate the school buses** that frequent the site. All New Bedford Public Schools regularly use the Sawmill for outdoor learning. The attached map shows how the parking area has been configured specifically for school buses.

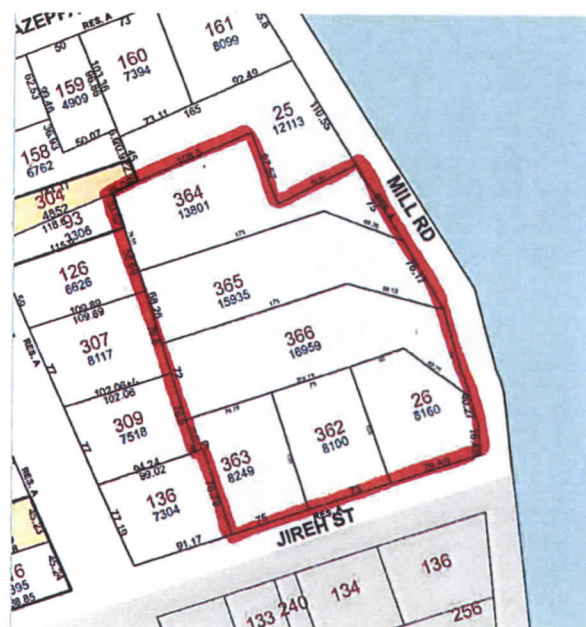
[www.savebuzzardsbay.org](http://www.savebuzzardsbay.org)

114 Front Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740 | Tel: 508-999-6363 Fax: 508-984-7913  
21 Luscombe Avenue, Woods Hole, Massachusetts 02543 | Tel: 508-540-6222 Fax: 508-540-5222

- Less than 15% of this 1.63 acre parcel will be used for to expand the availability of parking to the Sawmill. This is a vital user and public safety need at this site. The lot will be gravel, positioned behind a new stone wall, and attractive.

### Parcel Valuation

- The property to be purchased is already divided into 6 house lots that are ready for sale and construction. See City Assessors Map at right. The availability of these lots establishes the Fair Market Value for this land on the real estate market.
- A Fair Market Value appraisal was completed in November 2017 by Realworth Appraising & Consulting, a certified independent appraiser, in conformance with all requirements established by the New Bedford CPA Committee and the statewide CPA enabling legislation and policies.
- Realworth valued the property at \$400,000. The current landowners, the Hawes Family, have agreed to sell us the land for \$335,000 which constitutes a Bargain Sale of 16% below Fair Market Value.
- The \$335,000 purchase price equals \$55,833 per house lot – well below the current value of single lots for sale in the North End of New Bedford.



### Ongoing Land Management Responsibility

- The Buzzards Bay Coalition will assume all responsibility for management and care of this new addition to the Acushnet Sawmill property in perpetuity. There will be no ongoing maintenance expense to the City and our staff live immediately adjacent to the site providing hands-on stewardship of the property. We own and manage more than 3,000 acres of conservation land and pride ourselves on the quality of our parks, trails and farms.

### Addressing New Bedford's CPA Goals & Priorities

The Acushnet Sawmill project meets numerous CPA goals for Open Space, Recreation and Historic Resources as articulated in the city's Community Preservation Plan.

- Supports preservation of open space in New Bedford;
- Improves and enhances the public's access to the waterfront and in public areas;
- Restores degraded landscapes along the waterfront;
- Protects natural resources and creates new greenways through urban New Bedford;
- Preserves and expands the city's network of parks, open spaces and trails;
- Improves and protects the waterfront for recreational use, improve access to and enhance the aesthetic experience of the waterfront;



- Provides opportunities for passive recreation and environmental education, including waterfront amenities;
  - Acquires strategic tracts of private undeveloped land adjacent to existing permanently protected open space;
  - Preserves existing and create more passive greenscapes for the public;
  - Expands multi-use trails within the city and also connecting to neighboring communities;
  - Improves and enhances our community's access to the water;
  - Expands outdoor recreational opportunities for all New Bedford residents, regardless of age or ability;
  - Expands recreational opportunities for those segments of the population that are underserved given the current location of existing recreational lands and unique needs of different segments of the community;
  - Promotes the creative use of greenways, waterways and other corridors, including connecting corridors to create safe and healthful non-motorized transportation and exercise opportunities;
  - Expands waterfront accessibility/use while promoting water-based recreational activities;
  - Preserves and enhances the aesthetic experience of the city's greenspace and waterways.
  - Protects, preserves, enhances, restores and/or rehabilitates city-owned properties, features or resources of historic significance; particularly historic landscapes, *burial grounds*, monuments and park systems, as well as historic records and documents.
- (NOTE: An early 19th century Swift family burial plot is located on the subject property).

In closing, the Acushnet Sawmill Expansion and Community Garden project was one of the **Top Ranked** proposals reviewed by the NB CPA Committee, the **only Open Space** project received, and the only project recommended within **Ward One** – the largest ward by land area within the city.

We would welcome the opportunity to walk the Acushnet Sawmill property with any members of the Council to explain the project in detail and answer any questions. Please do not hesitate to call me to setup a visit at a time convenient for you.

Thank you for your consideration of our request to restore the CPA Committee's recommended funding for this project.

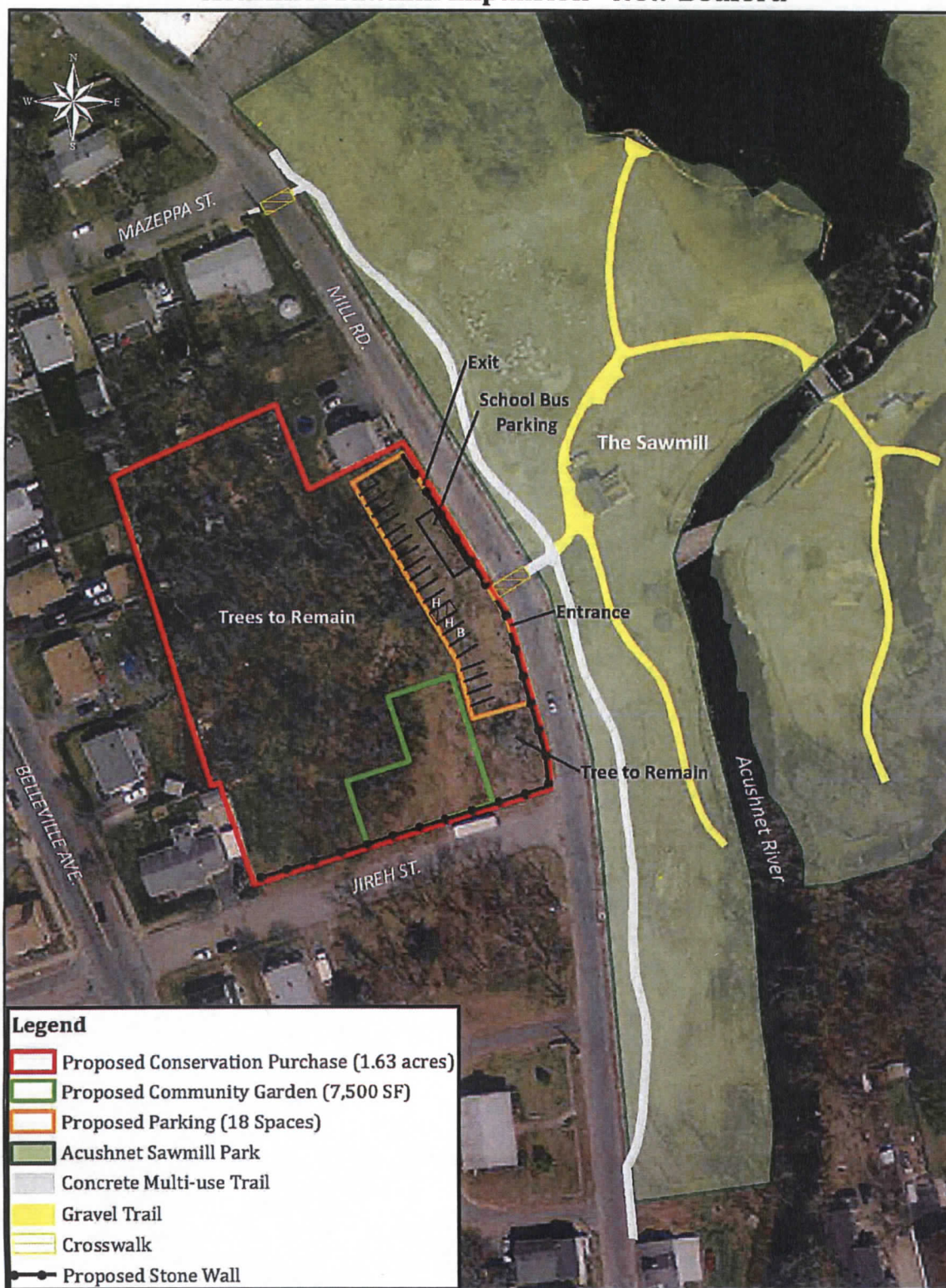
Sincerely,



Mark Rasmussen  
President

cc: New Bedford Community Preservation Committee  
Mayor Jon Mitchell  
Robyn Branco, Marion Institute  
Tonya Vitorino, Principal, Jireh Swift School  
Thomas Anderson, New Bedford School Superintendent  
Mark Montigny, State Senator  
Robert Koczera, State Representative

## Acushnet Sawmill Expansion - New Bedford



### Legend

- Proposed Conservation Purchase (1.63 acres)
- Proposed Community Garden (7,500 SF)
- Proposed Parking (18 Spaces)
- Acushnet Sawmill Park
- Concrete Multi-use Trail
- Gravel Trail
- Crosswalk
- Proposed Stone Wall



Source: MassGIS; Buzzards Bay Coalition  
Printed: December 6, 2017

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Feet