

November 19, 2020

Catherine Racer, Associate Director
Department of Housing & Community Development
100 Cambridge St., Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114

RE: Moby Dick and 117 Union Street Development Project

Dear Ms. Racer,

We are writing in support for the New Bedford Development Corporation's (NBDC) development proposal for 117 Union Street and the Moby Dick building on behalf of The Regeneration Project of the New Bedford Economic Development Council (NBEDC). The Regeneration Project Committee is a collaborative platform representing 44 community, institutional, and business leaders committed to shaping, advocating for, and tangibly advancing strategies for sustainable and shared growth for the City of New Bedford and the region.

After a careful redesign, the revised and more efficient proposal will bring 46 new market-rate and affordable workforce apartment units to the center of the downtown. This is a strategic growth imperative outlined in district and master planning documents, TDI objectives, and a key goal outlined in our full 2018 report, *Realizing the Potential*.

Our report outlines four "big ideas" to drive local, sustainable, and equitable economic growth in New Bedford. One of those big ideas is to build a vibrant, diverse, and uniquely New Bedford downtown and waterfront experience for all. A specific action for our advocacy under this idea is the pursuit of smaller-scaled housing developments with a focus on key infill parcels as a means to bolster the market and attract new residents interested in an urban lifestyle. This project proposed by the NBDC does just. And advancing this project, as a means to help us emerge with a downtown that is stronger in a post-COVID-19 pandemic world, cannot be overstated.

Projects such as this, which are focused on attracting a mix of income levels to the downtown while creating infill construction and preserving historic buildings, are incredibly difficult to plan, fund, and execute. We once again strongly feel that this project proposed by the NBDC is the very type of project that we should all be working to bring to reality.

Beyond the gains in new mixed-income housing units, committee members are pleased that this proposal will create over 100 construction jobs and the opportunity for new small businesses to find a downtown home—another goal of our report. Because of these catalytic impacts, we urge your consideration in fully funding their request.

Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Anthony Sapienza, Co-Chair
President
New Bedford Economic Development Council

Maureen Sylvia Armstrong, Co-Chair
President, CEO & Owner
Sylvia Group Insurance

Mark Preble
COO & Acting Chancellor
UMass Dartmouth

Jeff Pontiff
Owner
E J Pontiff Real Estate

Dr. Laura Douglas
President
Bristol Community College

John Vasconcellos
President
Community Foundation of SE MA

Rick Kidder
CO-CEO
One SouthCoast Chamber of Commerce

Rosemary Gill
Executive Director
Zeiterion Performing Arts Center

Margarita Graham
President & CEO
Reliable Bus Lines, Inc. &
J & J Driving School & Logistics, Inc.

Elizabeth Isherwood
Chairman, President
Greater New Bedford Industrial
Foundation

Joe Bahena
Senior Vice President
Joseph Abboud

Peter Muise
President and CEO
First Citizens' Federal Credit Union

David Slutz
Managing Director, Co-Owner
Potentia Business Solutions, Moby Dick Brewery
& Airport Grille

Bob Unger
Chairman, Co-Owner
Leadership SouthCoast, Moby Dick
Brewery

Sarah Athanas
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Stephen Silverstein
CEO & Owner
Not Your Average Joe's &
The Black Whale

Helena DaSilva Hughes
Executive Director
Immigrants' Assistance Center

Doug Glassman
Owner
SERVPRO of New Bedford

Paul Chasse
CEO
Realtor Association of Southeastern MA

David Wechsler
President & CEO
Maritime International

Gail Fortes
Executive Director
YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts

Rontell Grant
Owner & CEO, Agent/Manager
Lite Weights Fitness, Kerry Horan Real Estate

Christopher Rezendes
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Maria Rosario
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Jeff Glassman
President
Darnit! Inc.

Adam Cove
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Jennifer Downing
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Liz Wiley
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