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Structural Survey of the Macomber-Silvia Building, 1976

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A. W. BAKER RESTORATIONS, INC.

670 DRIFT ROAD
WESTPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 02790
(617) 636-8765

The ten acre area in New Bedford, which has been designated as a waterfront Historic District, has been thus honored because of the surviving structures which exist as a direct result of the commercial ventures that have given New Bedford it's identity with the past, in the present and for the future.

There are many types of architecture within this area that visually record the ever changing and busy atmosphere that predominated New Bedford's harbor during a 100 year span ---- from 1800 to 1900.

The Macomber-Silvia building supplies a meaningful space, along with the other structures, in the over all concept of an area that now has attained the title of a National Monument. To lose this building would be not unlike losing a volume from a set of books written about the history of New Bedford, it's people, influences, needs and changes. Already too many buildings have been lost and it seems a time when conjecture on anything but a positive level is out of the question. This building not only helped to serve those men who "went down to the sea in ships" but those people who contributed to the growth of New Bedford from a small waterfront town to a complex urban environment. The mood suggested by this building alone and in conjunction with it's two neighboring buildings will help to create a solid boundary to incorporate the concept of the historic area both in spirit and in actuality.

The Macomber-Silvia building was built in the early 19th century by Macomber. It is a simple wooden frame structure with studded walls and horizontal board sheathing. The work of early craftsmen is readily visible the frame being built with hand-hewn pine timbers, morticed, tenoned and pegged. The studs also are tenoned and morticed into the frame. It is believed that in 1874 the gable roof and victorian store front were added by Silvia, thus adding to it's 70 year heritage a second important architectural feature influenced by the times and growth in New Bedford.

The building has a clear and important marriage with the two buildings it abuts and these three buildings, connected to one another, say a great deal to the realist or romanticist. It truly is a happening and what is more American than that!

Although 80% of the building is healthy wood that 20% happens to be in critical areas. Once these are repaired there is absolutely no reason why it should not still be standing in another 150 years ... reaching the grand age of 300 ... and in it's simplicity or because of it - be of even greater infinite value for those who will be following.

The Macomber-Silvia building has survived by it's own right. Only if we continue to care about our architectural history can that opportunity be passed on to others. The significance is not for us to decide the responsibility is.

copy this over

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Structural Survey - Macomber-Silvia Building - 71-73 Union St. New Bedford.

Attic:

The roof boards are in good condition except the N-W corner where an area about 8'x8' is rotted completely due to a leak. All but two of the rafters are in good condition. These two need further investigation when the roof has been jacked up. Possible water damage requiring a scarfed replacement. An 8'x8' area of flooring is rotten and a 10'x12' area of flooring is missing.

2nd Floor:

Both the front and back plate have been subjected to water damage. The back or north plate is cracked in the middle. The N-E corner of the plate is not visible but there is a good chance of damage in the area, due to the roof leak. The front plate is broken in the S-E corner and the S-W corner is soft. Botheareas in the front plate requiring about a two foot scarf. One ceiling joist has been cut and is no longer carrying its load. This joist should be replaced. The joist in the S-E corner is rotted and requires a 2-3' scarf. The joist ends where pocketed into the plate are not visible. When the roof is freed they then can be inspected but I feel at this time damage if any, will be negligible. Half the floor area needs replacement of flooring. The East wall, at the girt and plate line, is no longer attached to the neighboring wall (the Tavern). I recommend steel angle plated, 6"x6"x3/8", be used. The studs are good. Post in N-E corner is not visible. Others seem good. The stairway needs the first few steps repaired.

1st Floor:

North girt needs complete replacement. South girt has a 2' rotted section in the S-E corner. There are 6 structural posts in this building. Of these 4 can be seen on the first floor. (2 being behind enclosures)

Posts

S-E - good

S-W - first floor needs replacement.

Mid-E - not visible

Mid-W - post is presently being supported by a 3 foot wooden addition and appears secure. However the masonry area surrounding needs repair and I propose to extend it to include this post.

N-E - not visible

N-W - this post has been cut off about 2 feet below the 2nd floor but is well supported on a masonry wall.

Generally the west wall of this building is not well supported. The sill is not evident. In addition the parking lot has been built up to a higher level causing water drainage to be captured in the sill area. The bottom of the studs are rotted. I feel that if the existing masonry wall is extended to the front of the building and as high as 2', it will supply the necessary support for the wall and prevent further water damage from the parking area.

The stairs can^{be} repaired and reused.

Cellar:

In general the joists look good and the floor feels sound. If the plywood floor is removed, then any joists can be replaced. With a new back wall, the West masonry

repaired masonry wall should be rebuilt the structural Postings should be secure

General Work Outline

Clean-up and expose all areas. Support and take a strain on the 1st and 2nd floor, floor joists, front and back. Having established a strong position to carry the stress, the roof can be jacked adequately to carry its structural load and while thus supported the front and back plates, girts and joists can be repaired or replaced.
 The North, 1st floor, wall extension is to be removed and rebuilt at its original location. This will be of masonry construction.
 The roof, the West and North walls plus the West wall of the abutting building will be reshingled.
 The street wall is to appear as seen in a photograph taken in the late 19th century.
 We would like to involve a boy from the youth group working for Whale, as an apprentice and for general help.

Proposed Work Schedule

<u>Week.</u>	<u>Labor</u>	<u>Material</u>
1. Bring materials to site. Clean up debris. Establish jacking stations. Head scratch.	\$520.00	
2. In motion. Jacking and securing all areas front and back. Pads on rafters. Jacking roof, front and back.	840.00	
3. Remove back siding and addition. Build <i>4 week</i> forms. Cement and masonry work.	840.00	
4. Repair back plate. Replace joists. Lay sill.	840.00	
5. Complete back wall	840.00	
6. Front - repair plate. Repair joist end. <i>4 week</i>	840.00	
7. Repair front girt and repace post. <i>2 week</i>	840.00	\$2000.00
8. West wall cut and or replace studs, 1st floor, on new concret foundation.	840.00	1000.00

9,400.00

Finish work for exterior

Front. 1 man - 5 weeks. New sash for 1st and 2nd floors. Lumber - clapboards, etc.	2000.00	645.00 1500.00
All other walls and roof (exterior) will be sub-contracted. Contract inclosed.		6275.00
	<u>\$8400.00</u>	<u>\$11,420.00</u>
Labor and materials		\$19,820.00
A. W. Baker Restorations - 15%		2973.00
		<u>\$22,793.00</u>

This is not a contract price except where noted. Until the building is actually jacked up will all the damage be absolutely known. I have tried to pad the time out for the unforeseen and believe I have but at the same time it could be longer in man hours. The jacking being the critical and consuming time. I have not quoted exterior door prices plus front shutters as I would like to try and find 2nd hand ones of the period which could save considerable money and be far handsomer. The trim detail between the front, 1st and 2nd floor, should also be sort after in original material.

+ 100.00 for photos.

C. Trainor
builder

Old Harbor Road, Adamsville, Rhode Island 02801 Telephone (401) 635-2793

July 16, 1976

A. W. Baker Restorations, Inc.
670 Drift Rd.
Westport, Mass.
02790

Dear Ms. Baker,

Re. Macomber-Silvia Bldg.
71-73 Union St.
New Bedford, Mass.

I propose to complete the following repairs, supplying all labor and materials unless otherwise noted.

West wall,

Remove existing siding, replace white cedar #1 grade, #15 felt underlaid, repair all rake moulds, primed and finish coat. (Material for rakes to be supplied by you.)

West wall adjacent bldg,

Remove existing asphalt siding and replace white cedar #1 grade, #15 felt underlaid

North wall,

Remove existing siding, replace white cedar #1 grade, #15 felt underlaid, repair as necessary eaves moulds. (Materials for repair of eaves moulds to be supplied by you.)

Roof,

Remove existing asphalt material, renaill boarding as necessary, replace asphalt roofing. Supply 1" insulation to entire surface. (since roofing material is not specified, I have allowed a budget of \$30 per square)

All debris will be cleared from site

Total cost for above repairs

\$ 6275.

Sincerely,

