

Statement of New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell on November 4 Plane Crash at Rural Cemetery

"I wish to express my condolences to the family of Paul Vidal, the pilot of the plane that crashed in Rural Cemetery yesterday. Mr. Vidal was a well-known and respected member of Greater New Bedford's recreational aviation community for many years, where his loss is being felt today.

I am profoundly relieved that the crash did not result in a much larger disaster. Despite its name, Rural Cemetery sits in the middle of the city, surrounded by densely populated neighborhoods where thousands of residents live. It is readily imaginable that under slightly different circumstances the crash could have taken lives on the ground.

I am also grateful to the many neighbors who promptly reported the incident to authorities, and for their cooperation with the response effort. I commend the New Bedford Police, Fire, EMS and Emergency Management personnel, along with the state and federal investigators, for their unhesitant and deliberate management of the crash scene. As awful of an event as it was, the public can have confidence that its officials reacted with the utmost skill in the moment." –Mayor Jon Mitchell