

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: 760 CHAPEL STREET. Special Exception to allow a Tavern and to allow 0 parking spaces where 32 spaces are required for a multi-use event space. Zone BD-1 (18-11-S) (Owner: Olympian New Co. Applicant: Slate Ballard)

REPORT: 1543-17

ADVICE: Approve Special Exception for Parking Reduction
Approve Special Exception for Use

BACKGROUND

The applicant is requesting a Special Exceptions to permit a Tavern (Beer and Wine) Liquor License for a proposed multi-use event space (The State House) located in the rear portions of the property at 760 Chapel Street in a BD-1 District. The space as proposed and described in the narrative and shown on both floor and site plans is composed of basement and ground floor use level totaling approximately 4600sf in area. The first-floor plan shows performance/assembly area (with maximum seating area for 125 people) and accessory uses such a small stage, consumer bar and restrooms. Basement space is devoted to other accessory uses such as storage, entertainer's lounge and dressing room areas and additional restrooms.

Special Exceptions are required both for the Tavern and parking. This is due to the idea that in the past in the BD- and BD-1 Districts establishments other than restaurants (such as taverns, cafes etc.) would sometimes morph into more club type uses that generated much higher levels of activity and parking demand than anticipated.

APRIL 10 PUBLIC HEARING

Slate Ballard, the applicant, appeared before the board. He is seeking to allow a use permitted by special exception in that of a tavern as well as 0 parking spaces where 32 are required. He stated that the space will be used for special events and there is available parking located in front of the building but is not fixed to the property. One member of the public spoke in support of the application. Approximately twenty letters of support were presented to the board.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Special Exception- Use of the Proposed Site: The applicant describes the proposed use of the space is "As a central hub for art, music, craft and trade" achieved "through a diverse array of events, workshops, productions and experiences." They are not proposing this as a conventional Tavern with regular hours of operation; it will be open for scheduled events only. The serving of wine and beer accessory to the primary use is both appropriate and in harmony with other uses in the district.
- Special Exception-Parking Nature of the Proposed Site: The site is in the rear area of a parking lot located just south of the southwest corner of the intersection of State and Chapel Streets. It is an area that while somewhat on its periphery of is still a part of the central business and entertainment heart of the city.
- Resulting Traffic Patterns: Due to the size, location and nature of the space as well as a largely pedestrian clientele it is highly unlikely to generate any additional automotive traffic in the area, if operated in accordance with the submitted plan.
- Nature of the Surrounding Area: The surrounding area is highly conducive for a use that is entertainment-based, or rather performance-based and that serves a largely pedestrian clientele.
- The Comprehensive Plan: The proposal is in harmony with advice of the Comprehensive Plan in respect to its enhancement of a mixed-use environment within the center of the city.

Given the number of seats, size of the structure and proposed hours of operation, it is safe to assume that the amount of traffic will not noticeably increase, nor will parking be overly disruptive to the neighboring residences/businesses in the district.

ADVICE

The Commission has reviewed the summary of the public hearing and the information of the BZA staff report and finds the request satisfies the Special Exception requirements of Section 63(d) and recommends approval.

ADOPTED: April 18, 2018
Leslie Radcliffe
Vice Chair

ATTEST: MPL.
Michael Piscitelli, AICP
Deputy Economic Development Administrator