

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: REQUEST TO PRESENT TO THE BOARD OF ALDERS ON HER SUGGESTED PLANS TO USE THE RIVER STREET PROJECT AREA FOR HOUSING FOR THE HOMELESS. (From Wendy Hamilton)

REPORT: 1494-09

ADVICE: Deny the use of River Street MDP properties for housing, and direct the submitter to other resources for technical assistance.

BACKGROUND

The River Street parcels lie within the River Street Municipal Development area. The MDP was approved by the BOA in January 2002 with the stated goals:

- The redevelopment of significant vacant land and building spaces for new light industrial and manufacturing uses;
- The restoration and adaptive reuse of the historic Bigelow Boiler/ National Pipe Bending complex;
- The development of a waterfront park and linear trail along the Quinnipiac Riverfront;
- The improvement of the public infrastructure, including reconstruction of River Street itself; and
- The implementation of new design controls to create a more appealing and sustainable environment.

A number of parcels were acquired at City expense, and City state and federal money have been further invested in environmental assessment and cleanup, infrastructure reconstruction and upgrades in order to make the area more attractive and financially viable for businesses which would retain or create jobs and pay real estate taxes.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

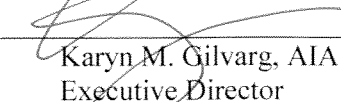
The purpose of the River Street MDP clearly states that the intent of the plan is to locate appropriate businesses there in order to create or retain jobs. The new zoning which was put in place as an implementation measure allows limited live/work residential use by Special Permit only. The environmental condition of most of the properties is likely to rule out residential use unless extraordinary (and expensive) measures are taken to clean sites and remove hazardous materials and pollutants.

Residential use is clearly difficult if not impossible and could be a deterrent to further needed commercial industrial development.

While housing the homeless is a worthy cause, this is an inappropriate location; therefore the Commission recommends that the submitter of the Resolution be directed elsewhere for finding technical assistance and sites.

ADVICE: Deny the use of River Street MDP properties for housing, and direct the submitter to other resources for technical assistance.

ADOPTED: June 18, 2014
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director