

**NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT**

**RE:** 262, 263, 265, & 269 DIXWELL AVENUE. MBLUs: 294 0343 00700, 282 0347 03700, 282 0347 03800, 282 0347 03900  
Acquisition of four lots for a mixed-income, mixed-use future development. Located in the BA Zoning District. (Submitted by: Evan Trachten, Livable City Initiative)

**REPORT:** 1622-02  
**ADVICE:** Approval

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**


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**Applicant(s):** City of New Haven/Livable City Initiative  
**Price:** up to \$1,300,000 plus closing costs  
**Site:** 22,207 square feet  
**Zone:** BA  
**Use:** Mixed-use development  
**Financing:**  
**Subsidy:**  
**City Lead:** Evan Trachten  
**Agency:** Livable City Initiative  
**Phone:** 203-946-8373

**ORDINANCE**

This request comes from the City's Livable City Initiative Bureau (LCI) regarding the acquisition of four lots. This is in accordance with Section D(8) of the City's Land Disposition Agreement Guidelines, "**The proposal shall be forwarded in the following sequence for further consideration: 1. PAD (approval required); 2. City Plan Commission (advisory review); and 3. LCI Board of Directors (approval required).**" Accordingly, the Planning Commission may provide an advisory report.

**BACKGROUND**

The City of New Haven, acting through the Livable City Initiative (LCI), proposes to acquire a portfolio of properties on Dixwell Avenue. The City proposed to acquire 262 Dixwell Avenue and 263 Dixwell Avenue (residential properties) as well as 265 Dixwell Avenue, and 269 Dixwell Avenue (mixed-use properties). The City will conduct a simultaneous disposition of 262 and 263 Dixwell Avenue, disposing of these properties to a nonprofit organization (organization not yet determined). Current residents will not be displaced. The City will retain 265 and 269 Dixwell Avenue for a mixed-income, mixed-use future development as part of the City's effort to revitalize the Dixwell Avenue Corridor. It remains undetermined whether the City would conduct the redevelopment, or whether there would be an RFP to find a Developer for the project. Essentially, the LCI Board of Directors seeks guidance as to whether this proposed acquisition is in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

**PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:**

The proposal will achieve the following Comprehensive Plan Goals:

- "Use redevelopment and other tools to address nuisance and deterioration issues, including uses that are deleterious to neighborhoods in general." – This is a redevelopment tool to keep properties from becoming deleterious to the neighborhood.
- "Strategic and targeted planning efforts are recommended within Dixwell and Newhallville neighborhoods such as: consolidation of vacant and underutilized sites, sliver lots, and/or non-conforming lots to create sizable opportunity sites for development; improving existing traffic and street network

around these sites; and promoting development through partnerships with local non-profits and other city agencies.”

**ADVICE:**

To approve based on this proposal’s alignment with the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

**PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:**

The City Plan Commission recently approved plans for redevelopment of Dixwell Plaza (CPC Report #1616-04), across the street, the Q House was recently completed and opened its doors in fall 2021. There are several other, city-owned sites slated for redevelopment in the area. This proposed acquisition represents another step toward reinvesting in the Dixwell Neighborhood, to create a thriving commercial corridor with mixed-income housing on upper stories. This type of redevelopment, designed to support residents and business owners in the Dixwell neighborhood, is explicitly called for in the Comprehensive Plan. Planning Staff note the discussion described in the PAD minutes on the importance of ensuring that gentrification and displacement do not occur as a result of the proposed redevelopment. Acquisition by LCI will give the City greater control over affordability and other key aspects of redevelopment plans, to ensure that this site is developed in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and the needs and preferences of the neighborhood.

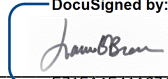
Planning Staff also note that all four structures in this proposal are listed in Historic Resource Inventories and are identified as contributing structures in the Winchester Repeating Arms Company National Historic District. The structures at 262 Dixwell Avenue and 263 Dixwell Avenue, slated to be disposed to a nonprofit organization following the acquisition and maintained as multi-family housing, retain notable features of the historic facades. The buildings at 265 Dixwell Avenue, and 269 Dixwell Avenue appear to have been substantially altered with additions to create ground-floor commercial space, while retaining some historic features. Any full or partial demolition of any of these structures proposed in the future is subject to City Charter Title III, Chapter 9, Article II, Section 9-50-Delay of demolition of historic resources.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Commission makes the following recommendations for the proposed acquisition:

- A strong affordability component should be required for the residential component of any future mixed-use development.
- Robust community engagement should be conducted as redevelopment plans are developed, including with the Community Management Team.
- Opportunities for local apprentices to be involved in the project should be pursued.
- Due to the site’s location, including proximity to the Farmington Canal Trail, special attention should be given to supporting bicycle and pedestrian access.
- Historic features on the façades of 262 and 263 Dixwell Avenue should be preserved. Impact on historic resources should be considered while planning for future redevelopment of the 265 and 269 Dixwell Avenue lots.

**ADOPTED:** November 30, 2022  
Leslie Radcliffe  
Chair

**ATTEST:**  December 2, 2022 | 10:28 AM EST  
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Laura E Brown  
Executive Director, City Plan Department