

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **263 DIXWELL AVENUE.**
 MBLU: 282 0347 03700
Submitted by: Evan Trachten, Livable Cities Initiative

Disposition of a city-owned two-family property to Beulah Land Development Corp.

REPORT: **1627-06**
ADVICE: **Approve**

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Applicant(s): Beulah Land Development Corp
Price:
Site: 4,764 SF
Zone: BA
Use: Two-family house
Financing:
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 disposition of a vacant City-owned three-family house. 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

On November 30, 2022, the City Plan Commission recommended approval of a PAD referral for the acquisition of four properties on Dixwell Avenue, including 263 Dixwell Avenue (CPC Report #1622-02). The City is currently in the process of finalizing acquisition of the properties. The acquisition proposal noted that the City planned to then dispose of the 262 and 263 Dixwell Avenue properties to a nonprofit organization.

The City of New Haven now proposes to dispose of the two-family property at 263 Dixwell Avenue to Beulah Land Development Corp. The applicant will rehabilitate the property and maintain the property as a low to moderate affordable rental property at 50% - 80% AMI. The property will deed restricted for a minimum twenty (20) year period. This property must be maintained as an affordable rental property at 50%-80% AMI for not less than 20 years, inclusive of successive ownership, unless a more extensive period is required by federal law, the Property Acquisition and Disposition Committee (PAD), the Board of Directors of Livable City Initiative (LCI), or the Board of Alders of the City of New Haven.

Planning Commission considerations include whether:

- The property is or should be used for municipal purposes.
- The site is not adjacent to a park to create additional park land.
- The property is an interior lot.¹

¹ Interior Lot - "a lot other than a corner lot with only one frontage on a street " (<http://parcelsales.scgov.net/Definitions.aspx>)

- The site could be used as a pocket park or community garden.²
- The comprehensive plan identifies or will identify resources within this area for which this parcel could be used.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

The proposal will achieve the following Comprehensive Plan Goals:

- Develop land uses that are compatible with the character of the surrounding area.
- **“Continue to use the city’s Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) to advance housing and neighborhood objectives, including appropriate densities, home ownership and contextual design.”**
- **“Use redevelopment and other tools to address nuisance and deterioration issues, including uses that are deleterious to neighborhoods in general.”** (The City’s Comprehensive Plan) – This is a redevelopment tool to keep property from becoming deleterious to the neighborhood.
- **“Create diverse housing stock suitable for all abilities, ages and incomes.”**
- **“Encourage neighborhood stability.”**
- **“Enhance quality of the housing stock.”** (The City’s Comprehensive Plan)
- **“Preserve existing, historic housing stock.”** (The City’s Comprehensive Plan)
- **“Encourage sustainable housing developments.”** (The City’s Comprehensive Plan)

Planning Staff note that the structure at 263 Dixwell Avenue is listed in Historic Resource Inventories and is identified as contributing structures in the Winchester Repeating Arms Company National Historic District. The structure retains notable features of the historic facade. Any full or partial demolition of this structure 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

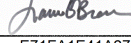
The Commission makes the following recommendations for the proposed acquisition:

- Robust community engagement should be conducted as rehabilitation plans are developed.
- 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 façade of 263 Dixwell Avenue should be preserved.

ADVICE:

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

ADOPTED: February 15, 2023
Leslie Radcliffe
Chair

ATTEST:  February 22, 2023 | 2:57 PM EST
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Laura E Brown
Executive Director, City Plan Department

² Pocket Park - "A small area accessible to the general public that is often of primarily environmental, rather than recreational, importance. They can be urban, suburban or rural and often feature as part of [urban regeneration](http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Pocket_park) schemes in inner-city areas to provide areas where wild-life can establish a foothold." (http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Pocket_park)