

PAD MEETING MINUTES

April 19, 2023

PRESENT: Hon. Gerald M. Antunes, BoA; Hon. Anna Festa, BoA, Steve Fontana, Economic Development; Nate Hougrand, City Plan; Evan Trachten, LCI; Clay Williams, Business Development

Absent: Maurine Villani, Tax Office

Guests: None

Meeting called to order at 3:06 P.M.

Roll Call of Members

A motion to approve the PAD minutes from March 15, 2023 was made by Steve Fontana STreet seconded Alder Antunes, roll call was taken, minutes approved unanimously.

New Business

47 Foxon Street

Evan told the committee the City is proposing to sell this parcel to Habitat for Humanity of Greater New Haven, Inc. as a non-profit sale for \$1,000. This is a creative reuse of land as this parcel was utilized for road realignment a few years ago and a small portion remains after the project. We are proposing to sell the portion labeled "Parcel A" on the engineering map. The City will retain a portion of the land which is on the right-hand side of the map and contains a sidewalk. The property will be developed as a single-family property and will be owner occupied for a minimum of 10-years unless a more extensive period is required by the funding used to develop the site. Evan noted this parcel is in Alder Antunes's ward.

Alder Antunes told the committee this parcel was used by the community as a park, but the land does not get any use. He supports this proposal. Alder Antunes told the committee he has concerns about the placement of the driveway, he would like it to be located along Essex Street at the rear of the parcel. There is limited on-street parking, so off-street parking is needed. Nate Hougrand noted this odd parcel contains three front-yards according to the Zoning code, it will likely need some zoning relief for front yard parking and perhaps other relief as well. We will have to look at a site plan to determine what relief will be needed. Nate noted several requests for front yard parking have been denied by the Board of Zoning Appeals in recent times. Evan told the committee that Habitat is aware of the zoning issues for development at this site. Evan believes this parcel qualifies for a hardship given the uniqueness of the parcel. Nate noted a single-family property is permitted on a non-conforming lot as of right. Alder Antunes wants to make sure there is off-street parking. Nate wants to make sure the applicant fully understands that zoning relief will be needed.

A motion was made by Nate Hougrand, seconded by Alder Antunes, roll call was taken, approved unanimously.

552 & 558 Winchester

Evan told the committee this is a non-profit sale to Conncorp, LLC of a vacant three-family structure (558 Winchester Avenue) and an adjacent vacant lot (552 Winchester Avenue). Under the rules of zoning two non-conforming parcels under common ownership are merged, so we are selling the house and the lot together. The lot will be used as a yard area and for parking. The City

purchased this house to gain site control a few years ago. LCI considered selling part of the lot to the property at 550 Winchester but due to the zoning code regulations and the fact that it already has a driveway and off-street parking, we are moving forward with the plan before the PAD committee. LCI recently built several new houses along Winchester Avenue and we were going to rehabilitate this property as part of our future phase-two development in this area, but we decided to have Conncorp rehabilitate this property because we are focused on the new construction aspect of phase-two. Conncop is a highly qualified developer. This property will be utilized as an affordable rental property with a minimum 20-year affordability period at 80% AMI, unless a more extensive period is required by the funding used to develop the site.

Alder Antunes asked why this isn't being sold for homeownership? Evan said there is a need for affordable rentals, LCI is trying to develop both owner-occupied properties as well as rental opportunities. Evan noted that LCI's construction cost to do this project would likely be much higher than Conncorp. Adding high quality new rental units to this area will benefit the community. This property is an anchor property and it's important to LCI's overall development project. Alder Antunes asked if 80% AMI was really affordable? Evan said this is considered a "workforce" level of affordability. Lower AMI's such as 25%-60% AMI requires subsidy to make the development feasible. Steve Fontana agreed with Evan, this is geared to "workforce". We need a mix of affordable options within the City, this isn't market rate. Alder Antunes wondered if someone making \$25 per hour would be able to afford the rent? Alder Festa didn't think so. Steve Fontana said perhaps; if it were a single individual maybe, but not likely for a family of four. Alder Festa asked if this proposal has Alder approval? Evan said he sent prior notification to the Alder of the ward but didn't receive any follow up on the matter. Alder Antunes said the Alder may be unavailable for a little while. Evan noted, there are Alders on all committees within the PAD process and ultimately at the Board of Alders. Alder Festa asked about the deferral for this property. Evan said the applicant would be eligible for the as-of-right Enterprise Zone assessment deferral which freezes the assessment at the current value during the rehabilitation, and then phases-in the increased assessment over the next seven years according to a phase-in schedule. **A motion was made by Alder Antunes, seconded by Steve Fontana, roll call was taken, approved unanimously.**

PAD Guidelines

Evan discussed the status of the PAD Guidelines. Evan noted he incorporated all of the comments and suggestions and generated a clean copy for the committee. Evan said Corporation Counsel was looking into the Urban Homestead Act which grants the tax abatement for sliver lots and had not received any new information, but Al Lucas provided guidance about ending sliver lot tax abatements. Al told Evan the Board of Alders can vote to end the tax abatement without causing any issues to the City's adoption of the Urban Homestead Act. Only the Board of Alder has the power to end sliver lot tax abatements. The PAD Committee can only make recommendations to the Board of Alders.

Evan highlighted some of the proposed updates: Eliminating the section about sales to religious organizations that violates RILUPA, increasing the cost of sliver lot sales for commercial uses, increasing the occupancy term for non-profit sales (sale to owner occupants and affordable rental). Evan said the committee did their due diligence over the last few months reviewing this document. If approved here, the document will go to other committees for review, and will then be submitted to the Board of Alder as a Communication. The Board of Alder will send the item to several committees for review prior to taking any action.

A motion was made by Steve Fontana, seconded by Alder Antunes, roll call was taken, approved unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made by Alder Antunes, seconded by Alder Festa. All were in favor. Meeting Adjourned 3:30 P.M.