

PAD MEETING MINUTES
October 18, 2023

PRESENT: Hon. Anna Festa, BoA; Hon. Gerald M. Antunes, BoA; Steve Fontana, Economic Development; Esther Rose-Wilen, City Plan; Evan Trachten, LCI; Maurine Villani, Tax Office; Clay Williams, Business Development

Guests: Donnell Hilton, City Plan

Meeting called to order at 3:02 P.M.

Roll Call of Members

The PAD minutes from July 19, 2023 were reviewed and approved with one abstention (Esther Rose-Wilen), and the PAD Minutes from August 16, 2023 were approved unanimously.

New Business

192 Cedar Street

Evan told the committee the City is proposing to sell this sliver lot to the adjacent owner occupant at \$0.25 per square foot for a purchase price of \$762.25. The City didn't offer to split this lot, the other abutting property is owned by Mandy Management. Alder Carmen Rodriguez supports the sale of this lot to the adjacent owner occupant.

The lot has a few trees and will create a nice side yard area. Evan noted this lot is too small for Habitat for Humanity to develop a home so we think this is the best use as a side-yard. Alder Festa asked why not build a tiny house, is that being looked at? Evan said the City hasn't embraced building in-fill tiny houses. Evan thinks a cluster of tiny houses would be better received than scattered sites based on discussions with residents. The lot is non-conforming so it would be possible to site a tiny house on this lot, but we are proposing to sell this as a sliver lot. Evan noted, it may be a good idea to permit sliver lot owner's to develop accessory dwelling units on sliver lots in the future, that's a future policy discussion for staff and Alders. Alder Festa thinks we should investigate this idea. Evan noted tiny houses need to be able to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy. Esther noted the greenery on Cedar Street is sparse, and keeping the trees on the sliver lot would be beneficial.

A motion was made to approve the item by Maurine Villani, seconded by Alder Antunes, roll call was taken, approved unanimously.

333 James Street

Evan told the committee this is a sliver lot sale to an owner occupant at \$0.25 per square foot. The City sold the applicant a few feet of this lot years ago, and now would like to sell the remaining portion of the lot to the applicant. The applicant will utilize this lot as a side yard area. Evan met with Alder Herrera and she supports the sale. The owner will fence the lot at the request of Alder Herrera. The lot isn't buildable because it's a narrow corner lot. This is a typical sliver lot sale. There has been a lot of illegal dumping at this site over the last few years.

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

145 Portsea Street

Evan told the committee the City is proposing to sell this sliver lot to the adjacent owner occupant for \$0.25 per square foot for a purchase price of \$292.00. This is a narrow strip of land at 10' wide. It is already paved and used as a driveway. LCI sold the other half of this lot to the other abutting property owner many years ago. Alder Carmen Rodriguez supports this sale. This is why we created the sliver lot program to sell small strips.

A motion was made to approve the item by Alder Antunes, seconded by Maurine Villani, roll call was taken, approved unanimously

321-325 Dixwell Avenue

Evan told the committee the City is proposing to sell this vacant to the Elks as a negotiated sale at \$2.00 per square foot for a purchase price of \$22,500. The Elks have been working with the City of New Haven on the Dixwell Plaza redevelopment. The City has been assisting the Elks with their relocation, we were planning to sell them a parcel on County Street, but they purchased a property at 329 Dixwell Avenue on the private market. This lot will serve as parking and site control. There is a letter of support from Alder Morrison for this property.

Evan said the lot was appraised at \$105,000 but LCI discounted the price because of the City's commitment to assist the Elks with their relocation. LCI recognized we needed to bring in revenue as part of this sale and not sell the parcel for \$1.00. LCI negotiated with the Elks and arrived at \$2.00 per square foot, based upon good faith efforts during the Plaza relocation. The Elks will be appearing at Zoning next month and will need City Plan Site Plan approval. The Elks have been a great asset to the community.

Alder Antunes asked if the City offered the abutting neighbor any of the land? Evan said no because all the land is needed for parking. The project is part of the Dixwell revitalization, and it takes priority over increasing an adjacent side yard. Evan noted that the two lots are non-conforming and are merged under zoning; zoning relief would be required to split them if we were trying to sell a portion of the lot to the neighbor. Evan said we are utilizing the lot to a higher use as part of the Elks redevelopment of this site. Alder Antunes asked if would have any legal issues by not selling land to the neighbor, Evan said no. The Elk's project is a top priority for the City. Moving the Elks to this site will help transform this area. There is a lot of development in this area.

Alder Festa asked how long the lot has been vacant, and if there were any other interested applicants? Evan said no, it has been City owned for probably 10-years. Alder Festa asked about the appraised value, she said the value could be higher than \$105,000 perhaps two or three times higher. Evan said the justification for \$2.00 per square foot is based on prior commitments by the City, and for the Elks being the catalyst to move the Plaza project along. Evan said selling this lot for \$1.00 would not be fiscally responsible so LCI negotiated to \$2.00 per square foot. Alder Antunes asked if this would be taxable? The Elks are a taxable entity, and the City will get taxes from this sale. The Elk's will be eligible for an Assessment Deferral, which is as-of-right. Esther said Site plan review is required due to the parking and other technical aspects such as storm water management.

A motion was made by Clay Williams, seconded by Alder Antunes, roll call was taken, approved with 6 yes votes (Maurine had a technical issue and was unable to vote during roll call. She called Evan after the meeting to inform him of the issue, and stated for the record she votes yes on this item which would have been 7 yes votes / unanimous approval).

Steve asked Evan to follow up With the Development Administrator about the PAD Guidelines. Evan told the PAD committee the guidelines are tabled at LCI Board, and he would follow up.

A motion to adjourn was made by Clay Williams, seconded by Alder Festa, all were in favor, meeting adjourned 3:30PM.