

Testimony by the New Haven Preservation Trust

Legislation Committee, New Haven Board of Alders

April 2, 2024

RESIDENT OF 26 BURNS ST,

My name is Michael Waters and I am here tonight on behalf of the New Haven Preservation Trust. The mission of our organization is to rally our diverse city to embrace and champion its historic places and spaces, and we aim to be an example of how historic preservation can be a relevant force for economic, social, and cultural progress ~~for everyone~~.

The Preservation Trust wholeheartedly supports the development of more affordable housing in New Haven. Along with its residents and institutions, historic buildings and neighborhoods make the City an appealing place to live and work. We are confident that Accessory Dwelling Units can co-exist with the City's architectural heritage and also believe they can be a means of promoting adaptive reuse and deterring the destruction of historic structures.

The current ADU zoning recognizes that Local Historic Districts require different treatment. The Preservation Trust urges your honorable committee to recognize, as other cities have done, that ADUs in State and Federal historic districts also need to be specifically addressed.

AS DIRECTOR BROWN AS THE DEPUTY DIR. SPOKE ABOUT IN TERMS OF GARAGES.

There are 25 such Historic Districts in New Haven within which approximately 6,000 properties have designations.

There are two ways that these historic designations and ADUs intersect.

First, the City is a Certified Local Government (CLG) under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. As such, the City acknowledges responsibility for the protection of properties with historic designations.

Second, under the New Haven's current Vision 2025 comprehensive plan, three ~~key~~ policies apply. These elements are so important that we encourage the continuation of them in the upcoming 2034 plan. Specifically, in this document the City pledges to [QUOTE]:

- Maintain the City's status as a Certified Local Government
- **Adhere to a preservation-based philosophy**
- [AND] Educate property owners about the US Secretary of Interior's design standards

In order to **adhere to a preservation-based philosophy** and Federal standards, we urge your Honorable Board to adopt special guidelines for ADUs on properties with State and Federal historic designations.

We note that the City's ADU Toolkit already states that [QUOTE] "ADUs can provide more housing for the growing population without disrupting the historic look of neighborhoods." *which was REITERATED CONZERT BY DIRECTOR BROWN*

The Preservation Trust strongly supports this statement and recommends the following amendments to the current proposed text to further this aim.

- **FIRST:** For each ADU application, the building permit shall state if the primary structure is listed individually on the National or State Register of Historic Places or is a contributing structure in a State or National Historic District. Such buildings shall be referred to in this section as Historic Properties.
- **SECOND:** To accommodate possible projecting or overhanging architectural features, no part of a new detached ADU shall be closer than 15' to the exterior of a Historic Property.
- **THIRD:** ADUs attached to a Historic Property shall be compatible in size, scale, and materials with the primary structure. To ensure the property's historic integrity, the connecting wall of the ADU shall be built so as to cover (not remove) the existing

exterior walls and architectural features of the primary structure.

- **FOURTH: To retain the character of the Historic District, no part of a new attached or new detached ADU shall project beyond the street façade wall(s) of a Historic Property.**

We respectfully ask your Honorable Committee to add these four terms to the proposed ADU zoning language before it is acted upon by the full body.

Thank you very much.

Cupo (~~Chair~~), Furlow (Vice Chair), Morrison, Marchand, E. Rodriguez, Sabin, C. Rodriguez

Examples:

California, Oregon